



## TUC LEADERS LET TORIES OFF HOOK

By Ian Harrison

### Dockers and railway workers betrayed

THE THATCHER government has survived its most severe political test since the miners' strike in 1984-85. But in order to do so it has made concessions to workers' wage demands; aroused popular concern over its policies on public sector services and the environment; and stirred up a revolt on its own back benches.

The effect of this will be to prepare the ground for further struggles against the Tories by other sections of workers yet to negotiate annual pay rises, while stimulating renewed opposition throughout the autumn to the break-up of the NHS and the privatisation of the water and electricity industries.

The fact that the government has survived the last two months of industrial action and opposition to its economic policies is not, however, due primarily to concessions to wage demands and a cabinet reshuffle designed to appease Tory backbenchers and voters saddled with increasing mortgage repayments.

It is the refusal of Labour and TUC leaders to unite the struggles of the different sections of workers, which came to a head in June and July, as the basis for mobilising the entire working class to bring down the Tories. The chief responsibility for this rests with Labour leader Neil Kinnock and T&GWU general secretary Ron Todd.

For Kinnock, Todd and the leaders of the TUC, the strike-wave which emerged in May unhappily coincided with the launch of Labour's policy review - which, as we pointed out in the last edition of Workers News, 'is the most potent expression of its acceptance of Tory attacks on the working class'.

When Todd rejected an overwhelming mandate from his members to take national strike action and told the High Court 'I do accept that some understanding can be reached that falls short of the provisions of the National Dock Labour Scheme', he was one step away from the outright betrayal of the dockworkers' struggle which came on August 1. At the T&GWU biennial conference in Brighton, Todd forced through motions accepting Labour's policy review, Tory anti-union laws, government money for postal trade union ballots and the abandonment of his union's opposition to nuclear weapons. Having carefully steered the dockers' dispute within the confines of Tory legislation, he had only to await the impact of joint preparations by the govern-

ment, port employers and major importers to call it off on the basis that the strike was collapsing.

While the government started to make plans a year ago for the end of the scheme, Todd delayed the beginning of the strike until the day it was abolished! By this time, warehouses were crammed with six months worth of vital imports. Port employers introduced new tactics such as sending redundancy cheques for £35,000 through the post together with dismissal notices. Yet Todd, with advance notice of the dispute, never brought forward any preparations for the defence of jobs and national agreements. Neither he nor Knapp of the NUR organised so much as a single national demonstration to mobilise their members.

The warning Workers News gave in the June-July edition must now be understood by every serious worker and trade union member in the light of the betrayals of the last two months: 'Before it can settle accounts with the Tories, the working class faces a fight with its own leaders. In every arena of struggle, the determination of workers to defend jobs and living standards is frustrated by leaders of the Labour Party and trade unions.'

During a debate in parliament on July 4 on the strike by NUR members, Kinnock sided with the press and employers. Placing an above-class 'national interest' over all else, he goaded Thatcher to support a trap being laid for the strikers: 'It must be clear even to you that this dispute can be urgently resolved if both parties go to ACAS to discuss all issues. I urge both to do that. Will you urge both to do just that in the national interest?'

The talks at ACAS - and the subsequent improved offer on basic pay - were used by Knapp, and the leaders of ASLEF and the TSSA as a cover to ditch their joint opposition to BR's plan to abandon the national negotiating machinery. (See story page 2)

Labour Party and TUC leaders played a key role in the decision to call off the first strike to affect all 135 North Sea oil installations on July 7. The strike, which was organised by an unofficial liaison committee representing members of the EETPU, AEU, GMB and MSF, was timed to coincide with the anniversary of the Piper Alpha disaster. Labour sent

an energy spokesman to the Forties oil field, calling on workers to stop their strikes.

Leaders of NALGO'S 500,000 local government workers have refused to accept a clear mandate to call an indefinite strike. Instead, they have suspended the series of stoppages which started in July and called for branches to nominate 5 per cent of their members to undertake indefinite action, a recipe for splits and confusion.

The strike-wave which began in May has immediately run up against an obstacle in the form of the existing trade union leadership. This leadership cannot be bypassed by unofficial action, or ignored, while it continues to play its treacherous role. It must be replaced by a principled revolutionary leadership which will fight to carry the lessons of the betrayals of the Labour and trade union leaders to the working class. Demands must be raised throughout union branches and shop stewards' committees to bring down the Tories, smash their wages policy and anti-union legislation and force Labour into office.



Rush-hour at Paddington on a strike day in July

## Gorbachev challenged by miners' strikes

By Bob Pitt

THE RECENT wave of miners' strikes in the Soviet Union represents the greatest upsurge of industrial unrest there since the 1920s. Beginning at one pit near Mezhdurechensk on July 10, with a protest by 77 men against inadequate food supplies, the action quickly spread throughout Siberia's Kuzbass coalfield, the second largest in the country, until some 150,000 miners were on strike. They repudiated the official trade unions and established independent workers' committees, raising demands for improved living standards, for local independence - both economic and political - and for measures against industrial pollution. Tens of thousands of workers marched in solidarity with the miners, and for several days whole towns were under the control of the strikers and their supporters.

The official media adopted a conciliatory attitude. The miners' anger, it was hoped, could be turned against 'conservative elements' in the bureaucracy hostile to Gorbachev's reform programme, while demands for local autonomy might be harnessed to proposals for loosening centralised planning in order to subject the Soviet economy to the disciplines of the market. But the miners proved unwilling to be used as a stage army by the Gorbachev wing of the

bureaucracy and rejected the government line that they had made their point and should go back to work. It required the despatch to Siberia of Politburo member Nikolai Slyunkov, and the granting of major concessions, including the shipment of thousands of tonnes of scarce basic commodities to the region, before the strikes were called off.

Meanwhile, inspired by the Siberian strikers' success, a quarter of a million miners in the even larger Donbass coalfield in the Ukraine downed tools, pressing demands which echoed those of their Kuzbass colleagues. And even as production was resumed in Siberia, the strike movement continued to spread, from Rostov-on-Don in southern Russia, to the Karaganda coalfields in central Asia, reaching as far as Vorkuta in the Arctic Circle. Repeated pleas by Gorbachev that the strike endangered *perestroika* were ignored, and the Donbass miners returned to work only after he and Prime Minister Ryzhkov had personally signed an agreement conceding the strikers' demands.

This unprecedented challenge from the working class, accompanied by continuing ethnic violence in the south, intensified the simmering conflict within the Commun-

ist Party between Gorbachev's supporters and the so-called 'hardliners', who blamed the relaxation of the Stalinist dictatorship for these outbreaks of social unrest. Addressing the Central Committee on July 18, Gorbachev called for a purge of his opponents at all levels in the party. His claim that the authority of the party was at stake was born out by the Vorkuta miners' demands, which featured the restoration of power to the soviets and the abolition of the clause in the Soviet constitution guaranteeing the Communist Party's political domination.

The ebb of the strike-wave has not ended the bureaucracy's troubles. In order to satisfy workers' demands, the moribund Soviet economy must be resuscitated. Yet implementation of the market-based restructuring advocated by leading economists, which includes removing price subsidies from food and housing, would undoubtedly provoke a further explosion of working class discontent. And attempts to buy off the workers with imported consumer goods, as the Polish experience demonstrates, would store up major economic problems for the future. Whatever road the bureaucracy takes, the crisis of Soviet Stalinism can only deepen.

### INSIDE

**Editorial:**  
**The myth of perestroika**  
page 4

**The way forward for workers in Hong Kong**  
pages 6-7

**The LSSP's road to coalition - part 2**  
page 9

**The left and the occupation of the Six Counties**  
page 10

# KNAPP LEADS THE RETREAT AS STRIKES HIT THE TORIES

By an NUR member

**FOLLOWING the sixth one-day national rail strike on July 26, the executive of the National Union of Railwaymen voted by a 'substantial' majority to accept an 8.8 per cent pay offer and suspend further action.**

The decision was a desperate attempt to persuade British Rail to hold talks on the issue of national negotiations at the conciliation service ACAS. It amounted to a criminal betrayal by the NUR leadership, the reverberations of which will be felt by railworkers over the coming months.

Not only will the pay rise be quickly wiped out by the effects of inflation, but BR management will now press ahead with its massive programme of regional line closures and speed up the process of breaking the network into separate commercial sectors in readiness for privatisation.

Announcing the vote to end the strike, NUR general secretary Jimmy Knapp made a statement of breathtaking cynicism. 'Industrial relations in the railway industry have changed for ever,' he said. 'There will be no more management by imposition. Railway workers and their representatives have won the right to be

treated with dignity and respect by their employers.'

A mark of this new-found 'respect' is the fact that BR has still to turn up for the talks at ACAS and the September deadline for the unilateral scrapping of the negotiating procedures is rapidly approaching.

Should the management negotiators turn up at ACAS, they will be well aware that the union leadership is prepared to concede to most of their demands. Knapp has stated that he is not opposed to local bargaining, and the acceptance of the pay offer, which includes extra money for workers in the South East, proves it. His sole concern is to maintain a 'role' for the union leaders.

British Rail and the Tory government are bent on smashing the collective bargaining strength of railworkers. Only this will convince the City speculators that the rail system is a suitable candidate for privatisation.

On July 17, BR offered the NUR executive 8.8 per cent and indicated that there would be some concessions on national bargaining. While still maintaining that wages and hours would be dealt with by five new separate bargaining groups, they threw Jimmy Knapp the life-line he had been looking for. Each bargaining group would have their deals rubber-stamped at national level and, provided the strike

was abandoned, the deal could be hammered out in talks. This amounted to the end of national negotiating in all but name, but at least the NUR would maintain an 'influence'!

Right on cue, the leadership of the train drivers' union ASLEF accepted BR's pay deal and called off its week-old overtime ban, thereby undermining the position of the NUR. On July 18, Knapp argued on the executive for the strike to be suspended for talks but was defeated by 12 votes to eight, and the fifth one-day strike was called. At this point, with the capitalist press going all-out to create the impression that public opinion was turning against railworkers because they had not accepted the increased pay offer, Labour leader Neil Kinnock stepped in with his infamous statement that there would be no more money on offer and railworkers should go back to work.

From here on, Knapp created maximum confusion amongst the rank-and-file with his ambiguous press statements. Dropping all talk of the link between the pay offer and the break-up of the negotiating machinery, the union bureaucracy set to work destroying the unity of the membership. Some branches were encouraged to send in motions demanding the executive call off the strike and enter talks with

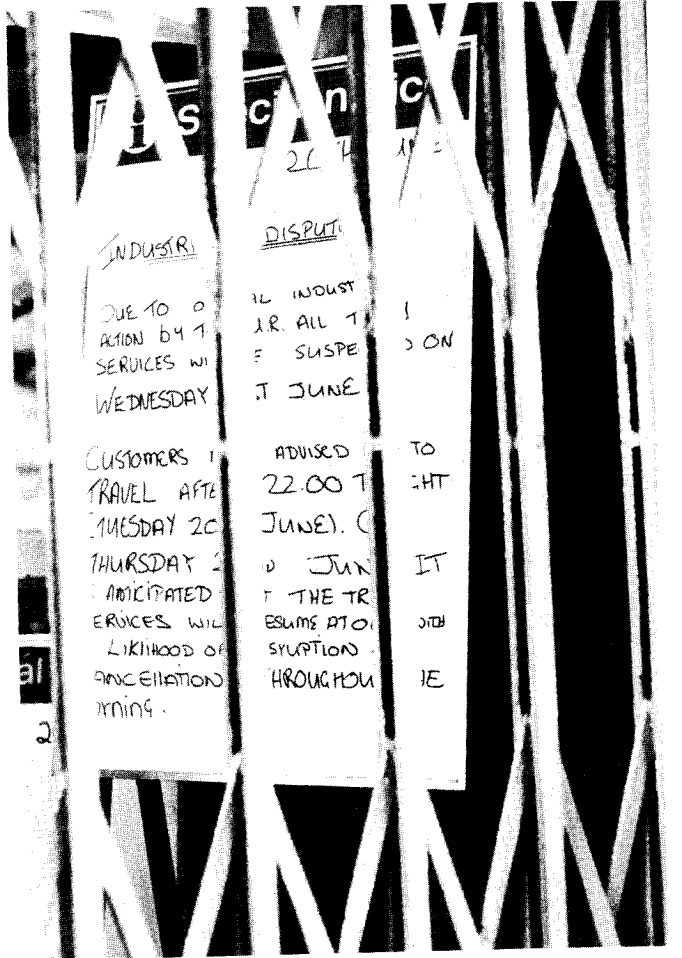
the management.

After the sixth strike, the NUR executive suspended the action with only 1.8 per cent more on pay than had already been imposed by BR, plus an agreement to 'discuss' the break-up of national bargaining.

The membership of the NUR has been cynically used to 'persuade' BR management to make some trifling concessions to the NUR bureaucracy. Over the last decade, Knapp and Co have allowed massive attacks on pay and conditions and the loss of thousands of jobs (20,000 since 1983 alone). They state with pride their record of having called only a handful of strikes in the last 50 years.

Complementing this treachery is that of the Labour Party bureaucracy. When the strike movement was moving powerfully forward, Kinnock and his cronies kept their mouths firmly shut. But at the first glimpse of hesitancy - itself the result of the conscious tactic of the NUR leaders of calling only sporadic, isolated actions - they joined the chorus of outrage directed at the 'militants'. A motion to the Labour Party executive calling for unconditional support for the strikers was substantially rejected.

The real battle is still ahead for railworkers. To meet this challenge, however, the lessons of this dispute



British Rail 'regretting' industrial action in July

must be learned and a revolutionary leadership built in the rail unions. In the meantime, Tube workers are

still in dispute and a fight to take action in their support by other railworkers is essential.

## Anger as civil service uses ET cheap labour

By a CPSA member

THE PROVOCATIVE introduction by the Tories of Employment Training into the Employment Service (responsible for Job Centres and Unemployment Benefit Offices) has led to an angry reaction by civil service trade unionists.

On June 19, staff at about 50 offices in the Southern and Eastern Divisions walked out after an ET trainee was brought into a Job Centre. One week later, over 40 offices struck when a further trainee was brought into another Job Centre.

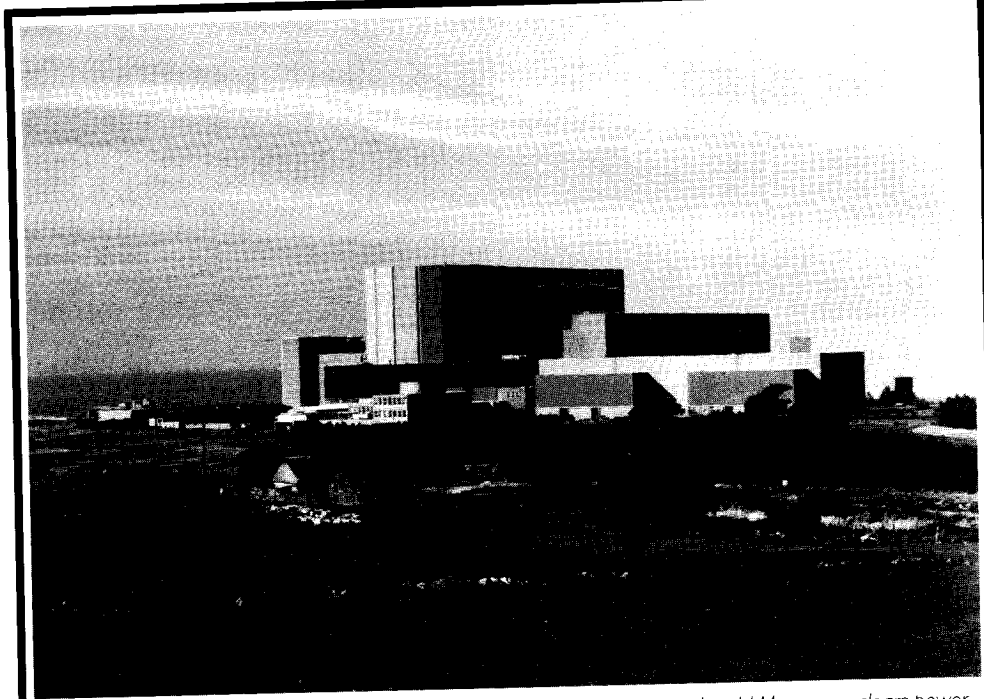
The Employment Service, which is believed to be targeted for partial or complete privatisation, is being used as a guinea pig for undermining terms, conditions and union organisation.

The substitution of ET trainees for full-time staff - at a fraction of the cost - holds no guarantee of permanent jobs for those being cynically used.

This attack has been encouraged by the continuous retreats of the right-wing leadership of the CPSA - the main union organising non-managerial staff. Action against ET has also highlighted the bankruptcy of the main left-wing opposition in the union. A lobby of the CPSA's National Disputes Committee (NDC) on June 26, to demand a ballot for all-out strike action at affected offices, resulted in an extensive discussion between *Militant* and SWP members on which of the right-wingers on the NDC were most susceptible to 'pressure'. Once the NDC

blocked a strike ballot, the *Militant* and SWP advocates of 'pressure' have the membership leaderless, with no perspective to extend action against cheap labour.

So shoddy are the standards of 'training' on ET that the Department of Employment revealed in June, in a written reply to a parliamentary question, that only 13 large companies are participating in the scheme on a national scale. Of these, only two have managed to fill more than half of the places they have guaranteed. Four million pounds has been spent promoting the scheme to 'Force the workers without jobs to do the jobs without wages'.



The Tories' friends in the City are to be spared the cost of decommissioning the old Magnox nuclear power stations

In a move designed to ensure that electricity privatisation really does line the pockets of their friends in the City, the Tories have withdrawn some of the oldest and most inefficient nuclear power stations from their privatisation programme.

The eight Magnox power stations are nearing the end of their useful lives and could cost a total of £15 billion to decommission. The Tories have ensured that this cost is met out of public funds and therefore does not jeopardise the sell-off.

Construction of Magnox power stations was started in 1955 and they were brought into service between 1962 and 1971. None of them has ever produced electricity anywhere near as cheaply as coal. This is also true of new designs such as the Advanced Gas-Cooled Reactor.

## White Paper cover-up for food industry

At the end of July, as the number of victims of the latest salmonella outbreak headed towards 300, the Tories published 'Food Safety - Protecting the Consumer'.

This White Paper is a cover-up for the food industry in Britain, whose massive profits are based on slipshod production techniques which have resulted in salmonella in eggs, botulism in yoghurt, listeria in cheese and the highly dangerous bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle.

Whilst the paper says that the government spends £8 million a year on food safety,

it does not mention that a number of food research centres have been closed down, nor that £30 million is being lopped off food research.

It does not mention that the government took a year - during which 26 babies died - to warn of the dangers of listeria, nor does it refer to claims that Ministry of Agriculture officials hushed-up the existence of BSE.

Painters run a 40 per cent higher than average risk of contracting lung cancer, according to a World Health Organisation report which was leaked to the *Observer* newspaper in July.

Three-quarters of the government's senior medical advisors are given money by the drug companies they are supposed to be monitoring, according to a report published at the end of July.

The 1988 annual report of the Medicines Commission discloses that 18 of its 24 members either receive consultancy fees, shares or salaries from pharmaceutical manufacturers or have re-

search grants paid to the departments in which they work.

The Medicines Commission was set up in 1968 after the Thalidomide scandal. Its most important subcommittee is the Committee on the Safety of Medicines. Only four of the 20 members of the CSM have no financial connection with the drug industry.

Children of painters have an increased risk of leukaemia and brain tumours, female painters have a greater chance of miscarriages and spray painters are more likely to get testicular cancer, the report finds. It is believed that it is non-water solvents that are responsible, but paint manufacturers claim there is no danger to users of domestic paint.

## FUNDS

IN THIS edition we have highlighted the unparalleled crisis gripping Stalinism in China, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. This must become the spur to rebuilding a world Trotskyist party to lead to victory through political revolution the immense struggles which are developing. Workers News stands shoulder to shoulder with the working class against the Stalinist bureaucracies. Help build its circulation by supporting the £10,000 Building Fund, which has reached £1,501.39, and the £300 Monthly Fund. Send your donations to:

Workers News  
1/17 Meredith Street  
London EC1R 0AE



# The Green Party and the politics of pollution

THE SUCCESS of the Green Party in the European elections can be seen largely as a protest vote by a disgruntled middle class. However, the environment and its protection is a question which cannot be resolved by protests and pressure groups, and must be tackled by the working class through the struggle for power.

The break-down of the election results shows that the swing to the Greens was not uniform. They gained more in the Tory south – winning nearly 25 per cent in the Sussex South constituency – and less in the Labour areas of Wales, the north and Strathclyde East. Bourgeois analysts had to agree that it was a predominantly middle class vote, taking ground mainly from the Tories and the Liberal Democrats.

Following the hypocritical announcement earlier this year by the Tories, concern for 'green' issues is currently being expressed, in words, by all the main political parties as well as by the capitalist media – so it comes as no surprise that large sections of the middle class found it an acceptable way of voting in June.

By Jon Bearman

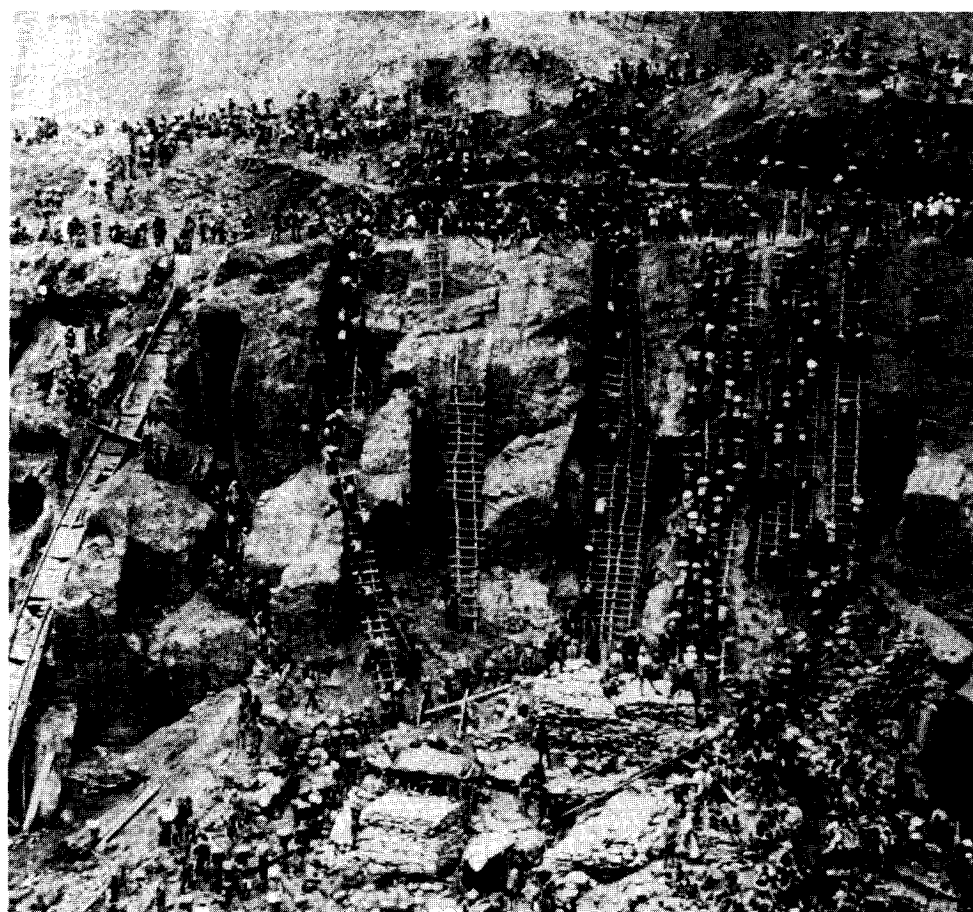
The new-found 'friends of the earth' in the Thatcher government, however, propose to exempt the new private water authorities from existing legislation covering river pollution for a year in order to make the massively-opposed sell-off a commercial success. They have also stipulated that nuclear power should continue after electricity privatisation, using the pseudo-green argument that this cuts down air pollution – whilst opposing EC proposals to clean up power station emissions and refusing to enact legal requirements to conserve energy which would reduce the production of 'green-house' gases. For many years, they resisted the introduction of lead-free petrol; and still have not acted to bring in catalytic converters which remove carbon monoxide from vehicle exhausts.

The Tories were quick to point out that Green Party policies are utopian – those, for instance, which call for zero economic growth, nuclear disarmament and withdrawal from NATO. In the

main, however, it is not the policies which are utopian, but the outlook of the party which is proposing them. Pollution can only be halted in a socialist planned economy based on genuine workers' democracy. But the Greens do not recognise – let alone challenge – the class basis of the destruction of the environment. They are reduced to pleading for zero economic growth – an attempt to turn the clock back which, if implemented, would lead to mass starvation. The most right-wing section of the ecology movement in the United States and Scandinavia has already taken this into account, and has proposed that so-called 'natural' disasters should be allowed to run their course, thereby reducing the world's population.

Other aspects of Green policy reek of opportunism and nationalism – such as opposition to the Channel Tunnel, aimed at disgruntled south-eastern Tories. Where is the opposition to the environment endured by the working class and unemployed in the towns and inner cities?

Pollution, the destruction of the rain forests, acid rain, the holes in the ozone layer



Brazil: open-cast gold mining on land formerly covered by rain forest

and other environmental issues cannot be tackled without a fight against imperialism. Its multinational corporations and banks destroy the environment in their search for higher rates of profits, either directly or by

extorting massive debt repayments from semi-colonial countries. This is the line of the class struggle and cannot be resolved by middle class protests, by individual actions (such as boycotting Amazonian wood in furni-

ture) or by charity. Only the full strength of the working class, aroused in revolution, can achieve this task. It requires the building of a class-conscious, revolutionary party committed to socialist policies.

# Fight privatisation! For workers' control!

THE PRIVATISATION of the ten water authorities will begin in November after the Tory bill has been given the royal assent.

Attempting to smooth the bill's passage through parliament has been a £30 million government advertising campaign with a two-fold purpose: to convince the private sector that water represents a lucrative investment, and to allay the widespread concern that privatisation will bring with it higher charges, a further deterioration in water quality and an increase in river and coastal pollution levels.

Despite the Tory propaganda, drinking water is well below European Community standards. The government has been told to improve the quality in line with EC requirements by 1993 – having failed to obey a similar directive that should have been complied with by 1985 – and is now trying to get a compromise with Brussels to extend the deadline by several years. The Tories claim that this extension will give them a better opportunity to 'clean up the system'; in fact, what worries them most is that potential private investors will be frightened off by the impact this will have on their profit margins. In a bid to make the £7 billion industry more attractive, they have already largely written off the debt that the water boards have built up – effectively transferring £5 billion straight into the pockets of private industrialists and the financial sector.

In the name of efficiency, the government has, over the last few years, been squeez-

By Graham Fenwick

ing the water authorities by starving them of investment. This has led to a deterioration in the quality of drinking water and in the maintenance of supply, and worsening problems with the already decrepit sewerage system which mostly dates back 100 years. Doctors have noticed an increase in illnesses related to water pollution, and supplies to parts of south London have recently been cut off because of an infestation of worms at a pumping station. There has also been an increase in the number of accidents in which water has been poisoned by contaminating chemicals, and the ability of the water authorities to cope with heavy demand during summer weather has been further undermined.

The provision of high-quality drinking water – as with all other issues of environmental health and safety – is, of course, in stark conflict with capitalism's drive for profit, whatever the Tory advertising managers may say. The privatisation of water will increase water charges – probably through the eventual introduction of metered supplies. Standards will not be improved through the introduction of 'competition' or 'consumer choice' – the nationalised industry is to be replaced by a cartel of regionally-based, privately-owned monopolies.

Despite the anger the bill has aroused in the working class, the Perrier-swilling trade union and Labour Party leaders have kept action against the bill to the barest minimum – lobbies of parlia-

ment and petitions to 10 Downing Street. They have refused to extend action to strikes and mass demonstrations of strength, fearing to unleash a political mass movement against the Tories. A future Labour government would not challenge the right of the speculators and shareholders to unearned income from the water industry – it would merely introduce 'safe-

guards' against what the Labour bureaucrats see as the 'unacceptable face of the market'.

Workers must mobilise against the Tory privatisation of water by taking strike action both inside and outside the industry. They must also insist that the Labour Party leaders pledge themselves to the full nationalisation of water, that no compensation be given by a Labour government to the new private owners, and that workers' control of the industry be introduced.

# Euros chase collapsing SLD/SDP

THE COMMUNIST Party of Great Britain is currently making its most elaborate attempt to enter the mainstream of British bourgeois politics. Published in June, 'Manifesto For New Times', the new draft programme of the CPGB, is couched in the pretentious terms favoured by second-rate sociologists and is the most detailed statement yet of the Euro-Stalinists' political intentions.

These are to advise and assist the SLD, the SDP and the Labour Party right wing to join together in order to provide a viable alternative to what is referred to in awed terms as 'Thatcherism'. Although the terminology is obscure, it cannot conceal the very right-wing views of the authors. They attack the Labour Party, not for its right-wing trajectory, but because it has not yet thoroughly severed its links with the working class, or 'working people' as these people pre-

fer to say, and because 'it has lost its position as the overwhelmingly preponderant channel for progressive centre-left opinion in society, with the formation of the SLD and the SDP'. (Unfortunately for the Euros, shortly after their document was published electoral support for the SLD and SDP collapsed and support for the Labour Party took it way ahead of the Tories).

The Labour Party policy review is hailed, along with the SLD's document 'Our Different Vision', as a sign of 'modernisation' and as indicating that 'the issue of electoral pacts and agreements . . . is on the political agenda'. The CPGB's current programme, 'The British Road to Socialism', is a thoroughly reformist document which was adopted in 1951 and last revised in 1977. Since the 'Manifesto For New Times' has been put forward as a replacement, there is a – presumably

mandatory – section entitled 'Socialism: Peering Into The Future'. This is, in fact, a humanist blueprint for a society having nothing to do with socialism – which in any case is not regarded as being of immediate concern since the details 'will be decided by the generations which make and remake socialism in their [our emphasis] time'.

For the present, they put forward a programme which reads like the result of a session by a group of advertising executives trying to break into politics. The rule seems to be 'if its sounds good, put it in'. Their goal for the economy is 'progressive modernisation', which must be 'sustainable' and 'democratic'. 'It should establish the new ethic of progressive consumerism' and 'the elements must cohere into a new idea of the public interest'. In the section on the welfare state, a whiff of Toryism can be detected when they argue for

'a new balance between collective responsibility and individual choice' and for 'self-help' in health care. The section on foreign policy promises 'a final laying to rest of the pre-war Bolshevik threat!!'

The document concludes with a section on 'a new kind of political settlement' which puts forward the bizarre notion that Britain never completed its bourgeois revolution. However, this is now apparently possible through proportional representation, coalition government, reform of the House of Commons and the monarchy (abolition of the monarch is relegated to the long term by these 'communists'), a written constitution and . . . individual rights.

This manifesto is truly a monument to the changes which Thatcher has wrought – on Beatrix Campbell, Marion Darke, Tricia Davis and the other ten authors of 'Manifesto For New Times'.

# Relatives refused entry into Britain

THE TORIES will continue their policy of dividing families through the racist immigration legislation.

In a statement issued in June, Home Secretary Douglas Hurd announced that adult relatives of immigrants now resident in Britain will still be refused entry, even if they prove by DNA testing that they are related. The only exceptions will be those who are deemed to be 'wholly dependent' on a relative living in Britain, or who can prove undefined 'compassionate reasons'.

The so-called 'genetic fingerprint' will be used to strengthen, not to liberalise, the immigration laws. In the case of relatives now over 18 who were previously denied entry, and who can now prove their relationship, the Tories have simply moved the goal posts: 'Previous decisions . . . were taken in good faith on the basis of information available at the time,' stated Hurd – Catch 22!

Future applicants will be charged at least a proportion of the cost of DNA testing, and tests will not be conducted 'routinely' – presumably to add a further twist to the legal maze.

The interests of international working class unity do not, however, lie in 'fairer' tests for eligibility, but in the scrapping of all racist immigration laws.

## EDITORIAL

## The myth of perestroika

NO SOONER had Mikhail Gorbachev completed his tour of France and Germany, preaching the importance of living together in a 'common European home' to the Council of Europe, than the largest movement of the working class yet seen in the Soviet Union brought hundreds of thousands of miners out on strike in Siberia and the Ukraine.

As if to whet their appetite for the penetration of the Soviet market, Gorbachev extols the values of perestroika (economic restructuring) to assembled capitalist ministers wherever he goes. At the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in July, he predicted 'a vast economic space from the Atlantic to the Urals where Eastern and Western ports would be strongly interlocked'. Mitterrand, Kohl and Thatcher all wish Gorbachev well in his great work, but enthusiasm is tempered by impatience - Gorbachev is long on rhetoric and short on delivery. As far as they are concerned the nationalised property relations of the USSR are one big restrictive practice, which should be dismantled without further delay.

Gorbachev tells Soviet miners that they need perestroika. He tells the Council of People's Deputies that the miners are ruining perestroika. He inspires a major article in *Pravda* on July 10 which accuses the Communist Party itself of being the chief obstacle to perestroika.

Since Gorbachev claims perestroika is the source of all good, and efforts to obstruct it are the source of all evil, the question arises - what have four years of perestroika achieved?

While Gorbachev has launched a thousand speeches and articles contrasting the recent period with the bad old days of the 'Brezhnev era of stagnation', stubborn facts say otherwise. The emperor's new clothes are see-through and more and more Soviet workers are becoming aware of the deception.

Agricultural production and distribution are in a deep crisis. This year the Soviet Union is importing 44 million tonnes of grain from the West. Depressed oil and gas prices on the world market are helping to drive up the foreign debt, currently standing at \$30 billion. Soviet trade accounts for only 4 per cent of the world total. Exports remain dominated by raw materials, while manufacturing is in the doldrums, dogged by outdated plant and machinery and consequently, low labour productivity. British coal production is six times greater per coal face than in the Soviet Union.

In an attempt to placate striking miners, sugar, washing powder, soap, milk, tea, coffee and cocoa were distributed. The shortages of such basic items speaks volumes about the current state of the Soviet economy.

Among self-styled 'revolutionaries', a vast number of articles have been written, claiming to analyse the significance of perestroika. At one pole stand groups of pro-Stalinists who claim that Gorbachev is carrying through a political revolution against the bureaucracy. At the other are those who say that perestroika is the programme of capitalist restoration.

Leaving aside the absurdities of the first position, the prospect of capitalist restoration deserves serious consideration. If Gorbachev has embarked directly on this road, it is up to those who hold to this position to explain when the nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy changed, through what routes can restoration triumph, can restoration be accomplished without a civil war against the working class, etc. At this point, however, analysis usually ends and bluster begins.

What both positions have in common is that they recognise the bureaucracy as the chief agent of the historical process. One sees the bureaucracy reforming itself out of existence, independent of the action of the working class. The other sees the bureaucracy as omnipotent from the opposite direction - it can destroy the gains of October without counter-revolution.

If Gorbachev is the representative of capitalist restoration, what does that make Yeltsin? The advance guard of restorationism? (*News Line*) A Stalinist, who none the less articulates some workers' demands? (*Workers Press*) An ultra-left?! (Healy-Redgrave).

If perestroika is indeed the programme of restoration, then it also calls into question whether China, Yugoslavia, Poland and Hungary are workers' states at all, since 'reform' programmes have already proceeded much further in each case than in the Soviet Union.

No class-conscious worker should underestimate the dangers inherent in the avenue which Gorbachev has opened up both to foreign capitalist penetration of the Soviet Union and to private accumulation within its borders. The monopoly of foreign trade has been weakened; a measure of private trade has been legalised; self-financing enterprises have been established; and, not least, private agriculture is being extended.

The central problem confronting Gorbachev is not the 'success' of these measures, but the opposite - the stubborn resistance of the working class to every attempt to increase labour discipline and unemployment, drive up output at the expense of wages and deprive it of basic commodities. In addition to the massive miners' action in July, official statistics admit that a further 100 strikes have taken place this year.

This resistance is the source of Gorbachev's continual complaint that the perestroika reforms are still - after four years - not operating; hence also the increasingly desperate pleas for Western technology, trade credits and investment.

A planned economy remains the source of the privileges of the bureaucracy. Gorbachev seeks to get it moving, by methods which are to the advantage of foreign capitalism and petty-bourgeois elements within the country and to the detriment of the working class, because he is obliged to defend that source of privilege. The long 'tail' of reactionary forces within the Soviet Union is growing daily, encouraged by the bureaucracy's overtures to imperialism - private traders, wealthy farmers, bourgeois nationalists in the Baltic, anti-Semites, etc.

To restore capitalism, however, the working class must be smashed and the nationalised property relations dismembered. While the immediate prospects of restoration are slight, a headlong confrontation between the working class and the bureaucracy cannot be indefinitely postponed. The Stalinists of Moscow are as capable as those in Beijing of drowning the working class in blood. The central task remains the creation of a Trotskyist party to lead the political revolution to smash the bureaucracy.

## The true face of Peronism revealed

By Martin Sullivan

THE INFLATIONARY crisis in Argentina has reached proportions rarely seen since the German crisis in 1923. Inflation is currently estimated at 200 per cent per month, the austral currency has lost 95 per cent of its value against the US dollar this year and the foreign debt stands at \$60 billion.

Announcing a package of measures on July 9 which savagely attacked working class living standards, incoming Peronist President Carlos Menem declared: 'We should conduct major surgery without anaesthetic'. Menem ditched his populist election pledges - wage increases and the regaining of sovereignty over the Malvinas (Falkland) islands - even before he took over.

By resigning before his term of office expired, outgoing president Raul Alfonsín was counting on Menem's relationship with the Peronist trade union bureaucrats to smother opposition to wage cuts. The final stimulus to Alfonsín's departure came with the eruption of food riots in late May, and the declaration of a state of siege, supported by Menem, in which hundreds of left-wingers were rounded up.

Menem has acted swiftly. On July 9, petrol prices were hiked by 600 per cent, the cost of public services rose by between 250 and 600 per cent and the austral was devalued by 50 per cent. Plans have also been revealed for the privatisation of many of the major public-sector indus-



Picket in London on June 13 demanding the release of political prisoners arrested during the state of siege in Argentina. It was supported by RIL, Spartacist League, WIL, WRP ('Workers Press') and Workers Power.

tries. To show its even-handedness, the government granted a wage 'increase' to workers - worth well below the rocketing inflation rate - and on July 17 signed an agreement with 300 companies to stabilise prices for three months. In the week of the anti-inflation agreement, prices of many foodstuffs rose by 400 per cent! Seven hundred people were arrested following further food riots.

In foreign policy, the fiery 'anti-imperialist' rhetoric has been shelved. Foreign Minister Domingo Cavallo is known to favour normalising relations with Britain if it will make some concessions on the 150-mile exclusion zone around the Malvinas islands.

Menem has also indicated that he is prepared to drop the few remaining cases against army officers implicated in the 'dirty war' of the late 1970s, in which 20,000

trade unionists and left-wingers 'disappeared'. On July 11, he retired a number of senior officers who had opposed the three right-wing military rebellions against Alfonsín between April 1987 and December 1988. Meanwhile, the trial of 20 members of the MTP guerrilla organisation opened on July 20. They are accused of attacking the 'La Tablada' army barracks in January this year.

## Pragmatists win the day

By Daniel Evans

THE VICTORY of Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani in the presidential election on July 29 is another step in the consolidation of power by the 'pragmatist' faction of the Iranian clergy.

The election, from which 77 candidates were barred by the Council of Guardians saw the former speaker of the Majlis (parliament) only formally opposed by one little-known candidate. The role of the president, a post which Rafsanjani now holds in addition to being the commander of the armed forces, has been broadened since the death of Khomeini to become head of state.

Rafsanjani represents the interests of the increasingly confident big capitalists and reactionary landowners. He now heads a rightward-moving Bonapartist regime which is anxious to come to a speedy accommodation with imperialism.

The dream of a separate Iranian road - independent of both imperialism and the Soviet Union - has been unceremoniously ditched. The slogan under which Iran's foreign policy is conducted remains 'neither east nor west', but Rafsanjani brings to it a new interpretation: 'This policy does not mean the severance of relations with the east and west,' he says in his election manifesto. 'This policy means healthy relations by negating expansionism and hegemony

and by preserving independence.'

A round of diplomatic activity is currently taking place between Iran and various imperialist nations, and Rafsanjani himself was a recent visitor to Moscow. At the same time, secret meetings with Israel on the future of the Lebanon have been held.

The practicalities of the new foreign policy were made clear a week before Rafsanjani's election when

he told leaders of Hizbollah, the militant Shia Muslim militia in Lebanon, whom he had summoned to Tehran, that the Islamic revolution in Lebanon was over. He then pressed them into an alliance with the pro-Syrian Amal Shia Muslim militia led by Nabih Berri, who was also in Tehran.

Taking advantage of this move to pull the rug out from under the feet of the Hizbollah, the Israeli government seized the opportunity to launch a provocation. On July 28, Sheikh Abdul Karim Obeid and two associates connected with Hizbollah

were kidnapped by commandos, ostensibly to trade for kidnapped Israelis but, in reality, to provoke a militant reaction from Hizbollah members. The Zionist leaders hope to put Hizbollah's alliance with the Amal under pressure and force Iran to distance itself even further from its allies.

● It was reported on July 18 that six senior Iranian army officers loyal to Ayatollah Montazeri, once the designated successor to Ayatollah Khomeini, were executed and a number of Revolutionary Guard Corps commanders arrested.

## Coup topples Sadiq

ON JUNE 30, the Sudanese government was toppled in a military coup led by General Omar Hassan Ahmed el-Bashir. Six days later, the deposed Prime Minister, Sadiq al-Mahdi, was placed under arrest.

The army has taken control of a country which is crippled by civil war and economic chaos. The coup came only 12 days after 14 army officers and 48 civilians were arrested for plotting against the government, and only five days after the announcement of an annual inflation rate of 80 per cent and a predicted record

budget deficit of £1.9 billion. It is the latest development in a country which has seen little but crisis since its nominal independence from British imperialism in 1956.

In February this year, the army gave Sadiq al-Mahdi one week to reform his Umma Party government, stop the civil war and ditch his alliance with Iran and Libya in favour of forging links with the imperialist powers and their stooges in Egypt. While appearing to accept these demands, Sadiq, under counter-pressure from the fundamentalist National Islamic Front led by his brother-in-

law, continued to play for time.

Shortly after the coup, General el-Bashir announced that peace talks with John Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Army - based in the impoverished south of the country - would take place in Addis Ababa. However, he has since put a halt to discussions on the November 1988 peace proposals. These developments provide further evidence that neither of the bourgeois groupings, north or south, who have fought each other to the point of exhaustion, can resolve the crisis which is ravaging the Sudan.



# Ochoa sacrificed to deflect criticism

By Martin Sullivan

THE EXECUTION by firing squad on July 13 of the Vice-Minister of the Cuban armed forces, General Amaldo Ochoa Sanchez, along with a further three high-ranking officers on charges of drug smuggling has shattered the carefully-fostered myth of 'incorruptibility' surrounding the old guard of the Cuban Communist Party. Ten others – all army officers or officials of the Ministry of the Interior – were convicted of smuggling drugs and luxury items, and of illegal currency dealing.

Ochoa was by any standard a senior figure in the Cuban state bureaucracy. He

joined Fidel Castro's July 26 Movement prior to the overthrow of Batista in 1959. He commanded Cuban forces in both Ethiopia and Angola, was one of only five officers to hold the 'Hero of the Republic of Cuba' medal, and had been a close friend of Raul Castro, the president's brother. One of Ochoa's co-defendants, Colonel Antonio de la Guardia, was also a veteran of the guerrilla struggle.

At hearings before a military Court of Honour and the military tribunal which condemned him, Ochoa admitted the charges. These centred on conspiring with the Colombian-based drug cartel

Medellin to transport six tons of cocaine to the United States, using the Cuban airport at Varadero as a stopping-off point. Ochoa and his fellow conspirators are said to have pocketed £2.2 million in bribes for arranging 15 trips between 1987 and 1989, although he claimed that he met the head of the Medellin cartel, Pablo Escobar, in Colombia.

It is self-evident that an operation on this scale could not have been restricted to a mere 14 people. Everything points to a network running throughout the Interior

Ministry and the armed forces – the twin pillars on which the Stalinist bureaucracy rests. The US intelligence services appear to have been well informed about the operation.

The case says much about the nature of the 'revolutionary' regime in Havana. Ochoa never once made a political justification for his actions; indeed, in a way reminiscent of Stalinist show trials in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, he pledged his support for the bureaucracy: 'My last thought will be for Fidel, for the great revolution he has given [!] to the people.' Asked about divisions within

the military, he replied: 'There is no truth in that. It could not be farther from the truth. I was never and I am not against the revolution.'

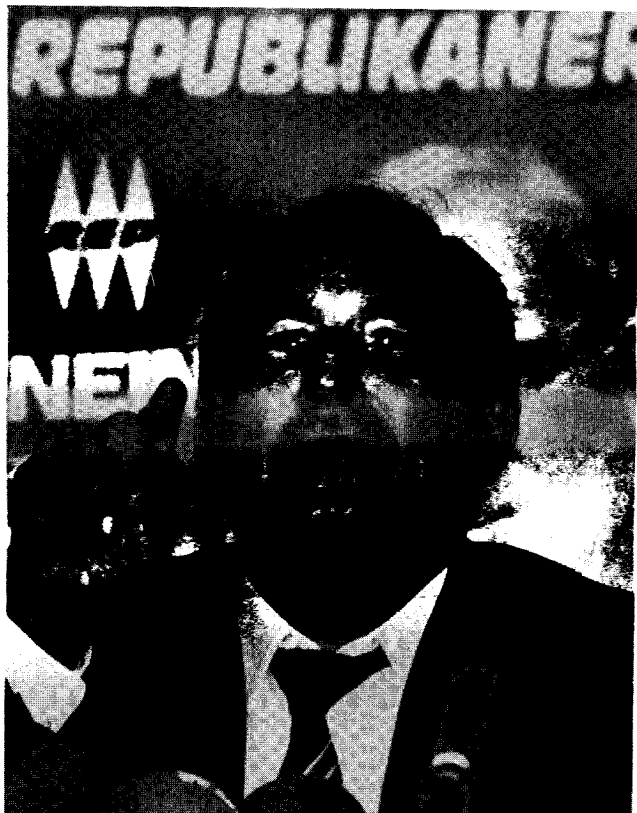
The outlook which sees no contradiction between drug-running or laundering money in Panama and being 'for the revolution' (i.e., the bureaucratic status quo) has been moulded by the creation of a caste of officers and administrators entirely independent of any supervision or control by the Cuban working class.

For its part, the Cuban leadership used the trial to breathe new life into the cult of Castro. Ochoa had betrayed 'Fidel and the revolu-

tion'; he had acted 'against the credibility of Fidel'.

There is little doubt that Ochoa has been the fall guy for the wider corruption within the state apparatus. The publicity given to the trial in Cuba is no doubt intended to impress the United States, but it is also a salvo across the bows of any potential contenders for power within the military, which controls many of the key positions in the Stalinist party and the economy.

As Cuba's economic problems continue to pile up, the monolithic unity of the bureaucracy will be undermined. The Ochoa case is the sign of things to come.



Republikaner Party leader Franz Schonhuber

## Election gains for fascists in W. Germany

By Daniel Evans

A SECTION of the European middle class, facing ruination as the policies of the conservative regimes increasingly favour the bigger capitalist corporations, is turning to fascism as a way out.

In France, the National Front has emerged as a strong electoral force in recent years, boosted by the growing support of small businessmen, farmers, civil servants and a number of backward workers. The growing competition for world trade between the major imperialist powers which lies behind the drive for a 'single European market' by 1992 is having the effect of squeezing the smaller French businesses and threatening them with bankruptcy.

More recently, in West Germany, the far right Republikaner Party recorded a 7.1 per cent share of the vote in the elections for the

European parliament in Strasbourg last June, gaining six seats where it previously held none. This leap in the fortunes of fascism in West Germany is set to net the Republikaners, led by Franz Schonhuber, a former sergeant in Hitler's Waffen SS, an £8 million windfall as the state channels funds to political parties in accordance with the percentage of voters they attract.

The Republikaners have translated worries about the economy, poor job prospects and bad housing into the demagogic language of anti-communism, racism and nationalism. They stand for the re-unification of the two Germanies into a single imperialist nation, the expulsion of immigrant workers –

particularly the large Turkish community: 'The green flag of Islam will never fly over Germany' – and the withdrawal of West Germany from NATO and the EC which 'benefits primarily the Euro-multinationals, the big concerns, but not the small artisans, farmers and workers'.

Using the familiar tactics of their Nazi predecessors, which have encouraged the rapid growth of attacks on immigrants, Jews and trade unionists, the Republikaners have given the appearance of being a strong alternative to the crisis-ridden Christian Democrat administration of Chancellor Kohl. And while they gained 750,000 votes at the expense of the conservative parties, they also took

150,000 from the Social Democrats.

The prostration of European Social-Democracy and Stalinism, including the trade union bureaucracies, before the requirements of capitalism, their complete lack of any programme to defend the masses, and their history of betraying every struggle of the working class is playing a major role in assisting the resurgence of fascism. Seeing no alternative in the so-called 'socialist' parties, sections of the middle class and some workers are being drawn towards seeking a 'national' solution to their problems.

The threat of fascism can only be combatted by mobilising the working class around a revolutionary socialist programme, the aim of which is the overthrow of capitalism and with it the conditions which give rise to movements such as the Republikaner Party.

## Ozal seizes chance to boost his popularity

THE BULGARIAN government of veteran Stalinist Todor Zhivkov and the Turkish government led by Turgut Ozal are both exploiting the plight of ethnic Turks forced to leave Bulgaria since May this year. In a deliberately created atmosphere of witch-hunt and pogrom, Bulgarian police and troops suppressed a demonstration by ethnic Turks in the town of Kaolinovo in May, killing one man and injuring many others. During this and a number of incidents surrounding it, Western diplomats in Bulgaria estimated that 30 Turks were

killed. The Bulgarian government denies the extent of atrocities and puts the figure for those killed at seven.

The demonstration in Kaolinovo was called by ethnic Turks in response to Zhivkov's brutal programme of enforced 'Bulgarianisation'. Under the programme, Bulgaria's 1.5 million Turks, who constitute a tenth of the population, have been forced to adopt Slavonic names while their mosques and schools have been shut down and their cemeteries vandalised.

Zhivkov is using the Turks as a scapegoat for Bulgaria's

economic crisis. By July 4, over 100,000 had sought refuge in Turkey, taking advantage of the temporary easing of travel restrictions. As the exodus in the wake of the atrocities reached 3,000 per day, Bulgarian authorities announced that 1 billion leia had been taken out of the country. A mass mobilisation of schoolchildren and adult civilians was decreed to provide a mobile workforce for agriculture and industry to replace the fleeing Turks, while Bulgarian intellectuals sympathetic to the Turks were arrested.

The Bulgarian government claims that the Turks do not exist and, therefore, have no right to defend their language, religion or culture. According to Zhivkov and his fellow Stalinists, the Turks are merely Bulgarians who came under the influence of Islam during the reign of the Turkish Ottoman Empire.

On June 25, a demonstration of 100,000 marched



Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal talks to ethnic Turkish women deported from Bulgaria at a refugee camp

through the Turkish city of Istanbul demanding that Ozal's government provide them with guns to defend the Turks in Bulgaria. Ozal has been quick to exploit popular concern for ethnic Turks seeking refuge, many of whom have been forced to abandon their children, relatives and possessions by the

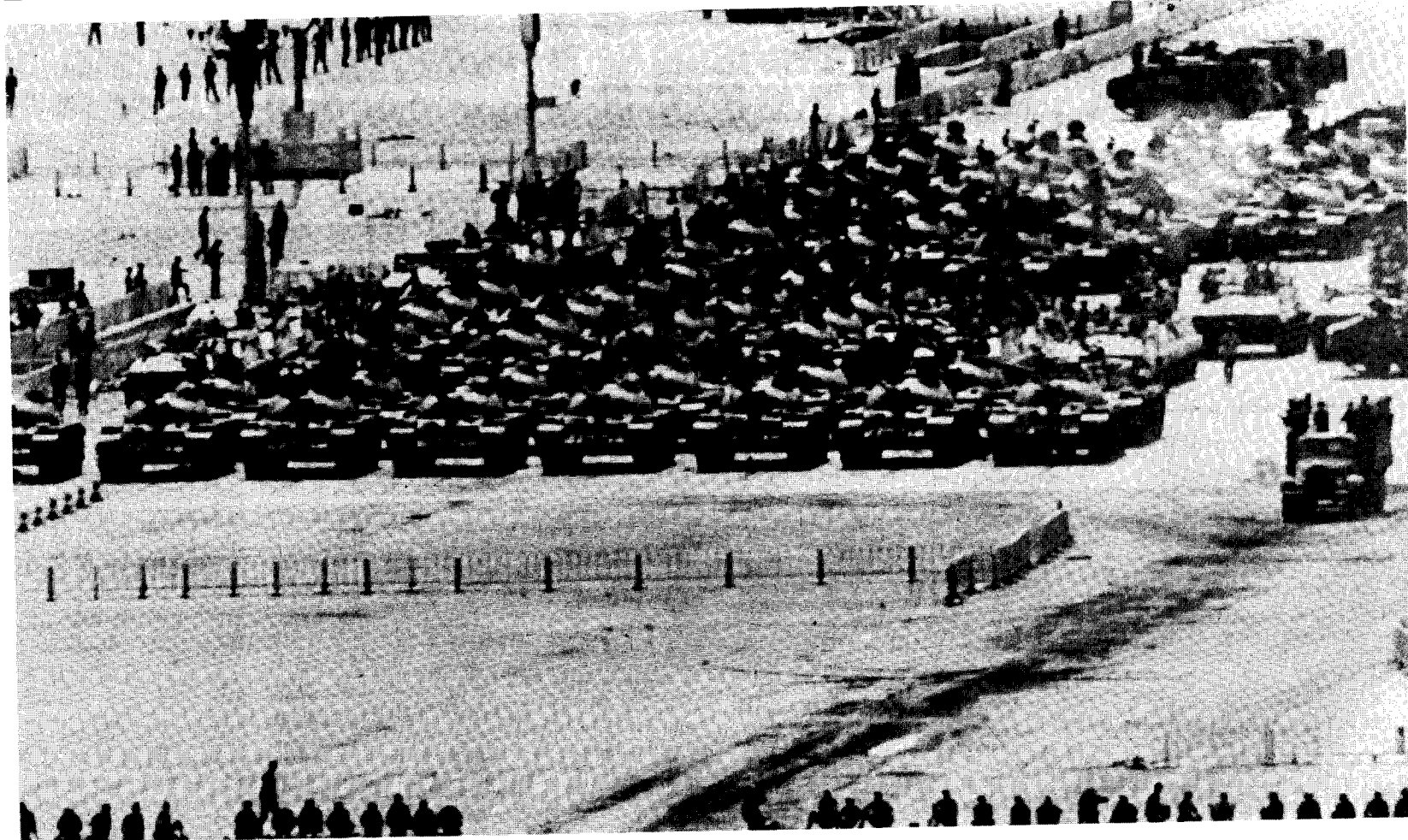
Bulgarian government.

With its own refusal to recognise the Kurds as a minority inside Turkey, the outlawing of the Kurdish language in schools and other state institutions, and the designation of the call for a Kurdish homeland as subversive, the Ozal regime's policy towards ethnic minor-

ities mirrors that of the Bulgarian Stalinists. Ozal's offer of a refuge to all Bulgaria's ethnic Turks is intended to strengthen his hand against the large Kurdish community in eastern Turkey by attempting to build support for his despised regime among Turkish workers.

## In two minds

LINES CROSSED at the *Morning Star* on July 7. Its obituary to Hungarian Stalinist leader Janos Kadar on page five paid tribute to his 'outstanding role in the suppression of the counter-revolution in October 1956'. Turning to page 12, readers could note, under the headline 'Imre Nagy innocent', a report of the decision of the Hungarian Supreme Court to clear the leader of the government during the Hungarian Revolution. Kadar was directly responsible for Nagy's execution after the crushing of the revolution.



Tanks occupy Tiananmen Square, June 5

## The 'Morning Star' and the Beijing massacre

WITH ITS ranks steadily thinned out by age and indifference, British Stalinism is revolving in ever-decreasing circles. The Beijing massacre on June 4 has given further impetus to an already advanced stage of decomposition.

In trade union meetings where resolutions condemning the massacre have been passed, there has been considerable disarray among members of both main Stalinist factions, some voting for, some against and others abstaining.

While the Euro-Stalinists of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) have invited readers of *Seven Days* to 'weep for Beijing', the so-called 'hardliners' of the Communist Party of Britain (CPB), grouped around the *Morning Star*, have had the difficult task of preserving their support for the Beijing bureaucracy, without alienating their liberal and reformist friends. Haunted by the impact of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, when thousands of Communist Party members tore up their cards in disgust and walked out, the *Morning Star* has hidden behind 'balanced' reporting and diplomatic double-talk.

On June 5, Roger Trask reported that troops had fired on unarmed protesters, and cited the estimate of 2,600 dead and 10,000 injured released by the Chinese Red Cross. 'Many called it a massacre,' wrote Trask. Readers were left to guess what the CPB called it. In the same edition, the first and last editorial on the events in Beijing was headed sanctimoniously 'No substitute for dialogue' (presumably the suppression of workers in East Berlin, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland was a 'substitute'). Whilst conceding that an 'appalling loss of life' had taken place and that 'the students have not opposed socialism', Stalinist even-handedness balanced this off with the clear implication that the victims

By Richard Price

of Tiananmen Square were the authors of their own fate: 'Coinciding, as it did, with the visit of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, the students' action diverted attention from the historic rapprochement between the two largest Socialist countries.'

The second day after the massacre saw the *Star* continuing in similar vein. Its front page lead referred to the 'grim tragedy' having taken place, but otherwise took no position. T&GWU leader Ron Todd obligingly parroted the Stalinist line that problems 'can surely only be resolved through democratic dialogue'.

By June 9, Trask had got a grip on himself and blithely announced 'China tension eases', while students' and workers' leaders were being hunted down. The following day, 'Beijing appeared to be slowly returning to normal'. The reason for this normality was, according to Trask, not the brutal man-hunt but the faint-heartedness of the students who 'seemed to have given up any hope of winning their demands'.

As mass arrests proceeded, the *Star* continued to play its dirty double-game, referring to Chinese state television coverage of trials as 'dehumanised', but adding that 'some Western reports, seeking to exploit the turmoil, may well have contributed to making the tragic situation even worse'. By inferring the role of a 'hidden hand' and retailing uncritically official sources in Beijing, the CPB has managed to imply that the mass movement was counter-revolutionary, without ever saying so directly.

As in days of old, the British Stalinists were clearly waiting for an authoritative statement from Moscow before committing themselves further. Gorbachev finally broke cover in a speech during his West German visit on June 15, and he was also -

publicly at least - hedging his bets. After stressing that nothing should impede the 'reform' process in China, he said of the student movement, 'I cannot suspect that they had any evil intentions', but pleaded that he lacked 'full information'.

Confining itself to 'straight' reports of executions, the illegalisation of the independent workers' unions and the purge in the Chinese CP, the *Morning Star* was so cowardly that it relied for its sole extensive feature in the month of June on a reprint of an article by veteran Stalinist reprobate Gus Hall, national chairman of the CPUSA. Hall called for the Chinese events to be studied 'within the socialist structure [?] and Marxist-Leninist framework'.

Hall's 'framework' was to present the massacre as the result of a complete misunderstanding: 'It seems clear that no-one - students, government or Communist Party leaders - had any inkling that the protests would lead to bloodshed. It is not a struggle between enemies.' He also made the staggering assertion that Mao Tse Tung had, from his earliest days of political activity (i.e., the early 1920s), been 'anti-Soviet and pro-United States'. This must come as news to members of Communist Parties throughout the world which published large quantities of Mao's works until the Sino-Soviet split. Hall admitted that 'there was a basis' for demands to eliminate corruption, and that the military possibly 'over-reacted', but had a comforting solution: 'Once things settle down [!] the leadership will have to calmly and honestly make an assessment and explain it to the Chinese people.'

Whatever the problems of its relationship with the Chinese bureaucracy, British Stalinism has once again demonstrated where it stands - against workers' democracy and in the camp of counter-revolution.

# 'Our allies are oppressed wo

What do you consider were the most important factors which led up to the mass demonstrations in Beijing in April?

The most important factors were the increasing contradiction between economic openness, the reforms of the last ten years and the conservative politics of the government. Secondly, the serious decline in living standards for workers and intellectuals, with inflation constantly increasing. The decline in workers' living standards made them receptive to the agitation of students following Hu Yaobang's death.

When the students demonstrated in Beijing at the end of 1986, demanding reforms in the system of education, a massacre was averted because Hu Yaobang accepted personal responsibility for the students' action. He stepped down from government and accepted disgrace in order to avoid bloodshed. The students have not forgotten this. His death in April drew the students forward to demand a reassessment of his role.

What in your opinion was the role of the working class and, in particular, the newly-formed autonomous workers' unions in the events?

On April 26, the *People's Daily* newspaper carried a leading article denouncing the students as 'anti-patriotic' elements 'out to cause trouble'. The following day students began to organise agitation among workers in the factories and all the citizens of Beijing in opposition to the line of the *People's Daily*. Workers immediately supported the students' demands, but it must be emphasised that they did so spontaneously, not in an organised fashion. Not only workers, but all the citizens of Beijing supported the

Jabez Lam, a trade union activist from Hong Kong working with the Chinese community in London, speaks to Workers News about the struggle of the Democracy Movement in China.

students' agitation. The workers did not set about organising themselves until late in May when they began to establish the Beijing Workers' Autonomous Federation.

After the declaration of martial law in Beijing (May 19), the students in co-operation with the workers, took over the running of the city. The students asked the workers not to organise a general strike but to go back to work and join the demonstrations in the evening after they finished work. The students were anxious to avoid a confrontation with the government. At all times they sought the most peaceful non-confrontational way to discussions with the government over their demands. In this way, with the support of workers, they sought tactically to oppose claims by Li Peng and the conservatives that the students were 'anti-patriotic'.

Sympathy with their agitation was spreading throughout the working class in all China's main cities but there was no evidence yet of a general strike by workers. When the massacre took place in Tiananmen Square, we know that the workers in the newly-formed Autonomous Union stood in front of the students as the army moved in. They died first. As well as agitating among the workers, did the students agitate among the peasants? Yes. Beijing students called students from outside cities to continue occupying the square while they went to the countryside. They did not succeed in mobilising the

THE ERUPTION of the workers' and students' movement in China in April and May and its bloody suppression in June has brought to the fore in the most direct manner the future of the working class in Hong Kong.

Massive demonstrations shook the colony, culminating in a march of over a sixth of the population. The leadership of this cross-class movement has predominantly come from the middle class and sections of the capitalist class who have taken advantage of working class hatred for the Beijing bureaucracy in order to preserve their own wealth and interests within the imperialist camp. No confidence must be placed by Hong Kong workers in their 'own' capitalists. They are the 'spiritual' and in many cases the direct descendants of the compradores, who sold their own country to foreign imperialism in the 19th century.

In 1983 Britain and China opened negotiations on the future of the colony whose lease, extorted by Britain in 1898, expires in 1997. The outcome was a compromise whereby Britain surrendered

peasants though, because the peasants were the first to benefit from the economic reforms of the last ten years. Many peasants enjoy a higher standard of living now. Student agitation among peasants was also made difficult because the government controlled the television, newspapers, etc., and to this day many peasants do not know the truth of what happened. It is widely known throughout China that the conservatives in the government held some demonstrations with peasants against the students. The conservatives only succeeded because they paid the peasants \$20 each - which in China is a lot of money.

What was the response of the pro-Communist Party leaders of Hong Kong's main trade union federation to the massacre?

All the lefts in Hong Kong, including trade union leaders, the pro-Beijing newspapers and China's news agency Xinhua, expressed their sympathy with those who had been massacred.

What has been the response of the working class in Hong Kong to the crackdown?

At first one of enormous disillusionment that this could happen. However, it must be emphasised that no-one has used the massacre to say that socialism is finished. Workers have not drawn further conclusions than that yet.

Under the British colonial government, the working class in Hong Kong is denied even the right to vote. How do you see the struggle going forward in the period leading



# The way forward for Hong Kong workers

sovereignty, but the Chinese Stalinists agreed to preserve capitalism within the boundaries of Hong Kong under the slogan 'One China, Two Systems'. In the interests of 'peaceful co-existence' with the Hong Kong capitalists and British imperialism, Beijing agreed to permit the continued existence of Hong Kong as a centre of international finance, trade and industry, complete with its 'own' police and judiciary to safeguard the 'lifestyle' of Hong Kong multi-millionaires. As a mark of good faith the bureaucracy established Special Economic Zones on the China-Hong Kong border in which Hong Kong capitalists could exploit Chinese workers at wage rates many times lower

## STATEMENT BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD

than those within the colony. In 1987, after the Black Monday crash, Beijing spent an undisclosed sum rescuing the Hong Kong stock exchange.

So long as the agreement between China and Britain appeared to be proceeding smoothly, the Hong Kong capitalists happily co-existed with the status quo - unconcerned about the absence of even the semblance of democracy. It was the mass demonstrations in China which disrupted this cosy relationship. Nowhere was this more clearly shown than in the shudders which went

through the Hong Kong stock exchange as the demonstrations grew throughout April and May. Haunted by twin fears, either of the political revolution sweeping the bureaucracy away in China or of their agreement with the bureaucracy breaking down, sections of the Hong Kong capitalists, together with the wealthy middle class, have taken up the call for democracy in Hong Kong coupled with the demand for entry into Britain. Such a belated discovery of the virtues of democracy does not stem at all from any concern for the

super-exploited mass of Hong Kong workers but from their parasitic class interests. Workers in Hong Kong must not merge their own interests with the manoeuvres of their exploiters!

In spite of the cynicism of the capitalists and wealthy middle class, workers in Hong Kong have raised the demand for the right to vote. Workers News rejects the argument of those who dismiss the struggle for democracy as either irrelevant or an obstacle to the reunification of China and the political revolution. So long as Hong Kong remains a British

colony, the demand for the right to vote directed against the hand-picked Legislative Council is entirely progressive. As Leon Trotsky stated in the founding document of the Fourth International: 'It is impossible merely to reject the democratic programme; it is imperative that in the struggle the masses outgrow it.'

The slogan of a freely-elected constituent assembly and the abolition of the existing appointed and co-opted bodies must become a rallying cry to mobilise Hong Kong workers against both the local capitalists and British imperialism. Down with secret diplomacy between London and Beijing! Legalise all workers' parties!

In agitating for democratic elections, the working class must not bind itself to the outcome of any such elections. To do so would be to surrender the political independence of the working class. This independence can only be guaranteed by fighting, alongside the demand for a constituent assembly, for a network of workers' councils (soviets) to be established representing every section of Hong Kong workers and drawing in the poorer sections of the middle class.

The task of the workers' councils must be to fight for the expropriation of the major capitalist industries, banks and finance houses under workers' control. Rather than passively waiting for the outcome of the agreement on 1997, every opportunity must be used to fight for working class power and the expulsion of British imperialism now. The demand has also been raised for the right to emigrate to Britain. Workers News, unlike many 'socialists', has no intention of avoiding or ignoring this demand. We stand unequivocally for the abolition of all British Immigration Acts. We support the right of workers to live in any country of their choice. The conditions for the raising of the demand for immigration have been created by the Stalinist parody of 'socialism' in China and have been given a further jolt by the Beijing massacre. The prospect of a substantial decline in their existing standard of living holds no attraction for the mass of Hong Kong workers.

On the other hand, the racist and patronising arrogance demonstrated by Tory Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe during his recent visit has further fuelled the de-

mand for emigration to Britain. To the workers of Hong Kong we say - British imperialism is not your ally. It has no intention of evacuating anyone aside from a handful of capitalists, bankers and policemen. A deliberate attempt is being made to drive a wedge between you and your one billion brothers and sisters in China. They are not responsible for the bureaucratic Stalinist dictatorship. No exit visas exist for them. Their future and yours depend on the revolutionary reunification of China and the carrying through of a political revolution to establish a genuine workers' democracy.

Workers News rejects the slogan of self-determination for Hong Kong raised by *Socialist Organiser*. Hong Kong is not and cannot become a legitimate 'nation'. It is an artificial creation of British imperialism. By virtue of its ethnic composition, language and geography, it is an integral part of China.

The responsibility for failing to reunify China and for maintaining the continued existence of Macao, Hong Kong and Taiwan rests with the Stalinist leaders of the Chinese Communist Party. Indeed, the CCP has resisted every opportunity to create a unified workers' state, even when offered the return of sovereignty over Macao by the Portuguese government in 1975. The task of reuniting China rests entirely with the working class in China, Macao, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Whilst criticising those who misuse the Leninist slogan of self-determination, we are no less critical of those who call for reunification from an entirely passive stand-point, which leaves out any perspective of struggle for the workers of Hong Kong. Such a position merely betrays the encrusted prejudices of British 'socialists', who consider the Hong Kong working class as pro-capitalist and incapable of struggle. To wait passively on events means to play into the hands of both Beijing and London. The 'reunification' agreed between Deng Xiaoping and Margaret Thatcher will not end the exploitation of the working class. On the contrary, the capitalists will be given a new lease of life. The struggle for the overthrow of the colonial administration in Hong Kong must consciously be linked to the fight for the political revolution throughout China.

The chief obstacle to such a struggle is the pro-Beijing leadership of the Federation of Trade Unions (FTU) which has played a despicable role during the recent explosion of struggles in China. Having briefly supported pro-democracy demonstrations in Hong Kong, the FTU endorsed the crack-down and execution of so-called 'counter-revolutionaries'. It must be replaced by a revolutionary workers' leadership - a Trotskyist party to lead the working class throughout China.

the workers'

up to reunification in 1997? Hong Kong will become the focus of China's Democratic Movement. It will be the base for the development and next stage of mobilisation. The Chinese in the United Kingdom also have an important role to play as a result of British imperialism. Here we must fight for a positive development of the democratic structure in Hong Kong. We must force the British government to establish a democratic structure in Hong Kong with a democratically elected legislature accountable to the Chinese electorate in Hong Kong. We must fight for civil rights, raising of living standards, employment protection, welfare, education and housing provision. Any advancement in this direction would assist in reviving the struggle within China. We cannot ignore the secret diplomacy of the British government, the Hong Kong colonial administration and the Chinese government. We demand the publication of their secret agreements.

I must emphasise that the struggle for a democratic political system in Hong Kong can only take place within the context of the return of sovereignty over Hong Kong to China. Hong Kong's citizens are not fooled by the British government's attempts to encourage dependency on Britain. Hong Kong's citizens reject the identity of Hong Kongese and identify themselves with China and its future.

It must be said that the Chinese bureaucrats, the Hong Kong colonial administration and the British government are all opposed to, and frightened of, a democratic political structure in Hong Kong - political power through direct elections and



Jabez Lam

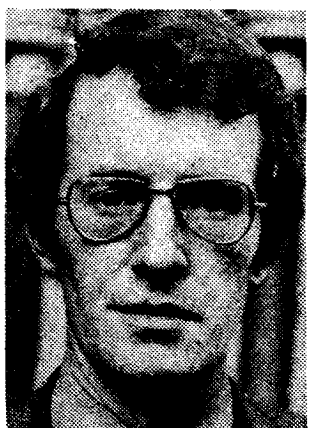
under control of Chinese people in Hong Kong.

We will campaign for the repeal of the immigration and nationality acts in Britain and fight to make the government fulfil its obligations to citizens in Hong Kong, though we do not encourage them to leave as that can only weaken the struggle.

In fighting for this, the British House of Commons cannot be the target of our work, nor can it be an ally. The British parliament's starting point has always been its own self-interest. Our allies are the oppressed workers and ordinary citizens in Britain, especially those organised in trade unions, students, ethnic com-

munity groups and religious organisations. We must win their support for our struggle

and the development of the Democracy Movement in China.



Corin Redgrave

## Back to Lenin?

THE BEIJING massacre has given its own bloody answer to all those who have argued that an irresistible process of liberalisation and reform is unfolding within world Stalinism.

Such an outlook is reflected in differing degree in a range of fake 'Trotskyist' tendencies throughout the world, notably in the United Secretariat. In Britain, the advance guard of pro-Stalinist apologists is the Healy-Redgrave 'Marxist Party'. In the summer of 1986, Corin Redgrave arrived at the conclusion that 'Stalinism can no longer terrorise the masses', such was the irrevocable progress of *glasnost*. At the same point, Healy's sidekick in Greece, Savas Michael (who has apparently fallen out with Healy in recent weeks), declared that a substantial tendency in the Chinese bureaucracy was heading 'back to Lenin' and 'back to dialectics'.

Workers News challenges the 'Marxist Party' to account for these treacherous positions.

# In defence of the theory of permanent revolution

## PART 13

By Richard Price

THE CLOSE OF 1924 saw the debut of the theory of socialism in one country, alongside the most violent attacks yet on permanent revolution. In 1935, reviewing the much-discussed analogy with the French Revolution, Trotsky revised his previous analysis: 'The smashing of the Left Opposition implied in the most direct and immediate sense the transfer of power from the hands of the revolutionary vanguard into the hands of the more conservative elements among the bureaucracy and the upper crust of the working class. The year 1924 - that was the beginning of the Soviet Thermidor.' (Trotsky: 'Writings 1934-35', Pathfinder, p.174).

Socialism in one country became the ideological standard around which Stalinism rallied, but Stalinism had as yet not reached its finished expression. The longer the 'leftist' line adopted by the Fifth Comintern Congress held, the harder it broke its head against reality. The imminent prospect of an international revolutionary wave clashed with the steadily growing evidence of capitalist stabilisation. 'Left' verbiage served to obscure the role of the Comintern leadership in assisting this stabilisation by its disastrous policy in Germany in 1925. It provided the gloss to the indictment of Trotsky as an unreconstructed Menshevik - albeit a strange one, who simultaneously wanted to disrupt the beneficial effects of this stabilisation on the Soviet Union with dangerous talk of world revolution!

Thus the Comintern line for 1924 and the first half of 1925 was a classic centrist hotchpotch - the revolutionary offensive all over the world combined with overtures to the national bourgeoisie; the denial of capitalist stabilisation and the theory of a self-sufficient national 'socialism' coexisting with capitalism. The beginning of the Soviet Thermidor offers a striking parallel to the flowering of 'Pabloism' in the Fourth International between 1948 and 1953.

At one pole, adventurism was given its head in Estonia on December 1, 1924, when 227 communists, acting entirely independently of the

mass of workers, attempted a putsch in Reval which lasted from 5.15am to 9.00am. At the other, the slogan of the 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry' was revived for the Communist Parties of the east, discarding the experience of 1917 and foreshadowing the Popular Front.

Meanwhile, to spur the implementation of this part-adventurist, part-opportunist line, the 'Bolshevisation' (i.e., the extension of bureaucratic discipline) of the Comintern proceeded, with Trotsky constrained from speaking out openly.

His opportunity to counter-attack, and to defend the strategic line of 1917, came with the publication in October 1924 of Volume 3 of his 'Collected Works' containing his writings and speeches from that year.



J.V. Stalin

In the summer of 1924 Trotsky had written 'The Lessons of October', an extended introduction to the volume, in which he reopened the books on the aborted German 'October' of 1923, and drew a striking

parallel with the opportunist waverings of the Bolshevik Old Guard in 1917.

Every effort was made to obstruct the circulation of the book. After the initial run of 5,000 copies had been eagerly snapped up, a 'technical problem' was announced, and a further run delayed. Limitless supplies of paper, ink and machinery, however, were immediately available for printing articles, pamphlets and entire issues of *Pravda* and *Izvestia* denouncing Trotsky and permanent revolution. This frenzied campaign, which went under the title 'the literary discussion', was a pivotal point in a pivotal year.

In raising the role of leadership in 1917 and 1923, Trotsky had nothing in common with those who study history 'for its own sake'; he was fighting the degenera-

tion of the Comintern into petty-bourgeois opportunism. By counterposing the strategic conceptions of permanent revolution to the attempt by Zinoviev and Stalin to resurrect the slogan of the 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry', Trotsky was addressing life and death questions for the Communist movements of both the West and the semi-colonial and colonial countries. As Canadian Trotskyist Maurice Spector wrote: 'For Trotsky ... the crucible of October furnished the acid test of Marxist strategy and the calibre of the leadership. The Communist International must assimilate the lessons of the October experience or invite disaster.' (Introduction to 'The Lessons of October', New Park).

Quite different is the understanding conveyed by Isaac Deutscher's biography, 'The Prophet Unarmed', which sees in the 'literary discussion' a kind of duel in which Trotsky demonstrates his intellectual brilliance in the service of a lost cause. This type of fatalism was

entirely alien to Trotsky: it was precisely *lessons* that Trotsky sought to draw, not to preach a funeral oration for the world revolution.

Although there are numerous references in 'The Lessons of October' to events in Europe, there is little doubt that Trotsky intended its message to have an even wider validity. In the chapter 'The Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry - in February and in October', he subjected to withering criticism the positions of the Bolshevik right wing which clung to this slogan in 1917. Under circumstances in which it was being revived for the Communist parties of the east, a clear inference was drawn on the present line of the Comintern leadership: 'The study of these disagreements will, we believe, enable us to draw deductions of considerable importance to other parties in the Communist International.' ('The Lessons of October', New Park, p.15).

Trotsky's treatment of the 'democratic dictatorship' slogan laid bare its affinity under changed conditions with Menshevism. Those who had clung to it in 1917 had, along with the Mensheviks, opposed proletarian insurrection in October; they had retreated from battle at the critical moment in 1923; and, by implication, their resurrection of the line with growing confidence since Lenin's death could only derail the struggle of the working class on an international scale. The 'rediscovery' of the slogan had nothing in common with Lenin's method. Lenin had understood the task of the worker-peasant alliance to be to carry through, by a dictatorship directed *against* the bourgeoisie, the liquidation of feudal survivals and a thoroughgoing democratisation: 'Lenin's formulation of the problem, revolutionary and dynamic through and through, was completely and irreconcilably counterposed to the Menshevik pattern, according to which Russia would pretend only to a repetition of the history of the advanced nations, with the bourgeoisie in power and the social democrats in opposition.' ('The Lessons of October', New Park, p.9).

Insofar as the 'democratic dictatorship' was realised in the period after February 1917, it was only partial - in the form of an extremely unstable dual power. Led by Mensheviks and SRs, the soviets supported the power of the bourgeoisie while exercising semi-oppositionist "pressure" upon it' (ibid, pp.12-13). So long as the soviets coexisted with capitalist property relations, the control exercised over the peasantry by the bourgeoisie could not be broken. In practice, the 'democratic' worker-peasant coalition hitched the working class into the position of the left flank of the 'national revolution', tail-ending the bourgeoisie. Only by fighting for power - for its own class dictatorship - could the working class carry through the democratic revolution, notably the resolution of the agrarian question.



G.Y. Zinoviev

It is not necessary to endow Trotsky with a crystal ball, for instance in relation to future events in China, to underline the prescience of his attack on Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin.

Some elements of the Left Opposition saw 'The Lessons of October' as a tactical blunder. Trotsky maintained that the conflict was inevitable - a fact confirmed by Zinoviev and Kamenev following their rupture with Stalin: 'After the formation of our bloc with the Leningrad Group, during one of the conferences, in the presence of several other comrades, I put substantially the following question to Zinoviev:

"Could you please tell me whether the so-called literary discussion against 'Trotskyism' would have taken place, if I had not published 'The Lessons of October'?"

"Without the slightest hesitation, Zinoviev replied: "Yes, indeed. 'The Lessons of October' served only as a pretext. Failing that, a different motive would have been found, and the discussion would have assumed somewhat different forms, nothing more." (Trotsky: 'The Stalin School of Falsification', New Park, p.72).

In the public onslaught on 'The Lessons of October' which opened in the autumn of 1924, the bureaucratic attack began with a broadside against permanent revolution, in which dozens of 'Old Bolsheviks' were enlisted to 'expose' his 'underestimation of the peasantry' in pamphlets, magazines and leading articles transmitted throughout the world. It extended into a vicious attempt to rubbish Trotsky's reputation by selectively raking up long-buried clashes with Lenin and it culminated in the blatant falsification of party history, in order to deny Trotsky's role as the organiser of the October insurrection.

Communist Parties were called upon to condemn 'The Lessons of October' without even reading it - an unheard-of practice prior to Zinoviev's campaign of 'Bolshevisation'. The leadership of the British CP, meeting on November 30, 1924, was

exemplary in its ill-informed and dog-like devotion to the triumvirate:

'The Party Council of the Communist Party of Great Britain sees in the Preface to Comrade Trotsky's book on "1917" an attempt not only to reopen the discussion closed by the decision of the 13th Congress of the RCP and the Fifth Congress of the Communist International, which, in the opinion of the CPGB, will not only definitely encourage the British imperialists, the bitterest enemies of Soviet Russia, but will also encourage the lackeys of the Second International and those other elements who stand for liquidation of the CI and the CP in this country.'

'The Party Council and Executive Committee of the CPGB records its solidarity with and implicit faith [!!!] in, the Communist Party of Russia and the Executive Committee of the Communist International. Especially in this most critical period, when the world situation demands the closest co-operation of every member of the Communist International in carrying out the accepted policy of the International.' (Quoted in S. Bornstein and A. Richardson: 'Against the Stream', Socialist Platform, p.3).

In Italy, Antonio Gramsci joined the hue and cry in a manner typical of the contortions which the opponents of Trotsky were forced to perform. He accused Trotsky simultaneously of pessimism in relation to the prospects of imminent revolution in Europe, and scepticism as to the future of Soviet Russia, for stressing the necessity for socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries! (cf A. Davidson: 'The Theory and Practice of Italian Communism', Merlin, pp.161-3).

The 'literary discussion', conducted as an international slander campaign backed by bureaucratic discipline, was the fertile soil in which the Stalinist theory of socialism in one country grew.

To be continued

Subscribe to

## Workers News

Inland: 6 issues £3.50, 12 issues £7.00

Europe, Ireland and Overseas (surface):  
6 issues £3.80, 12 issues £7.60

Europe, Ireland (letter rate):  
6 issues £5.10, 12 issues £10.20

North Africa, Middle East (air):  
6 issues £5.40, 12 issues £10.80

Asia, Americas, Africa, Caribbean (air):  
6 issues £5.80, 12 issues £11.60

Australia, Far East (air):  
6 issues £6.60, 12 issues £13.20

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ENCL. £ \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Workers News, 1/17 Meredith Street, London EC1R 0AE



THE LSSP's slide towards a popular-front coalition with the capitalist Sri Lanka Freedom Party proceeded very unevenly, constrained as it was both by the LSSP's residual Trotskyist traditions and by developments in the class struggle.

The decision to give 'responsive co-operation' to the 1956 coalition government was reversed the following year, under criticism from an opposition headed by Edmund Samarakkody and against a background of mounting working class discontent with an administration which soon proved to be dominated by the SLFP right wing. In the next period the LSSP led a number of important struggles, both industrial and political, against the government.

However, this did not involve a turn to revolutionary politics. Rather, mass disaffection with the government encouraged the LSSP leaders in the reformist illusion that they could come to power by winning a majority in parliament. The party put up 100 candidates in the March 1960 general election, campaigning under the slogan 'For a Sama Samaja Government'. In an attempt to acquire a broader political appeal, the election manifesto restricted the LSSP's programme of nationalisation and emphasised the party's respect for the bourgeois-democratic process. But given the LSSP's failure to carry out the basic organisational work in the countryside which was needed to break the rural masses from the SLFP, it is not surprising that the party won no more than ten per cent of the poll and only ten MPs.

Because the March contest resulted in a hung parliament, further elections were called for July. The Samasamajist leaders promptly abandoned their perspective of an LSSP government, entering instead into a three-way electoral pact with the SLFP and the Communist Party. Indeed, N.M. Perera was able to persuade a party conference to endorse his treacherous proposal that the LSSP should aim to form a coalition government with the SLFP after the election. This was prevented only by the absolute parliamentary majority the SLFP secured, which removed the need for political horse-trading with the LSSP. The Samasamajist MPs (except for two who defied the party whip) then voted both for the Speech from the Throne, in which the government announced its programme, and for the budget. They even tried - unsuccessfully - to join the SLFP parliamentary group.

Before 1960, the International Secretariat of the Fourth International had taken no steps to arrest the LSSP's descent into popular-frontism; on the contrary, the Pabloites' own adaptation to Stalinism and bourgeois nationalism facilitated the LSSP's anti-Trotskyist course. Now, at last, the IS felt obliged to issue a public criticism - although, anxious to avoid a split with the leaders of its one mass section, the IS did no more than mildly rebuke them for excessive support for the SLFP. Neither here, nor at the Pabloite Sixth World Congress in 1961, was the vote in favour of coalition even mentioned. In any case, criticism was soon shelved when growing conflict between the working class and the SLFP administration again forced a retreat from co-operation, albeit a reluctant one, as LSSP trade unions clashed with the gov-

# THE ROAD TO COALITION

## How the LSSP betrayed Trotskyism

ernment. The Seventh Congress in 1963, although regretting the party's failure to recognise past errors, gave the LSSP a virtually clean bill of health. And any remote prospect of a stand against the LSSP's political line was buried when the Pabloites stitched together an unprincipled merger with some sections of the International Committee, to form the United Secretariat, on the basis of a tacit agreement to avoid discussion of political differences.

In contrast to the evasions of the IS/Usec, a statement by the IC in July 1963 unequivocally denounced the LSSP's 'opportunist degeneration'. Characterising the party leaders as 'petty bourgeois charlatans masquerading as Marxists', the IC declared itself 'confident' that genuine revolutionaries in the LSSP would succeed in defeating this rotten leadership. In fact the IC was so confident that it made no effort at all to intervene in the ranks of the LSSP in the crucial period preceding the 1964 betrayal! And this despite the fact that the British section, the Socialist Labour

In June 1964, a special conference of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, Ceylonese section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, voted to join a bourgeois coalition government under Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike. In the second of two articles, Bob Pitt traces the LSSP's road to reformism and examines the impact of this major act of betrayal by a party which, campaigning beneath the banner of revolutionary Marxism, had established itself for a quarter of a century as the leading political force in the Ceylonese working class.

the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna. Promoted with particular enthusiasm by the LSSP right wing under N.M. Perera, the move was in accordance with the IS's proposal after the March 1960 general election that the party should adopt 'an electoral policy which puts forward a radical programme to be realised by a United Front of the parties which claim to be working class'. This was in reality a complete perversion of the united front tactic whereby the revolutionary party initiates joint action with reformist organisations

the LSSP Central Committee correctly condemned the ULF for paving the way towards 'the establishment of a capitalist coalition government in association even with the SLFP'. And in an internal document entitled 'Whither the LSSP?', Edmund Samarakkody forcefully put their arguments to the LSSP membership. This struggle was, however, criminally undermined by the United Secretariat's official endorsement of the ULF which was in line with the decision of the Seventh World Congress that to take power in backward countries only 'blunted instruments' were required.

Pressure from the ranks for working class unity, to which the ULF was a distorted bureaucratic response, found a potentially revolutionary expression in the Joint Committee of Trade Union Organisations, formed in September 1963. Bringing together 800 delegates representing 1,500,000 workers - not only in the LSSP, CP and MEP trade unions but also in the mass organisations of the Tamil plantation workers - the inaugural conference adopted 21 demands on wages and conditions around which to launch a fight against the employers and the government. By March 1964 the JCTUO was able to draw 40,000 workers to a mass rally in Colombo in support of these demands. In the meantime, a strike by the Ceylon Mercantile Union (whose general secretary Bala Tampoe was a leader of the LSSP opposition) paralysed the capital's port facilities for 69 days and succeeded in breaking the government's wage freeze.

Faced by this rise in working class militancy, and with her parliamentary majority almost entirely eroded, in March 1964 Prime Minister Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike suspended parliament. Her proposed solution to the crisis was to rope the workers' leaders into a coalition, thereby defusing the upsurge in the class struggle and simultaneously restoring the government's voting strength in parliament. Early in May the SLFP executive empowered her to enter into negotiations with the 'Marxist' parties. At the same time, N.M. Perera was wag-

ing a parallel campaign within the LSSP in favour of coalition, and on May 10 he persuaded the Central Committee to agree to this policy (with 12 votes against) and to call a party conference four weeks later to ratify the decision.

Eight hundred 'delegates' (one for each member!) attended the conference on June 6-7. Trained in years of parliamentary reformism and adaptation to the liberal bourgeoisie, and denied translations of the basic works of Marxist theory, they were poorly equipped to make a principled political judgement. Nor did they receive any positive international assistance. In his speech to the conference, Usec representative Pierre Frank advocated a ULF government, a policy supported by none of the LSSP factions, while the surprise arrival of SLL leader G. Healy, having been preceded by no political preparation, was just a crude attempt to gate-crash the conference to which he was predictably refused entry.

The conference was presented with three motions. The first, by the left wing, rejected coalition with the SLFP as 'treachery to the proletarian revolution', and received 159 votes. A centre faction led by Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin de Silva got 75 votes for their policy of a coalition between the SLFP and the ULF. But the motion of the Perera wing, which proposed LSSP entry into the Bandaranaike government on the grounds that the SLFP represented the petty-bourgeoisie and was 'not a capitalist party', secured an overwhelming 507 votes. As a result, the LSSP was granted three ministerial portfolios, M.N. Perera becoming Minister of Finance. This was followed by the withdrawal of the LSSP trade unions from the JCTUO, which effectively wrecked the '21 demands' movement.

The anti-coalition minority marched out of the conference to found the LSSP (Revolutionary), which was officially recognised by Usec. Winning respect in the working class for its leadership of a bitterly-fought strike at the Velona Mill, the

new party was regarded sympathetically by the rank and file of the old LSSP, many of whom could still have been broken from their leadership. Any such potential, however, evaporated in December 1964 when the two LSSP(R) MPs, Edmund Samarakkody and Meryl Fernando, voted with the right wing against a government proposal to nationalise a major capitalist newspaper group. This unholy alliance between revolutionaries and bourgeois reactionaries brought down the government, and in the general election of March 1965 the hated United National Party was returned to office in alliance with several smaller parties (including Philip Gunawardena's MEP). The response of the Ceylonese workers to this act of sectarian stupidity may be gauged by the fact that in the elections all four LSSP(R) candidates lost their deposits, Edmund Samarakkody receiving 278 votes as against 13,023 for the successful LSSP (reformist) candidate.

Perera and his fellow traitors blamed their electoral defeat on the Tamil minority, whose Federal Party had backed the UNP, and the LSSP's propaganda descended into the most disgusting appeals to Sinhalese racism, permanently destroying the party's influence in the Tamil working class. The support they retained among Sinhalese workers enabled the LSSP leaders to return to government at the 1970 general election in a coalition with the SLFP and the CP, which then presided over the slaughter of thousands of rural youth during the crushing of the JVP uprising in 1971. The LSSP renegades bear direct responsibility for the present situation in Sri Lanka, where the workers' movement, torn by communal strife and subject to murderous attacks by the now neo-fascist JVP, is in its weakest state for generations.

As for the LSSP(R), a faction led by V. Karalasingham returned to the reformist LSSP in 1966, while the remaining group broke up in 1968, with Edmund Samarakkody splitting from Bala Tampoe, who was granted the Usec franchise, and the Healyites under Wilfred Pereira walking out to set up a Ceylonese section of the IC. None of the avowedly revolutionary groups emanating from the LSSP has since succeeded in re-establishing the mass influence of the old party, a failure due not least to the misleadership of the various international tendencies falsely claiming to represent Trotskyism. A mass revolutionary party in Sri Lanka, it is clear, will be built only as part of the struggle to reforge the Fourth International. ■

Many thanks to the comrades from 'Socialist Platform' for the use of their library.



The United Left Front; Philip Gunawardena (MEP), S.A. Wickremasinghe (CP) and N.M. Perera (LSSP) in 1963

League, had links with the movement in Ceylon, two of its leaders, Mike and Tony Banda, being former members of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party. It does appear that some of the LSSP left wing - Wilfred Pereira, Sydney Wanasinghe, Prins Rajasooriya and R.S. Baghavan - were sympathetic to the International Committee. But no credit goes to the IC for organising this grouping, which apparently arose through reading SLL publications acquired on a commercial basis by Sydney Wanasinghe, who ran a business dealing in socialist literature. It was not until 1966 that Tony Banda was sent to Ceylon to carry out serious political work for the IC.

In August 1963 the LSSP formed a so-called United Left Front with the CP and Philip Gunawardena's party,

on specific practical issues, in the course of which it fights for its own independent political programme.

The common programme agreed by the ULF embodied a thoroughly parliamentarist political perspective which renounced even verbal commitment to overthrowing the bourgeois state. The list of proposed nationalisations left the national bourgeoisie largely untouched. And the LSSP abandoned its stand in favour of equal status for the Sinhala and Tamil languages and citizenship rights for Tamil plantation workers. Significantly, the ULF agreement was hailed by the CP as 'ending the disunity that has plagued the working class and socialist movement in Ceylon for the last 23 years' (i.e., since the Stalinists' expulsion from the LSSP in 1940).

The left-wing minority on

## JOIN

## THE WORKERS INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE

I would like details/to join the W.I.L.

NAME.....

ADDRESS .....

TRADE UNION .....

Post to:-

Workers International League  
1/17 Meredith Street, London EC1R 0AE

# Branded with infamy

## The left and Ireland

Twenty years ago this month, the Labour government of Harold Wilson sent troops onto the streets of the Six Counties to crush the resurgent Irish nationalist movement. David Lewis looks at the response of the British left during the first five years of the occupation.

THE DEPLOYMENT of British troops in the Six Counties of the north of Ireland from 1969, and the subsequent 20 years of struggle for Irish national self-determination, have been met by most of the major left-wing organisations in Britain with a mixture of hypocrisy, cowardice, vacillation and chauvinism.

The International Socialist group (now the Socialist Workers Party), the Communist Party of Great Britain and the *Militant* group all hailed the British army as peacekeepers when they entered Derry and Belfast in August 1969.

The IS had until then demanded the withdrawal of British troops from abroad and, in April 1969, its paper, *Socialist Worker*, carried a front-page headline calling for 'British troops out' of the Six Counties. As soon as the army moved onto the streets, however, the IS dropped the demand and argued instead that the 'contradictory role' of British troops would allow a 'temporary breathing space' for the Catholic population from loyalist attacks. Variations on this theme continued until the middle of 1970 when the IS leadership re-adopted the 'troops out' slogan on the



Blanket protest against prison conditions in 1978

grounds that the role of the army had changed. Today, the SWP prefers to forget that it ever supported the presence of British troops in the Six Counties.

The Stalinists of the CBGB underwent a similar but permanent conversion. The 1968 edition of their programme, 'The British Road to Socialism', said that 'The enforced partition of Ireland should be ended and British troops withdrawn from Northern Ireland'. This was quietly forgotten in August 1969 and since then they have consistently supported the role of the British army in the Six Counties, opposing the call for immediate withdrawal at all times.

The initial response of the *Militant* group to the occupation of Derry and Belfast was to try and have it both ways. In the September 1969 edi-

tion of *Militant*, the slogan 'Withdraw British troops' appeared at the top of a leading article which actually defended the Labour government for its introduction of troops into Derry because it had prevented a 'slaughter'. By the autumn of 1970, in the pages of their theoretical journal, *Militant International Review*, they were promoting the line that the Irish working class should appeal 'to the "workers in uniform" in the British army'. Displaying a truly remarkable ability to invert the relationship between imperialist oppressor and its victims, they attacked the 'vicious chauvinism of the "official" Sinn Fein' for calling on Catholic workers not to fraternise and for describing the soldiers as murderers, looters and oppressors, describing this as a move

'calculated to drive the British troops further into the arms of the reactionary officer caste'.

The International Marxist Group, British section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, and the Socialist Labour League (forerunner of the Workers Revolutionary Party) both called for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. What distinguished the IMG from the SLL was the former group's unequivocal support for Irish self-determination; unequivocal, that is, until the bombing of two Birmingham pubs in November 1974. The IRA denied responsibility, pointing out that it was not their policy to bomb non-military targets without warning. However, the bombings not only provided Labour Home Secretary Roy Jenkins with the excuse to bring in the Prevention of Terrorism Act, they also led to the arrest, beating up and wrongful conviction of the Birmingham Six and blew away the credibility of the IMG. For, embedded in what was otherwise a veritable hymn of praise to the IRA was a cowardly appeal to the police: 'As for the gentlemen of the law, let us make one thing clear for them. The IMG has never, and does not now, support the IRA by material, financial or by any other such means. We don't have the ability to do so, even if we wanted. Neither do we support them politically.' (*Red Weekly*, December 5, 1974)

The SLL, on the other hand, except for the occasional general remark affirming the right of oppressed peoples to use any means in the fight against imperialism, virtually ignored the Irish national question. Even this verbal support for the right of oppressed peoples to take up arms against imperialism had its limits: namely, the borders of Britain itself. When the Official wing of the IRA, after Bloody Sunday, bombed Aldershot barracks in February 1972, all the left groups - with the exception of the IMG - fell over themselves to attack those oppressed people who dared to carry the fight to the imperialist heartland. The SLL put forward the most craven line of all, which would not have been out of place in a Fleet Street paper. It not only condemned the bombing, but argued that 'the terror of the oppressor cannot be overcome by terror from the oppressed'. (*Workers Press*, February 24, 1972). For these frightened chauvinists, bombs were alright as long as they exploded outside Britain.

Eighteen months later, in August 1974, when fire-bombs brought the Irish struggle right into the centre of London, an SLL state-

ment condemned the bombers, 'whoever they are'. The IMG, while saying that the London campaign was mistaken, stated that it 'unconditionally supported the right of the Irish liberation movement to carry out armed actions against British Imperialism'.

The SLL's chauvinism in relation to the Irish national question took an organisational form. The SLL was the British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International and, until 1970, the only representation the ICFI had in Ireland was through SLL branches in Belfast, Derry and Dublin. When a separate Irish section of the ICFI was proclaimed in 1970, it was done in order that the SLL could have another section on its side for a faction struggle against the French OCI.

**'The British Socialist who fails to support by all possible means the uprisings in Ireland, Egypt and India against the London plutocracy - such a Socialist deserves to be branded with infamy, if not with a bullet, but in no case merits either a mandate or the confidence of the proletariat.'**

Leon Trotsky: 'Manifesto of the Second Congress of the Communist International', 1920

Running through the SLL/WRP's response to the development of the Irish liberation struggle was its insistence that the demand to withdraw British troops was the single most important criterion of correctness and that, moreover, it was the only group to raise it. But while it was certainly the first to hold such a position unequivocally, it did so at the expense of the demand for self-determination. Here, the SLL/WRP, despite other programmatic differences, found common cause with the IS/SWP and the *Militant* group - though all three gave this a 'revolutionary' gloss. They held that self-determination could only be fought for through the struggle to unite Protestant and Catholic workers under a revolutionary socialist leadership, and was therefore not an immediate issue.

This denial of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution - and of the political responsibilities which flow from it - led, not accidentally, to serious errors of analysis and periodic outbursts of the worst kind of chauvinism. It was the direct inspiration for all three organisations coming down on the side of the Officials against the Provisionals when the IRA split at the end of 1969, on the grounds that the Officials were 'turning towards the working class'. The Officials ended up in the Stalinist-dominated and pro-imperialist Workers Party.

The failure of all the main groups of the British left laying claim to the name 'Trotskyist' to advance a consistently principled line on the Irish question has played no small part in allowing the Labour Party and trade union leaders to continue their 'bi-partisan' policy towards the Six Counties. The net effect of this has been to strengthen the hand of the British state.

## Twenty years of occupation

**1969**  
**August 14:** Labour government sends troops into Derry. Loyalists, backed by the Royal Ulster Constabulary, attack Catholic areas in Belfast.  
**August 15:** British troops on the streets of Belfast.  
**December:** IRA splits into Provisional and Official wings with the majority, the Officials, giving de facto recognition to partition.  
**1970**  
**January 11:** Sinn Fein splits into Provisional and Official wings.  
**April 1:** Ulster Defence Regiment formed to replace the B Specials.  
**April:** General Sir Ian Freeland, British army commander, announces shoot-to-kill policy for petrol bombers.  
**June 18:** Tories under Edward Heath win British general election. Bernadette Devlin re-elected as MP for Mid-Ulster.  
**June 26:** Devlin jailed for six months.  
**June 27:** Provisionals launch first major action, in Belfast, to defend Catholic areas against loyalist attacks.  
**July 3:** The army invades Lower Falls area of Belfast; 35-hour curfew imposed.  
**July 31:** Danny O'Hagan, aged 19, is the first Catholic to be shot dead by the army, in New Lodge Road, Belfast.  
**August 11:** Two RUC men blown up by Provisional IRA in Crossmaglen.  
**August 21:** Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) founded.  
**1971**  
**February 6:** Two British soldiers killed by Provisionals. Unarmed member of Sinn Fein killed by the army.  
**February 27:** Two RUC men shot dead in Belfast.  
**March 10:** Three Scottish soldiers found dead in unexplained circumstances.  
**March 20:** Chichester-Clark, leader of the Unionist Party in the Stormont parliament, resigns under pressure from loyalists to escalate the anti-nationalist campaign.  
**March 23:** Brian Faulkner elected leader of Unionist Party. Demands introduction of internment.  
**March:** Official IRA launches a series of attacks on Provisional IRA members.  
**April:** Provisional IRA starts major bombing campaign.  
**May 25:** Faulkner announces that anyone 'acting suspiciously' could be shot.  
**July 8:** Two unarmed Catholics, Seamus Cusack and Desmond Beattie, shot dead in Derry.  
**July 23:** 2,000 soldiers and RUC men raid republican homes at night, collecting names and documents.  
**August 9:** Authorities arrest 342 without charge; 116 are released and 226 officially interned. Pitched battles break out between the British army with loyalist support and the

IRA with civilian support in Derry and Belfast. Fourteen internees subsequently tortured using sensory deprivation techniques.

**August-December:** Troop strength brought up to 14,000; border roads blown up; further 642 interned; two women shot dead. IRA campaign intensified with sabotage operations, ambushes and attacks on army, RUC and UDR. Nationalist areas barricaded. Rent and rate strike supported by 23,190 households. Ulster Defence Association, a loyalist paramilitary organisation, formed in September.  
**December 4:** Loyalist bomb kills 15 Catholics in McGurk's Bar, Belfast.  
**1972**

**January 30 (Bloody Sunday):** Twenty thousand march in Derry against internment; Parachute Regiment shoots 13 civilians dead.  
**February 22:** Official IRA bombs Parachute Regiment HQ in Aldershot, England.  
**March 24:** Heath suspends Stormont government and introduces direct rule from Westminster.  
**May 29:** Official IRA declares an indefinite cease-fire.  
**June 26:** Truce between Provisionals and British forces starts.  
**July 7:** Secret meeting in London between Provisional IRA representatives and Northern Ireland Secretary William Whitelaw, at the house of Paul Channon, then a junior minister.  
**July 9:** Army breaks the truce.  
**July 31:** As part of Operation Motorman, the army breaks into the no-go areas in Derry and Belfast and subsequently builds several forts.  
**December:** No-jury courts introduced on the recommendation of Lord Diplock.

**1973**  
**March 8:** Government poll on whether to retain the border with the south is boycotted by all anti-unionist groups. Bombs explode at Scotland Yard and the Old Bailey.  
**June 28:** Elections to new assembly replacing Stormont.  
**August-September:** Minor London bombings of stores and the Stock Exchange. Provocateurs suspected.  
**December:** Sunningdale power-sharing agreement.  
**1974**  
**January 1:** New executive takes office.  
**January 4:** Bombing campaign in Britain starts at Madame Tussauds and Earls Court.  
**February 28:** General election; Labour returned to power under Wilson.  
**May 14:** Loyalist Ulster Workers' Council calls a general strike against power-sharing.  
**May 28:** Unionists resign; executive falls; power-sharing ends.  
**October 5:** Guildford pub bombed.  
**November 7:** Woolwich pub bombed.

**November 21:** Birmingham pubs bombed.  
**November 29:** Labour's Prevention of Terrorism Act becomes law.  
**December 22:** IRA declares cease-fire.

**1975**  
**April:** Irish National Liberation Army formed as a split from the Official IRA.  
**August:** Bombing in Britain resumed.  
**December:** Internment without trial ended and replaced by a remand system; Long Kesh replaced by H-blocks, the Maze.  
**1976**  
**January:** SAS sent to South Armagh.  
**February 12:** Hunger striker Frank Stagg dies in Wakefield prison.  
**March 1:** Political status removed from IRA prisoners.  
**October 28:** Maire Drumm, recently resigned as vice-president of Sinn Fein through ill health, assassinated in hospital by UVF.  
**1978**  
**Autumn:** Mass 'dirty' protest against criminalisation begins.  
**1979**  
**March 30:** Tory spokesman for Northern Ireland Airey Neave killed by bomb.  
**May 3:** General election. Tories take power under Thatcher.  
**August 27:** Lord Mountbatten killed by bomb.  
**1980**  
**October 27:** Seven republican prisoners start hunger strike demanding political status.  
**December 18:** Hunger strikes called off with no concessions made.  
**1981**  
**March 1:** Bobby Sands, leader of the Provisionals in the H-blocks, starts hunger strike. Others join the strike subsequently.  
**April 9:** Sands elected Westminster MP for Fermanagh-South Tyrone.  
**May 5:** Bobby Sands dies.  
**October 3:** Hunger strike called off. Seven IRA and three INLA prisoners have died.  
**1982**  
**October 20:** Elections to a new assembly; Sinn Fein wins five seats. Start of 'Armalite and Ballot Box' policy. RUC undercover units kill six men in Armagh in 'shoot-to-kill' policy.  
**1983**  
**June 9:** Tories win general election; Sinn Fein gets 100,000 votes; Gerry Adams elected MP for West Belfast.  
**1984**  
**October 12:** IRA blow up Grand Hotel in Brighton during Tory party conference.  
**1985**  
**November:** Anglo-Irish Agreement signed.  
**1987**  
**May 8:** SAS ambushes and kills eight IRA men as they attack Loughgall RUC station.  
**1988**  
**March 6:** SAS kills three IRA members in Gibraltar.



## The German resistance

**The Quiet Revolutionary:**  
The autobiography of Margaret Dewar  
Bookmarks £5.95

FEW ACCOUNTS exist in English of the struggle of the German Trotskyists in the 1930s. It is disappointing, therefore, that their history occupies a relatively small proportion of the autobiography of Margaret (Rita) Dewar.

As a revolutionary, she was a 'late developer'. Born in 1901 in the Russian Empire into a comfortable middle class Latvian/German family, her early life was sheltered from the gathering storms of revolution. Even the 1917 Russian revolution, which so profoundly affected the youth of her generation, seems to have had little impact on her, and in 1920 her family moved to Germany.

Over half the book is taken up with personal memories of her life before she joined the German Communist Party (KPD) in 1930. Despite sometimes interesting accounts of everyday life in early Soviet Russia and Weimar Germany, the lack of a political perspective lessens their significance.

Drawn by the growing social crisis, first to working with International Workers' Relief and then the KPD, the disastrous role of Stalin's policies only became apparent to her after Hitler took power. It was the immediate demoralisation and disintegration of the KPD in the face of the Nazi dictatorship

which convinced her of the necessity to break from Stalinism, and during 1933 she was recruited to the Left Opposition by Jan Bur, an underground leader of the German Trotskyists.

Margaret Dewar carried out clandestine work with the Berlin Trotskyists for the next two-and-a-half years. While she conveys the considerable courage of those involved, little of the political discussion within the movement is recorded, although she alludes (p.165) to the early state capitalist positions which had some influence on the German left.

In 1936, following a close brush with the Gestapo, she escaped to join other Trotskyist refugees in Prague. There she experienced all the frustrations and hardships of emigre politics, compounded by a public campaign by local Stalinists to frame her as a collaborator with the Nazi secret police. In 1937 she left for Britain, where she joined and later married Hugo Dewar, one of the first British Trotskyists of the Balham Group. Like many others, they subsequently drifted away from active involvement in the Trotskyist movement.

The chief merit of this book is the light it sheds on those who fought against the odds for the revolutionary overthrow of fascism.

**Cuba: The Test of Time**  
by Jean Stubbs  
Latin America Bureau  
£3.95

JEAN STUBBS states in her preface: 'Thirty years since the revolution, twenty since I first made its acquaintance, this book aims to take a critical look from within at the options and dilemmas facing a small nation which has fought against the odds, taken on one of the world's giants and traded it in for another.'

However, this is far from being a critical work. The author takes as her standpoint one of uncritical acceptance of everything Fidel Castro and 'well placed officials' in the bureaucracy have to say. Chapters such as 'The Co-operative Hope', 'Money and Motivation' and 'Ethics of Liberation' leave the reader with the overwhelming impression that one of the most important events in Cuba's history was Jean Stubbs's 'acquaintance' with it.

Throughout, the author describes the deformed workers' state as 'socialist' and in 141 pages, she devotes just two-and-a-half to the trade unions. The reader will learn that their role is apparently 'a controversial issue'. A 'radical tourist', able to explain away the re-emergence of rationing in the shops and potholes in the road 30 years after the revolution. Stubbs does not have to trouble herself too much with the controversy. She has ready-made to hand the opinions of bureaucrats

# A superficial look at Cuba



Photo-opportunity for Fidel Castro at a Sunday voluntary work shift

who live off the backs of the working class and poor peasants. They soothe her 'critical' mind with the answer that there is 'no need for unions in the classless worker-peasant state' and that 'the revolutionary government could legislate for all'.

How will Cuba meet up to, as Stubbs puts it, 'the test of time'? A fair question, when an unprecedented crisis for

bureaucratic rule and the Stalinist outlook of 'socialism in one country' is ripping such self-styled 'classless', 'socialist states' apart and opening up the prospect of political revolution and counter-revolution in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and China, no less than in Cuba. Here Stubbs feels the need for dreams and hopes to help her out (hope is a word which flows from her pen every time she is faced with a serious contradiction). She observes that assistance to Cuba from the capitalist European Community 'could serve as a necessary complement to essentially sound arrangements between Cuba and Comecon, as well as a growing process of Third World or South-South co-operation. It is perhaps not too much to hope that the US might also take its cue from such positive develop-

ments'. Building on this idea, she reveals herself as hostile to the gains that have been made by the working class and poor peasantry in Cuba - the establishment of nationalised property relations, the ending of direct imperialist intervention in the economy and the suppression of the national bourgeoisie. 'A change in policy on the part of the US would help to cement Cuba's process of internal democratisation by providing an economic breathing space... To do this, however, the US would have to recognise the concept of ideological pluralism and national sovereignty within the Caribbean basin.' Thirty years since the revolution, Stubbs, with her concept of a benign EC and US imperialism, demonstrates that she has learned nothing about her subject whatsoever.

## Two varieties of 'Pabloism'

The Editor  
Workers News

Dear Comrade,

Your reply to D. North is not only the first attempt by the fragments of the WRP's 1985 collapse to come seriously to terms with its history; it looks like being the only one. As such, and being based on all but suppressed source material, it merits critical attention.

A correct analysis of the 'entrist' tactic up to 1959 coincides with a description of the 1956 period as 'Healy's finest hour' and praise for the early *Labour Review* and *Newsletter*. Some might call this 'contradictory', others a vicar's egg. Could it not also be concluded that the Trotskyist movement was by the mid-1950s so disorientated that it was unable - on either side of the 1953 fiasco - to capitalise on the very crisis it had been founded to confront, despite a promising start?

Your review of this period stops just at the point when the fruits of opportunism were harvested. If 1953 was muddled, what can one conclude from the rout in the Labour Party which you only mention in passing.

But more important, it is surely inconsistent to berate Cannon (correctly) for provoking a confused split in the International and then blame him for trying to scale down a public polemic with Pablo. When Cannon wrote - as you quote - 'We will never be able to get American workers excited about it', he was not too wide of the mark.

A more rounded view of Cannon would have drawn attention to his role in building the early communist movement in the US and to his smuggling Trotsky's writings out of Moscow in 1929. It would also have noted the heroic fight to build a Trotskyist cadre in the appalling conditions of the 1930s, World War II and the McCarthyite post-war period.

Cannon's defiance of the Stalin bureaucracy contrasts sharply with North's secret 1982 dispute with Healy, made public only after others had safely drawn Healy's teeth. Cannon may have faltered in the 1941 Minneapolis trial: he never appealed to the judiciary to decide the *bona fides* of a workers' party.

Such a view might have been able to focus on the principal question. Why were people even of Cannon's stature unable to comprehend the nature of post-war events? To answer this is to examine a notion that *Workers News* accepts uncritically from Cannon: *Orthodox* Marxism.

Ignore for a moment that 'orthodoxy' has been subject to critiques by Luxemburg, Korsch and others and that the record of the merchants of 'orthodoxy' - Plekhanov, Kautsky, (C. Slaughter?) - leaves much to be desired. Just what is the orthodoxy to which Cannon - and *Workers News* - aspires?

If it is taken as the central ideas of Trotsky's analysis of Stalinism, then it can be shown that, **every bit as much as the 'Pabloite' wing of the International**, as your own articles demonstrate, the IC never grasped its essence. How else can one explain the vacillation between 'Stalinism as counter-revolutionary through and through' and Stalinism as having a 'dual role'?

The first idea was always attributed (even by the scholarly Adam Westoby in his WSL days) to Trotsky, who never wrote crap like that.

The second was held as firmly by the 'Pabloite' and 'anti-Pabloite' wings of the Trotskyist movement, however much the latter squirm. It is this theoretical confusion and not rumours of top-level intrigue that explains the position of the IC on China (Banda in *Labour Review*), Vietnam (in *Labour Review*, series II), Cuba (the SWP of the US), etc., etc. It extends from Yugoslavia in the early days to the current positions of the great anti-Pabloites Healy and Banda on Gorbachev, the *Workers Press* group on Scargill, the iST on Poland etc., etc., (and etc., etc.).

You may well agree with this since it seems that, unlike many Trotskyists, you have troubled to read Trotsky with care. (To be fair to the comrades of the 1950s, much of Trotsky's writings, especially from his last crucial ten years, was all but unobtainable). However, you show you still cling to the 'Pabloite' mould when you talk (*Workers News*, 4/89, p.9) of a 'healthy' workers' state.

Has there ever been a 'healthy' workers' state? If you accept famine, civil war, the decimation of the working class, incipient bureaucracy, destruction of democratic rights, the encouragement of capitalism and the suppression of the workers' control movement etc., as aspects of a healthy workers' state, then perhaps the USSR from (say) 1917 to 1923 will pass muster.

Neither Lenin's *The State and Revolution* nor Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, make reference to 'healthy workers' states'. *The State and Revolution* speculates how a proletariat, having conquered power, copes with the inherent sickness of the society it inherits.

The movement never assimilated Trotsky's analysis of Stalinism other than in a political sense (i.e., the counter-revolutionary role of the *Stalinist* bureaucracy) and muddled it with the Stalinist notion that the USSR amounts to some kind of interim socialism.

No-one has seriously developed Trotsky's analysis in the half-century since his death especially concerning the Soviet Union. By exposing the 'anti-Pabloite' myths of the thoroughly Pabloite International Committee, your researches may play a part in creating the conditions for doing this.

Yours fraternally,

CHARLIE COOK

Two pamphlets available from the  
Workers International League

### THE WRP AND THE 'REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION'

(1978)

By Jack Gale

An attempt to raise differences with the  
WRP leadership which was suppressed

Price 50p plus 30p postage and packing

### WHAT NEXT? AND OTHER WRITINGS FROM 1917

By Leon Trotsky

A new translation of Trotsky's classic analysis of  
the class forces within the Russian Revolution

Price £2 plus 50p postage and packing

No. of copies of What Next? .....

Jack Gale document ..... Enclosed £ .....

Name .....

Address .....

Send to: WIL, 1/17 Meredith Street, London EC1R 0AE

# Workers News



12 Workers News

August 1989

## THE SWP AND THE TIME TO GO CAMPAIGN

TWENTY YEARS after British troops were sent onto the streets of the north of Ireland, the Socialist Workers Party has turned full circle. In 1969, it capitulated to British imperialism and dropped the slogan 'troops out now!' Two decades later, it is a key factor in the 'Time To Go' campaign launched last year by left Labour MPs, churchmen, Stalinists, and members of the SLD and Plaid Cymru.

The purpose of the campaign is to smother principled solidarity with the Irish national struggle under a suitably vague call for a 'timetable for British withdrawal' and an appeal to British imperialism to make a 'declaration of intent' on the future of the north.

This is intended to influence those sections of the ruling class who consider it to be in Britain's interests to discuss long-term withdrawal, but who support the present army of occupation.

At NALGO's annual conference in June, the union's leadership, which has consistently opposed 'troops out' motions, railroaded through a motion supporting the campaign by guillotining discussion. The two wings of British Stalinism, the CPGB and the CPB, after 20 years of supporting British troops, are enthusiastically pushing 'Time To Go'.

Most craven, however, is

the position of the self-styled 'revolutionaries' of the SWP. Whilst opposing motions criticising 'Time To Go' and demanding 'troops out now!' and 'Irish self-determination', SWP members are putting forward the line that 'personally' they support these positions, but that it is 'sectarian' to impose them on a broad-based campaign.

In a recent pamphlet, misleadingly entitled 'Ireland: Why Britain Must Get Out', SWP leading light Paul Foot retreats even further than this hypocritical position: 'The British government should declare that it intends to withdraw its troops from Ireland forever; and that it will no longer sustain a separate state in the North of Ireland. It should set an irrevocable date for that withdrawal, and at once convene a constitutional conference at international level to determine how best that



Civil rights demonstration in Derry, 1969

withdrawal can be accomplished and what contribution Britain should make to a new, united Ireland.'

Foot even calls on the British government to disarm the Protestant paramilitaries and for good measure throws in this insult to the nationalist resistance - 'the best way, however, to defeat terrorism

## Haughey forced into coalition

By Terry McGinity

A COALITION government was finally cobbled together on July 12 between Fianna Fail and the Progressive Democrats, following the indecisive result of the June 15 general election in the 26 counties of the south of Ireland.

Charles Haughey, leader of Fianna Fail and Prime Minister, was seeking a clear mandate to continue his attacks on the working class. It was his party's fifth such bid in twelve years, all of which have been unsuccessful.

Since the 1987 election, an austerity programme has

been carried out with the support of the right-wing parties - the Progressive Democrats and Fine Gael. The impact of these severe policies - designed to lower inflation and revive a stagnant economy - has alienated Fianna Fail's working class supporters. Anger has been steadily growing over ever-lengthening hospital waiting lists, education cuts, mounting unemployment which has produced emigration figures of 50,000 per year and the general high cost of living.

With interest rate rises imminent, Haughey decided to go to the polls with an appeal for national unity before higher mortgage repayments began to affect his middle class supporters. His party was returned with a loss of four seats.

Refusing to accept the results and denying there was a constitutional crisis, Haughey eventually lost a vote of confidence in the Dail and was forced into a humiliating resignation. He then sought a coalition, claiming he was merely seeking an extension of previous alliances, rather than face the prospect of a general election re-run and an even worse defeat.

Unable to come to an arrangement with Fine Gael, whose leader Alan Dukes demanded an equal share of power, Haughey started a round of horse-trading with the Progressive Democrats, a right-wing split from Fianna Fail. The PDs, led by Des O'Malley, lost eight of their original 14 seats in the election. To gain their six votes in the Dail, Haughey was forced to concede two cabinet seats and agree to speed up the programme of reducing standard income tax to 25 per cent by 1993.

The move to the left by the working class, reflected in an increase of seats to a combined total of 22 for the Labour Party and the Stalinist-dominated Workers Party, has been met by a sharp lurch to the right by Fianna Fail. Primary responsibility for this must rest with these same fake lefts.

Despite the widespread unpopularity of the Haughey administration's economic policies, the right-wing reformist and anti-IRA programmes of both Labour and the Workers Party are incapable of mobilising the whole working class and breaking it from its allegiance to the shadowy nationalist 'heritage' of Fianna Fail.

is to root out the cause of it'. SWP members must demand that their party repudi-

ates this disgusting accommodation to British imperialism.

## Join anti-imperialist contingent!

THIS AUGUST sees the 20th anniversary of British troops arriving on the streets of Belfast and Derry. It is therefore essential that there is the biggest possible turnout on the demonstration called for August 12 in London to mark the anniversary of this event.

The troops arrived in August 1969 under the pretext of defending the nationalist population from loyalist pogroms. Instead they introduced internment, torture, daily harassment and shoot-to-kill against anyone who resisted British rule.

Britain's policy has never been aimed at bringing about a peaceful solution. Both Labour and Tory governments have tried to smash the anti-imperialist resistance.

In Britain, through the use of the PTA and frame-up trials, such as the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six and anti-Irish racism stirred up by the mass media, they have carried out a campaign of repression and intimidation against the Irish community.

During the last 20 years British workers have not been won to the building of a mass challenge to British rule in Ireland. The central responsibility for this rests with

the Labour Party and TUC leaders who have upheld a bi-partisan agreement with the Tories throughout this period. Labour governments were responsible for the introduction of troops in 1969 and the SAS death squads in 1976. From the hunger strikes of 1981 to the Gibraltar shootings in 1988, the Labour leadership has continued its treacherous, chauvinist role.

The slogans of the march organisers: 'British Withdrawal From Ireland - Time To Go' accommodates to this chauvinism in the hope that they will give the demo fake mass appeal and by presenting withdrawal from the point of view of Britain's best long-term interests.

There can be no principled or lasting political basis for a withdrawal movement based on these backward sentiments. Such a movement would be unable to withstand the intense pressure put on it by British imperialism and its agents in the labour movement.

There can be no short cuts to making Ireland a popular issue. Illusions that exist in the working class about the neutrality of the British state, and the bigotry that exists towards Irish people must be

challenged head on.

Work within the trade unions has been relegated by Irish solidarity organisations to a tenth-rate issue. That must be changed. There must be a clear recognition of the need to rally the working class as the only force in Britain that can effectively unite with Ireland's republicans and socialists to force the troops out.

That is why any campaign to get the troops out must be based on the labour movement. It must be unambiguous and state clearly that Britain has no progressive role to play in Ireland and therefore the occupying troops must go - NOW! It must make clear that the only people who have the right to decide the future of the Six Counties are the Irish people as a whole. They were deprived of this right in 1921 when Britain partitioned the whole island against the express wishes of the majority of the population.

It is for these reasons that we are calling for support for the anti-imperialist contingent on the August 12 demonstration around the demands:

- Troops out now!
- Self-determination for the Irish people as a whole!

### Time To Go demonstration

### 20th Anniversary of British troops on the streets of the north of Ireland

SATURDAY AUGUST 12  
11.00am WHITTINGTON PARK  
HOLLOWAY ROAD, LONDON N19

Join the anti-imperialist  
contingent

TROOPS OUT NOW!  
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE  
IRISH PEOPLE AS A WHOLE!

Sponsors of the anti-imperialist contingent include:

AUT University of London Computer Centre, NALGO Bloomsbury Health, NUT Camden, South London Year of Action, Revolutionary Internationalist League, Wembley UCATT, Workers International League, Workers Power