

South African black miners challenge regime

Smash apartheid terror!



Selwyn Tait

Mass turnouts at funeral defy state of emergency. More than 120 blacks murdered by apartheid cops and death squads since July, thousands more arrested.



AP

As the bloody armed fist of apartheid repression strikes out at the black masses in the townships of South Africa, a mighty giant joins battle with apartheid slavery in the mines. The strike by the black South African National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) could add an explosive, and crucially strategic, new ingredient in the unprecedented wave of black resistance and apartheid repression which is sweeping South Africa. It is the most urgent duty of the international labour movement to offer every conceivable measure of material support and class-struggle solidarity to this struggle. Victory to black South African miners! Smash the 'state of emergency'! Smash apartheid slavery!

Since apartheid fueder president PW Botha's imposition of a 'state of emergency' in the black townships on 20 July, well over a hundred black people have been murdered, often by death squads tied to the military, bringing the total killed since the anti-apartheid revolt began last autumn to more than 650. Over 2000 blacks have been subject to indefinite detention for which there are no charges, no bail, no access to lawyers or family. It is a detention in which many will suffer the same fate as Black Consciousness Movement leader Steve Biko, tortured and murdered in police custody in 1977.

With every passing day, atrocity exceeds atrocity. Elderly black women and young Soweto schoolgirls alike have been brutalised and bestially raped by the police, others have been *sjambokked* (whipped) as they lay in bed. More than 800 Soweto schoolchildren boycotting classes were rounded up by armoured hippo troop carriers, tear-gassed and dragged off to detention centres, 336 of them charged under the emergency regulations, 27 simply 'disappeared'. In its frenzy to crush every manifestation of resistance to apartheid, the regime has threatened to starve out black townships engaged in boycotting white businesses by forcibly closing down black shops. It has even tried to strip the victims of apartheid terror of a last shred of dignity by banning outdoor funerals, which had been the sole 'legal' occasions where mass anti-apartheid protest could take place.

To date, these savage measures have not quelled protest in the areas affected by the 'emergency' and have fuelled protest outside those areas, especially in the major urban centres of Cape Town and Durban. On 20 July

tens of thousands attended a funeral for four murdered leaders of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the Eastern Cape city of Craddock. In courageous defiance of the apartheid police state, mourners unfurled the banners of the nationalist African National Congress (ANC) and the Stalinist South African Communist Party (SACP). Both organisations are banned in South Africa and their advocates if captured are frequently hanged. Subsequently thousands of university students -- black, Indian, coloured and white -- in Durban and Cape Town have protested against the 'state of emergency' with chants of 'Botha is a terrorist'.

South Africa is driving towards civil war. The current wave of black resistance to apartheid slavery continues to mount. So does the determination of the white supremacist regime, armed to the teeth, to drown that resistance in blood. Even as the rand plummets in international money markets and white South African church leaders and big-business lobbies like the Urban Federation plead for cosmetic reforms to cool down the situation, Botha continues to hardline it and his cops boast to their black victims, 'Botha has said we can kill you like flies' (*Guardian*, 24 August). And his Cold War allies in Washington and London stand foursquare behind this butcher. While Reagan grotesquely lauds South African 'desegregation', the Thatcher government hails Botha's hardline speech as 'further evidence that the South African government is embarked on a process of reform'. Meanwhile Thatcher's cops arrest anti-apartheid protesters at home by the dozens and turn a blind eye to the murderous firebombing of Anti Apartheid Movement headquarters in London by South African secret police agents.

Black miners: a revolutionary powerhouse

Now Botha's 'state of emergency' is being challenged by the most powerful section of South Africa's black proletariat. On Sunday evening, 1 September miners walked off the job at seven mines, after others, including at the giant Anglo-American conglomerate, had agreed a wage settlement with the NUM. As we go to press one day later security forces have fired rubber bullets and teargas into a peaceful meeting of 1000 workers at the non-struck Beatrix gold mine, while helicopters were reported flying over mining areas warning through loudhailers that strikers would be

forced down the shaft at gunpoint.

Even before the strike the NUM had delivered a *political ultimatum* to the regime, initiating a highly effective boycott by its members of all white businesses in or near mining towns in protest against the 'state of emergency'. This comes on top of a boycott of white-owned shops led by car unions in the Port Elizabeth area and another around Pretoria, linked to stayaway protest strikes.

South Africa is the largest gold producer in the 'free world'. The threat of class struggle in the Witwatersrand mines forced

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No credit

South African black miners: powerhouse of workers revolution, key to smashing apartheid capitalism. Workers around the world must rally to their support!

On British, Australian docks

Labour action against apartheid!

While various imperialist governments (not including Britain) moved to impose token sanctions against their South African ally, hoping to save face for 'free world' democracy, workers here and in Australia have taken matters into their own hands by blacking ships and cargo from and to South Africa.

In Sydney, Australia maritime and waterfront unions applied 'rolling bans' to the *Safocan Mildura*, a Nedlloyd Lines ship which regularly links Australia to South Africa, when the ship docked there in late July (Australian *Daily Commercial News*, 30 July). The Waterside Workers Federation kicked off the ban with a 24-hour action which stopped cargo handling. This was followed by stoppages by tugboat workers, seamen, watchmen and other workers in different unions. When the ship arrived in Melbourne, 1 August, it was again met with rolling bans that continued until the *Mildura* left port 7 August. However, in between the stoppages, the South African cargo was worked -- the actual effect of the bans was to delay the ship.

In Melbourne, 6 August a picket was held to support the maritime unions' action. The rally attracted some 70 - 80 people, including waterside workers, representatives of the South African ANC and Namibian SWAPO, as well as a contingent from the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand. On 17 August at Freemantle another South African ship, the *Safocan Nederburg*, was stopped in a 24-hour ban by seamen. The WWF and maritime workers followed this with another 2-day ban, with the ship finally being allowed to sail on 24 August.

In Britain, Southampton dockers intervened

Quote of the month



Trotsky and Lenin

The methods of class struggle

Today's labour misleaders are preaching 'new realism' and bowing to the bosses without a fight. In contrast veteran American communist leader James P Cannon, drawing fundamental lessons from the victorious Trotskyist-led Minneapolis general strike of 1934, wrote the following:

Our people didn't believe in anybody or anything but the policy of the class struggle and the ability of the workers to prevail by their mass strength and solidarity. Consequently, they expected from the start that the union would have to fight for its right to exist; that the bosses would not yield any recognition to the union, would not yield any increase of wages or reduction of the scandalous hours without some pressure being brought to bear. Therefore they prepared everything from the point of view of class war. They knew that power, not diplomacy, would decide the issue. Bluffs don't work in fundamental things, only in incidental ones. In such things as the conflict of class interests one must be prepared to fight.

-- James P Cannon, *The History of American Trotskyism* (1944)

WORKERS HAMMER

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at the last minute to prevent the loading of a sophisticated computerised milling machine onto a South Africa-bound ship. The machine had been sold by a British firm to a subsidiary of the South African Armaments Corporation, which produces and maintains South African military aircraft. The transport and General Workers Union, the National Union of Seamen and two civil service unions spent 'three days of frantic detective work' tracking down the shipment (*Guardian*, 31 July).

The blatant violation by Thatcher and Reagan of the United Nations arms embargo against South Africa demonstrates the dangerous futility of reliance on the bosses' government and the UN to pressure their South African racist friends, as well as the urgent need for international labour solidarity action in this hour of crisis. Such direct action would strike a blow at the racists, and strengthen and encourage the South African black proletariat, the engine of the South African revolution. But so far effective international proletarian solidarity has been sabotaged by the various national labour bureaucracies, who want to avoid at all costs a sharp confrontation with their 'own' bourgeoisie.

Even the actions in Britain and Australia have been constrained by the labour fakery. The British action centred on a single machine -- the maritime unions picked it out because its export violates the UN embargo, so they thought they could get away with their blacking action without being prosecuted under the Thatcher government's anti-union laws. Yet South Africa is Britain's twelfth largest export market, and according to the *Financial Times* (2 August), Britain plays 'a major role in strategic areas of the South African economy -- fuel, military equipment and computers'. Similarly the Australian union bureaucrats have tried to limit their actions to dovetail with calls on the capitalist Labor Party government to ban trade with South Africa.

Meanwhile, on 2 August the Ligue Trotskyste de France, French section of the international Spartacist tendency, protested the arrival of 40,000 tons of South African coal at the port of Rouen. The rally in front of the ship *Galion* underlined the need for working-class solidarity with the embattled black masses. Subsequently, the Stalinist leadership of the CGT, France's main labour federation, has organised protests against South African coal imports. On 24 August in the port of Le Havre, 400 CGT militants including miners from Northern France and Lorraine, occupied the *Citra-Sagitta*, a ship flying the French flag loaded with South African coal destined for the French electricity industry. Although coming in the context of a protectionist policy ('defend French coal'), these are nonetheless clearly workers' actions in solidarity with the South African unions' call for international labour boycotts.

In the US, the criminal role of the labour traitors has been even more obvious: no action whatsoever has taken place despite the presence of large numbers of black workers in strategic unions like the International Longshoremen's Association. The AFL-CIO is too con-

sumed with propping up the CIA/Vatican Solidarnosc 'union' in Poland to lift a finger for the black proletariat in South Africa, and East Coast dock union leaders prefer to black 'Communist' shipping.

In the so-called 'progressive' International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) on the West Coast, militant Stan Gow raised a motion at a 25 July Local 10 (dockers) executive board meeting to 'not work any ships carrying cargo to and from South Africa' as a protest against the state of emergency. However, the same gang that sabotaged last December's action against a South African ship in San Francisco moved in to do the job again. Gow's motion was immediately ruled out of order by local president Larry Wing, who cited a standing injunction against the local for the December action. Like a broken record, Leo Robinson, a well-known supporter of the Communist Party's *People's World*, chimed in to back up the no-action position of the bureaucracy, raising the



Militant dockers picket South African cargo ship Nedlloyd Kimberly in San Francisco port, November 1984.

spectre of court fines 'bankrupting' the union. So while the black masses are being shot down by the apartheid butchers, these phonies tremble over a six-month-old injunction.

Instead of labour action, the reformists tell the workers to crawl to the bosses government to plead for sanctions and 'disinvestment'. In this hour when the South African apartheid rulers think they can move with impunity against the black masses, the international proletariat must act. Screw the bosses' laws! At this crucial juncture, international labour solidarity action can have a powerful political impact in shaping the struggle in South Africa along class lines. ■

Cops unfurl swastika at S Africa demo in US

On 20 August the Spartacist League/US and the SL-supported Labor/Black League for Social Defense organised a 70-strong emergency protest outside South African Airways office in San Francisco in defence of anti-apartheid activist Benjamin Moloise. In a chilling racist provocation, the cops on duty at the demonstration displayed a poster of a large Nazi swastika and the slogan 'Einsatz', meaning 'action'. This recalls the sadistic terrorist Einsatzgruppen (Action Groups) created under the direction of Himmler's SS to exterminate the Jews and Communists in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

A 21 August SL/US press release quoted Spartacist spokesman Al Nelson: 'This is Bit-burg West! The cops showed up at the Spartacist anti-apartheid demonstration with a swastika to solidarize with the pro-Nazi Afrikaner nationalists who now rule South Africa and because they hate us for being

reds and for tearing down the racist Confederate flag from San Francisco Civic Center last year ...

'The cops are not just revelling in the regalia of the Third Reich. Their swastika is a warning to every Jew, black, Hispanic and Asian, to every gay, to every red and trade unionist -- "Watch your ass." The cops are the armed fist of this racist capitalist system and we have no illusions that the police force can be reformed into liberal humanitarians. It will take a socialist revolution to rid this country of the violence-crazed police force which is also a prime recruiting ground for fascist terrorist groups.' ■

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London, 24 August: Spartacist League on solidarity march with black miners' struggle against apartheid.

Don't beg Thatcher for sanctions For class-struggle solidarity!

It is a criminal indictment of the British left and labour movement that since the imposition of the state of emergency in South Africa nearly two months ago even the largest anti-apartheid protest has brought less than a thousand people onto the streets of London. In South Africa itself men, women and children are imprisoned and gunned down for daring to struggle against racist slavery. But here in Britain -- apartheid South Africa's number one trading partner -- the bulk of the 'left' has chosen to sit at home in their beds (or their Labour Party wards).

'Isolate apartheid -- Sanctions now!' has been the chief rallying cry of what anti-apartheid protest there has been. The main, competing demonstration organisers -- the Anti-Apartheid Movement, animated by the *Morning Star* wing of the Communist Party, and the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group, led by the Revolutionary Communist Group -- differ on tactics, with the City Group wanting more flamboyant, public protest. But their politics are well-nigh identical. Both plead with Maggie Thatcher to take diplomatic/economic action against her Cold War allies in Pretoria -- the same Thatcher who, almost uniquely in the world, praised PW Botha's late August 'we'll keep killing blacks' speech as 'constructive', and who regularly unleashes her cops to arrest City Group protesters outside South Africa House. Drop the charges against all anti-apartheid demonstrators!

Most other British left organisations propound a similar strategy, sometimes with a bit of 'working-class' rhetoric for camouflage. *Socialist Worker* (3 August) supports the call for sanctions, adding only that 'it is not good enough simply to call on the government'. *Socialist Action* (26 July) and *Workers Power* (June 1985) chime in with more convoluted formulations for the same thing, demanding in look-alike front-page headlines: 'Break all links with South Africa' and 'Break all links with apartheid state'. Here action by the organised working class is presented as a pressure tactic on the imperialist British government.

All of this is not merely utopian. It actively demobilises. At every level it is counterposed to effective struggle, in particular working-class struggle, to aid the anti-apartheid revolt, since to be effective such struggle must necessarily be directed against 'our own' capitalists as well. When something under 1000 leftists marched in London on 24 August on a demonstration in solidarity with South African mineworkers, our 50-strong Spartacist contingent uniquely expressed the necessary fighting, class-struggle perspective. While the RCG/City Group headed the march with their usual 'Sanctions now' banner, we demanded 'Trade union action to aid anti-apartheid revolt' and 'Unions: black all arms to South Africa!' A Spartacist banner read: 'Down with apartheid terror! For international

working-class action, not imperialist sanctions!'

In a concrete demonstration of workers internationalism, miners from Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Notts and the Midlands marched with the 'Workers Hammer Readers and Supporters Groups' banner with placards proclaiming 'British miner says: "Victory to South African NUM! Smash apartheid!"' Spartacist contingents have also participated in numerous pickets of South Africa House in London. Internationally our tendency has initiated or joined in anti-apartheid protest actions from San Francisco to New York to Paris to Sydney, notably in defence of Benjamin Moloise, the African National Congress activist threatened with execution late last month.

Crawling for sanctions . . .

The call for sanctions and disinvestment raised by fake-lefts is a call on the international capitalist class to implement a strike of capital against apartheid. It is based on the false assumption that a section of the capitalists can be made to act in the interests of the oppressed black masses. The demand for sanctions from 'free world' capitalist states implies that apartheid South Africa can be reformed into 'democratic capitalism'. But apartheid (the superexploitation of black labour, the migrant labour system

Workers Hammer



Reformists' plea for imperialist sanctions demobilises struggle for labour-centred anti-apartheid solidarity action.

etc) is fundamental to South African capital. It cannot be gradually reformed away.

To the extent that liberal and reformist capitalist politicians in America and West Europe have come out for sanctions it has been to head off potential unrest at home, to channel dissent into moral, symbolic gestures, and to force cosmetic reforms on South Africa's bourgeoisie with the long-term aim of stabilising apartheid capitalism. Neil Kinnock sums up the perspective of these 'enlightened' pro-imperialist politicians: 'These are

the last available means by which the international community can try to prevent further protracted and violent conflict in South Africa' (*Guardian*, 17 August). In other words, the 'last available means' to prevent serious struggle against capitalist oppression.

A strategy based on imperialist sanctions is utopian. Just recall the supposed sanctions against Ian Smith's Rhodesia during the 1960s and 1970s, regularly broken by British companies and governments Labour and Tory alike. Capital will always seek the best return for investment. 'Morality', 'international law' etc have nothing to do with it. To the extent that there has been capitalist disinvestment from South Africa recently, it is because with the country in such profound turmoil it is becoming an investment liability, not because of moral pressure or company conscience.

The plea for sanctions is also ultimately reactionary. First and foremost, it serves to prettify the American/West European imperialists by pretending they can somehow be part of a 'progressive' struggle. In fact their crimes against humanity are on a scale the South African Afrikaner ruling elite can only dream of. Often such calls for trade sanctions also dovetail with pleas for nationalist protectionism, to 'save British industry' (ie British capitalist profits) at the expense of other countries.

And were widescale, long-term sanctions and disinvestment actually to be implemented, for whatever reason, their effect on the ground in South Africa would be to weaken the only force with the social power to lead a successful struggle to overthrow apartheid capitalism, the black proletariat. We do not wish to see the powerful black working class in the mines of the Rand and the car factories of Port Elizabeth rendered powerless by being thrown back onto the bantustans as a result of mass unemployment. Our goal is not to 'isolate' apartheid, but to smash and overthrow it.

It is no accident that the same reformist leftists who propound sanctions in this country uphold a disastrous, 'two-stage' strategy for South Africa itself. They see the black proletariat as at best an adjunct to the struggle of 'the people', and strive to unite the superexploited black masses with their 'progressive' exploiters (eg Anglo-American's Harry Oppenheimer).

. . . or class-struggle solidarity

What then is the political alternative to pressurising for imperialist sanctions and disinvestment? Concrete acts of labour solidarity. Political protest strikes, blacking all military cargo, more generalised blacking of South African cargo under specific circumstances -- these tactics can genuinely materially aid the struggle in South Africa. We do not campaign for the labour movement to

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Signature of the Reagan years

The bombing of black America



After Philadelphia holocaust, black neighbourhood resembles Dresden after World War II firestorm.

The following article is adapted from Workers Vanguard (no 380, 31 May and no 384, 26 July), newspaper of the Spartacist League/US.

'Attention, MOVE. This is America.' With this ultimatum, delivered over a cop bullhorn at 5.40am on May 13, there began the hideous siege and mass murder by firebombing of a black neighborhood in West Philadelphia. At least four black children, seven black men and women burned alive and entire city blocks destroyed in a deliberate firestorm. For the alleged 'crime' of being a social nuisance, and without a fig leaf of legality hiding the state's racist terror, members of the black MOVE commune were incinerated, hundreds were left homeless and without possessions. Watch your ass or you could be next! -- this was the message to the black people of America, and not just the black people. Black Democrat Philadelphia mayor Wilson Goode vowed, 'I would do it again.' The bloody tracks of Ronald Reagan's 'anti-terrorist' war on blacks, labor and the left are all over West Philadelphia. The grisly Philly firebombing is the symbol of Reagan's America.

It is utterly clear that this heinous crime was approved right at the top. Philadelphia police met with the FBI and reviewed strategy and tactics two days before the operation against MOVE began. US attorney general Edwin Meese then praised Goode's actions as 'a good example' to emulate! The people who salute SS graves in Germany brought Bitburg back to Philly with a bang. This was no 'firefight', it was a firestorm: Dresden in America.

This was a willful racist massacre of people with no name (they called themselves 'Africa') who had committed no crime. And the American ruling class gets off on it. 'Tragedies will occur', smirked Meese (*New York Times*, 18 May). But it's not just the present gang in Washington. The opening shots of the Reagan years were fired in Greensboro, North Carolina in November 1979, under Democrats Carter and Mondale, when Ku Klux Klan and Nazi killers murdered five leftists, labor and civil rights organizers. The feds (FBI) and cops were up to their necks in planning and carrying out that massacre, as they were up to their necks in the Birmingham (Alabama) church bombing and the assassination of Freedom Riders during the civil rights movement, not to mention the subsequent orchestrated campaign to physically wipe out the Black Panthers. Today the Greensboro massacre is not forgotten, and the Philly inferno will not be forgotten, next week or next year. The firebombing of West Philadelphia rivals Nazi war crimes. A victorious workers revolution will submit the criminals responsible to revolutionary justice, after a fair trial of course. (But then, we recall that at the liberation of Dachau, American GIs executed 122 SS prison guards on the spot, and newly-liberated concentration camp inmates dispatched another 50 with shovels.)

Murder and lies

In the aftermath of the West Philly massacre, Goode held thrice-daily press conferences, piling lie upon lie in hopes that the enormity of his crime would be buried under an avalanche of hysteria about MOVE. 'We cannot permit any terrorist group ... to hold a whole neighborhood or a whole city hostage', he said. Some 'terrorists'! MOVE grew out of a local commune, whose murky politics, variously described as 'back-to-nature' and 'anarchist', are nothing but an inchoate cry of despair for the future of black people in racist America. They attacked no one, and just sat in their ramshackle com-

mune waiting for the holocaust to hit. They even offered to surrender days earlier, if the mayor would guarantee no arrests. But a surrender wasn't wanted.

The cops wanted to burn MOVE alive and they sat and watched for 90 minutes after dropping their bomb on the house, while Osage Avenue was in flames. Firemen were ordered to cease the use of water cannon, which were (safely) positioned in the next street. As cars melted from the heat blocks away, and the fire spread through 60 homes, Goode waited until every last man, woman and child in the MOVE house was burned alive, most apparently huddled in the basement.

Wilson Goode and the firebombing of West Philadelphia are the ultimate proof that the black Democratic mayors are the front men for Reagan's war on black people. In the 1960s as the ghettos burned with black rage and frustration, black mayors were installed in many of America's big cities to put out the fires. But LBJ's firemen are now Reagan's arsonists. It is left to the communists to give organized expression to the felt outrage of the black people in the face of this bloody cop massacre and to fight for the elementary right of black self-defence against the racist terrorists.

Solidarity with MOVE martyrs

Solidarity with the martyrs is an elementary reflex of human dignity, not to mention socialist morality. Yet the American reformists who claim to be socialist (Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party et al) have sought a middle ground between the martyrs and their executioners, solidarizing with the accidental victims whose houses were burned but not with the people the state deliberately set



Spartacist League/US spokesman Ed Karsten and MOVE supporter at 11 July public meeting.

out to murder. The reformists see their only hope for influence as tailing Goode's fellow black Democrat Jesse Jackson (who responded to the Philly inferno by asking that black construction firms get contracts for the new housing). For our part we pledge that the future American workers government will avenge these dead. Ramona Africa and all the MOVE prisoners must be set free! And we are embittered that there is so little a small Marxist party can do now beyond joining with the MOVE survivors in their righteous anger.

At a Spartacist public forum held in New York on July 11, Spartacist comrades, transit (public transport) workers, students came to bear witness to our outrage and to memorialise the Philadelphia martyrs. MOVE supporter LaVerne Sims spoke movingly of

MOVE's struggle against injustice and of the slaughter on Osage Avenue:

'The MOVE sisters and brothers in jail left their children behind, and they will never see their children again. Mayor Goode, police commissioner Gregore Sambor, fire commissioner William Richmond and managing director Leo Brooks saw to that. They elected, endorsed and sanctioned the dropping of that bomb, and lieutenant Frank Powell was the executioner. When lieutenant Powell dropped that bomb from the helicopter, he wiped those babies from the face of this earth. The act of genocide. For there will be no generation forthcoming. Their lives were snuffed out, literally blown apart. Of five children, only one was intact. The other four were completely dismembered. All that is left are their arms, their legs, bones, teeth and patches of flesh. Patches of flesh, that's all that's left of them.'

Ed Kartsen of the Spartacist League Central Committee, Spartacist candidate in the upcoming New York City elections for Manhattan borough president, added:

'The Nazis had at least the shame to hide the murder that went on in the concentration camps! But not the American bourgeoisie.... Well, we promise, we promise that our work, our successful work will result in avenging this atrocity. This is what we are dedicated to. The power of the working class must be unleashed to stop the racist atrocities carried out by the Ku Klux Klan in white robes and in blue, in the White House or not.'

The SL/US initiated and led the Labor/Black Mobilization which brought out 5000 people and stopped the KKK from marching in the nation's capital on 27 November 1982, an anti-racist victory which stands in sharp contrast to the defeats and sellouts which black people have endured in recent years.

Reagan's 'anti-terrorism' means war on blacks

The rulers justify the growing paramilitarization of the cops in the name of 'war on terrorism'. To regiment the American people for nuclear Armageddon with the Soviet Union, Reagan and Meese have created a 'terrorism' scare in order to institute real 'state-supported terrorism' at home. This includes sweeping police measures like the new FBI Security/Terrorism Guidelines which label all opponents of the government outlaws to be shot down in the dead of night; and the 'shoot first' National Security Directive 138 which unleashes US military and intelligence forces to carry out unprovoked 'strikes' against 'terrorist' targets. There are also the police state military 'exercises', such as the martial law atmosphere surrounding last year's Democratic National convention in San Francisco and the 'free world' Olympics in Los Angeles.

The Osage Avenue massacre was supposed to be a message to anybody who gets 'out of line' in Reagan's America -- blacks will get the Philly treatment, labor will get the PATCO (air traffic controllers sacked by Reagan) treatment, and everyone, not least the Marxists, will get the 'terrorist' treatment. But you can fight the terrorists in City Hall and the White House and win. Black people do have social power: they are concentrated in some of the key sections of the American proletariat, constituting its most militant layer. But to unlock this power means breaking the capitalist two-party stranglehold, fighting for a workers party to mobilize labor and oppressed blacks in revolutionary struggle against this racist, capitalist system. Avenge the Philly inferno -- For black freedom through socialist revolution! ■

For union/minority mobilisation!

Racist terror in East London

Only days after the obscene show trial of the Newham 7 led to the conviction of four of these heroic Asian youth, emboldened race-terrorists struck down an Asian woman and her three children in East London in a cowardly, brutal murder. The stream of racist arson attacks and similar incidents since then only underlines the reality -- Thatcher's Britain is increasingly a racist hellhole for the specially oppressed black and Asian minorities.

From Ilford, London, just outside the notoriously fascist-infested East End, to Toxteth, Liverpool, where under a veil of press censorship cops launch repeated assaults on minority and working-class youth, the terror attacks proliferate. The police terror used against the miners, which brought home to white workers the experience that has been the norm for blacks and Asians for years, was given another grisly dimension with the cold-blooded execution of a young boy by a cop on a poor, white council estate in Kings Norton, Birmingham. Thatcher and her cops threaten us all! We need integrated workers defence guards to stop cop/fascist terror against minorities and the whole working class!

In the early hours of Saturday morning on 13 July in Seven Kings, Ilford, the Kassam family found their house in flames. The blaze took the lives of Mrs Shamira Kassam, eight months pregnant, and her three sons aged six, five and one. Mr Kassam and his brother managed to escape through an upstairs window and were treated in hospital for burns. Three weeks before the arson attack that ravaged his family, he had found the carpet in front of the door on fire. He and other neighbours saw two men running away from the house.

Local Asian residents told *Workers Hammer* that the Asian lawyer who had previously lived in the Kassams' house had himself been badly beaten up about three years ago, and that an Asian woman had been attacked and mugged nearby. There were 'no end of stories' about racist terror attacks in the area, they said. Yet police still claim there was nothing to indicate a racial motive in this arson attack! For the family and friends of the Kassams the scars of this murderous attack will last for the rest of their lives.

Since the Ilford carnage, there has been a spate of further attacks on Asians in East London, with equally murderous intentions. On 9 August nine Bengalis, including a 70-year-old man and a 10-month-old child, were rescued from their blazing home at Electric House in Bow. Three days later came another arson attack on a house occupied by fifteen Asians in nearby Leyton. The Kayani family, owners of the house, had just left hospital when they and their two-month-old baby were whisked off by the cops and



Racist firebombing hits Muslim butcher's shop in Newham, East London, 27 July.

subjected to eight hours of intensive interrogation in separate rooms. It took three hours before the cops even brought some milk for the baby, despite repeated requests from the mother. As Mr Kayani, who had just received 21 stitches for a deep cut in his arm after jumping through a top-floor window to help his family escape, said: 'I felt as if I had committed a crime. In eight hours they didn't even offer me a glass of water!'

The vindictiveness of the Thatcher government and cops against minorities, while itself nothing new, is given particular force by the capitalist state's desire to revenge itself on those communities that most solidly supported the heroic miners. This in turn emboldens the race terrorists to commit their atrocities.

But the Asian residents of East London have not been taking this lying down. The Newham 7 were hauled into court facing serious charges of affray, criminal damage, possession of offensive weapons and more, for exercising what should be the elementary right of community self-defence against racist attack. The fact that, despite a vicious, frame-up show trial, none of the Newham 7 went to jail, was due mainly to the deep chord that their defence campaign struck in the minority communities -- and not just there -- giving the authorities great pause for worry. Insultingly, four of these heroic Asian youth were still sentenced by the judge to do 'community service'!

Several black and Asian organisations and others have formed an alliance called Anti Fascist Action. Organisation for the purpose

of self-defence is vital, but the lessons of the Anti Nazi League of the late 1970s must be learned. This alliance of all 'anti-fascists' from Liberals to rock stars, animated by the Socialist Workers Party, succeeded only in diverting anti-fascist struggle into tepid Carnivals -- consciously allowing the fascists to march unmolested, as in Brick Lane in 1978.

The racially-integrated London labour movement has the power to mobilise to crush the fascists. The Spartacist League and our supporters fought in the unions for the use of industrial muscle to defend the Newham 7, in particular among the heavily minority workforce of London Transport. The 'left' fakers in the National Union of Railwaymen, full of 'militant' rhetoric, refused to fight for strike action when Thatcher could really have been beaten during the miners' epic battle. And in LT they turn a blind eye while their own black and Asian members suffer attacks almost daily.

The Labour/trade union bureaucracy is an obstacle to effective struggle against racist attacks and all aspects of capitalist oppression. The industrial action by NALGO workers against supposedly 'left-wing' Islington Labour Council, which is protecting the jobs of a couple of open racists in the housing department who have been responsible for racist abuse and threats of violence against minority workers, speaks volumes about the Labour 'left'. All their 'anti-racist' rhetoric and schemes for 'controlling' the cops are so much reformist rubbish. We say: Smash racist attacks! For the right of organised self-defence! For mass union/minority mobilisation to sweep racists and fascists off the streets!



Spartacist contingent at Newham Seven defence demo: labour movement must be mobilised against racist attacks!

Jail West Midlands killer cop!

Vengeance for John Shorthouse!



John Shorthouse, aged five, victim of killer cop.

At 6am on Saturday 24 August armed police smashed down the door of a house in Kings Norton, Birmingham, and shot dead a five-year-old boy, John Shorthouse, huddled under his bedclothes. The cops say that the .357 Magnum Smith & Wesson was 'accidentally discharged' when killer cop Brian Chester saw what he thought was a 'bundle of rags' move. This was nothing but cold-blooded child murder!

West Midlands police claimed to be searching for suspects in a £170 petty theft case that morning. They arrested John's father along with two other men, then returned to the Shorthouse house and continued their search. Minutes later the five-year-old child was shot dead. West Midlands Chief Constable Jeffrey Dear claimed his killer was 'a model policeman' and temporarily removed him from duty -- on full pay. Meanwhile the body of John Shorthouse lies in the mortuary. John's parents weren't even told their child had been murdered until many hours later. Mrs Shorthouse is absolutely right when she says 'He should not get away with it scot-free.' Jail killer cop Chester! Vengeance for John

Shorthouse!

Birmingham cops are notorious for their trigger-happy fingers. The same day John was killed, two other families were held at gunpoint by cops 'searching for suspects'. Five years ago, sixteen-year-old pregnant Gail Kinchin was shot dead by cops in a house siege in Birmingham. In 1982, a baby in the heavily black and Asian Handsworth area of the city narrowly missed death after cops broke down a house door and again 'accidentally discharged' a loaded gun in the child's bedroom. Numerous houses have had their doors smashed down and the occupants held at gunpoint by gun-crazy cops. Meanwhile in London last year three unarmed 'suspects' were shot and seriously wounded. Not a single cop has gone to jail for any of this.

The Kings Norton area is overwhelmingly white and poverty-stricken. In the mid-1970s it boasted the largest branch of the National Front in the country. Cop harassment and terror was something that happened in the minority areas like Handsworth. But not even being a patriotic white member of the working

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Tory paymasters, Labour godfathers

Spencerism, yesterday and today

Bolsover Local History Society

The attempts of Roy Lynk and his gang of scabherders in Nottinghamshire to establish a scab company 'union' have resurrected the ghost of George Spencer, Labour MP and leader of the Notts scab union that emerged in the aftermath of the defeat of the 1926 General Strike. Pro-boss and anti-communist to the core, the Spencerite split was backed to the hilt by the bosses as a way of destroying the capacity of struggle of the miners and the whole working class for years. This is exactly the role being fashioned for Roy Lynk and Co today. Their 'Union of Democratic Miners' is, alongside counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarnosc, the only 'trade union' Margaret Thatcher supports and promotes.

'Born in the colliery office, supplied with Tory beer and fed in the Tory clubs', was the way then miners leader AJ Cook described the Spencer gang, and it's equally true for Lynk and his lot today. But if the Tories are the paymasters for these professional strike-breakers and anti-communists, it is the Labour/TUC traitors who provide the political inspiration. Len Murray and Frank Chapple foreshadowed the Notts splitters with their vicious anti-communist witchhunt of Arthur Scargill at the 1983 Blackpool TUC for his forthright stand against Polish Solidarnosc and anti-Soviet warmongers Reagan and Thatcher. And the likes of Neil Kinnock and Norm Willis carried on from Lords Murray and Chapple with their vile clamour for strike-breaking ballots and cowardly condemnations of strikers' 'violence' throughout the miners' heroic battle. Yet, committed to unity at all costs with the Labour/TUC misleaders, Scargill's militancy proved incapable of finding a road to victory. Just so did the 'lefts' of an earlier day refuse to break with the Ramsay MacDonalds and Ernest Bevin, who helped sow the seeds of Spencerism by their betrayal of the miners in 1926. The lessons of history must be understood if they are not to be, tragically, repeated.

The 1926 General Strike: Sowing the seeds

The roots of the Spencerite split lay in the betrayal of the 1926 General Strike by the Labour and TUC leaders. Faced by a determined government and coalowner drive to slash wages and extend hours in the mines the TUC found itself in a position where the Baldwin government offered it no means to compromise and reluctantly called a General Strike in support of the miners. Millions of workers came out in solidarity with the miners and their demand for 'not a penny off the pay, not a minute on the day'. But the TUC, desperate to stop any kind of challenge to capitalist state power, engineered a non-existent 'compromise' and caved in to Baldwin after nine days. The strike was called off and a return to work ordered, leaving the miners out alone in a national lockout.

The 'lefts' on the TUC General Council, in particular AJ Cook, general secretary of the Miners Federation of Great Britain (MFGB, the forerunner of the NUM), were incapable of challenging the sellout. Although Cook was a vigorous advocate of trade union militancy, like Arthur Scargill today he could see no real alternative to supporting and pressuring the Labour Party. Thus he was incapable of rallying the workers for a sharp *break* with the Labour/TUC misleaders, even as their treachery became manifest. Trapped in this Labourite dead-end Cook tried to pull off a secret deal to end the 1926 lockout when on 2 July he met with three leading Liberals and signed a memorandum, envisaging a return to work on the basis of wage cuts, which was then discussed with the government. (See AR Griffin, *The Nottinghamshire Miners 1914-1944*.) But the owners were in no mood to compromise and the deal never materialised.



Bolsover, 1926: strikers in front of effigy believed to be George Spencer.

During the General Strike the Communist Party, pursuing Stalin's line of seeking diplomatic allies among the reformist British trade-union officialdom, raised the slogan 'All Power to the General Council'. This could only lull workers into the impression that TUC chiefs JH Thomas and Ernest Bevin were somehow going to side with them against the bosses, rather than alerting them to the impending betrayal. Tailing after 'lefts' like Cook, the CP not only failed to criticise their refusal to break with the General Council but itself persisted in calling for 'All Power to the General Council' even after it had stabbed the miners and called off the strike.

Given a determined revolutionary leadership rooted in the trade unions the General Strike could have been a major step on the road to the British revolution. But the TUC's abject betrayal left the miners to fight alone for six long months amidst growing despair and demoralisation. In the aftermath of defeat, countless workers simply left the unions altogether as the Baldwin government rammed home its victory with vicious anti-union legislation. Labour leader Ramsay MacDonald took the reformists' class-collaborationist appetite to a logical conclusion by 1931, splitting the Labour Party to form the notorious National Government. And among the miners themselves the Spencerite scab 'union' took root in the coalfields of Nottinghamshire.

Spencer splits

Even before 1926 the coalowners controlled the Notts coalfield with an iron heel. The 'butty system' of gangleaders subcontracting men to work in the pits flourished, making a job dependent on the whim of the gangleader. Many pit villages, particularly in North Notts, were owned lock, stock and barrel by the coalowners and a wrong word in the wrong place could lead not only to dismissal but to eviction and destitution. As a Notts miner of the 1920s recalled,

'You were working for the Company the whole 24 hours. You worked at the Pit; if you were sleeping you paid Company rent, if you went out for a drink it were their money, if you bought groceries it were their

money.' (RJ Walters, *The Dukeries Transformed*)

George Spencer, as leader of the Nottinghamshire Miners Association (NMA, the area affiliate of the MFGB) had opposed the 1926 strike from the get-go. It was in Notts, among men in the butty gangs, that the drift back to work began in July 1926. As the return became serious by late summer the other leaders of the NMA caved into Spencer's demand that they ask the MFGB for permission to organise a separate settlement. The MFGB refused, and at the start of October Spencer began to negotiate terms for individual pits to return in defiance of union policy. On 7 October he was expelled from the MFGB, but by then over 30,000 Notts miners were back at work.

Even at that late stage the battle was not lost. AJ Cook spoke at Woolaton and nearly 600 men rejoined the strike, whilst a ballot on 11 October showed over fourteen thousand men still prepared to stay out as against only 2875 in favour of a separate settlement. But the NMA leadership floundered about, not knowing what to do, whilst more demoralised men went back. Seizing his chance Spencer and another Labour MP, NMA treasurer Frank Varley, met with the Notts owners to discuss an area agreement. Then on 19 November an MFGB national conference ignored a national ballot vote to stay out and voted for a return to work in order to negotiate local agreements. The miners had suffered a bitter, far-reaching defeat.

The Notts owners then signed a separate agreement, and on 22 November Spencer announced a scission to form the Notts and District Miners Industrial Union (NMIU). The collusion with the coalowners was blatant. The owners agreed to stop all talks with the NMA and stop NMA organisers collecting dues on pit property, and 'donated' £10,000 to the NMIU pension fund, an annual donation which is still paid today by the NCB. Spencer's vindictiveness knew no bounds: even retired miners whose sons stayed loyal to the NMA were denied pension rights. And the NMIU was predictably and violently anti-communist. CP supporters were barred from membership. JG Hancock, NMIU treasurer, could have been foreshadowing Roy Lynk when he said,

'Communists, atheists, Bolsheviks and men

who were traitors to their country and to their class and were spies and the tools of Russia have dragged men time after time into strikes.' (quoted in R Williams, *The Derbyshire Miners*)

Spencer's next move was to link up with one J. Havelock Wilson, the leader of the National Union of Seamen, to form an alternative to the TUC, the Non-Political Trade Union Movement (NPTUM). Wilson, a 1920s version of Frank Chapple, was the author of 'The Communist Plot Against the British Empire' and had been involved in anti-communist activity since World War I. He took great pride in organising the importation of scab coal during 1926. From the outset it was clear that the NPTUM was nothing but a tool of the bosses. Eight knights, twelve peers and over ninety companies sponsored it and it gained the active support of the anti-communist intelligence agency the Economic League. (Shades of Roy Lynk's 'consultations' with Ian MacGregor, Norris McWhirter, Thatcher adviser David Watt et al today!) But Spencer's attempts to spread the scab 'union' largely failed, although a number of branches did spring up, most notably in South Wales where the Spencerite South Wales Miners Industrial Union (SWMIU) was set up.

TUC 'new realism', 1927-style

Tasting blood after the sellout of the General Strike and their victory over the miners, Stanley Baldwin's Tory government pushed through the 1927 Trades Disputes Act, a model for much of today's Tory legislation. This outlawed 'political' strikes and abolished the 'contracting out' system of political levy. Spencer naturally supported its passage through parliament. At the same time, police raided the Soviet Trade Centre in London, launching an anti-communist witchhunt in the country. Like the TUC's crucifixion of Arthur Scargill for calling Polish Solidarnosc 'anti-socialist' in 1983, the response of the TUC in 1927 was to kneel to the bosses, avow their anti-Sovietism and ask for forgiveness. The TUC proved its loyalty to King and Country by walking out of the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee in September 1927 and banning Trades Councils from affiliating to the CP-led Minority Movement. Meanwhile, it was reported that Ramsay MacDonald sent a message of congratulations to Spencer for reaching a settlement in Notts. All this led Spencer to try and make common cause with the TUC; in his words, 'The TUC who had turned war on the Communists ought to support the new union [the NMIU] instead of crushing it....'

The centrepiece of the TUC's strategy was to pursue discussions with the bosses to campaign for 'industrial peace' and 'efficiency'. This culminated in the January 1928 'Mond-Turner' talks. 'Mondism' meant nothing more than unity between the bosses and the union leaders in the 'national interest'. Seven TUC leaders, led by Ernest Bevin, and seven industrialists set up a joint consultative committee, along lines similar to today's National Economic Development Council. The



Left: Ramsay MacDonald, JH Thomas, Arthur Henderson. Right: AJ Cook, 'left' miners leader. Cook's refusal to break with Labour/TUC traitors paved the way for miners defeat and rise of Spencerism.



Six weeks later these worthies added injury to insult and withdrew strike pay from the sacked men. 'Mondism' was simply Spencerism in another guise. As a recent (17 August) *Guardian* article put it, 'The TUC simply stole many of Spencer's clothes.'

By now it was clear that the TUC had no intention of driving the Spencerites out of the coalfields, and the MFGB leadership under AJ Cook increasingly went along with this. The return of MacDonald's Labour government in 1929 saw Cook holding a series of meetings with Spencer to discuss amalgamation of the NMA and NMIU. Cook became the chief conduit for meetings between Spencer and Manny Shinwell, then enconced at the Department of Mines and eager to force amalgamation on a reluctant NMA. The 'left' MFGB secretary gave active support to NMA vice-president Herbert Booth, a leader of the pro-amalgamation wing of the NMA who later, at the height of the fight against Spencer in 1937, defected wholesale to the scabs.

Rebellion in South Wales

All but abandoned by the MFGB leadership, its organisers victimised and driven out of the coalfields by the bosses and the cops, the membership of the NMA inevitably declined. But by the mid-1930s a new wave of self-confidence was beginning to appear in the coalfields. In 1935 the MFGB balloted its members for a national strike in support of a two shilling a week pay rise. A massive majority of over 380,000 was returned for strike action. But there was no strike. The MFGB leadership simply used the majority to persuade the bosses to open up national negotiating machin-

SWMIU. On 12 October men at Nine Mile Point colliery, Cwmfelinfach, staged a staydown strike. Hours later men at nearby West pit, inspired by the actions of Hungarian miners the previous year, began a hunger strike until the company stopped dealing with the SWMIU.

The strike spread like wildfire. Within a week six pits were on staydown strike and another 40,000 men were striking on the surface. Demonstrations supporting the men, often organised by their wives, occurred throughout South Wales. Railwaymen refused to move scab labour. Frightened that the strikes could get out of hand and spread further, the Department of Mines stepped in to order the owners and the SWMF to meet. At Taff Merthyr, a scab stronghold, men trying to organise a staydown strike were thrown into coal trucks and forced up in the cages. The union leaders ordered the men back but the handful that obeyed were stopped by mass pickets, as at North and South Celynen where 2000 men and women stopped anyone returning. Eventually the owners agreed not to carry out victimisations and to negotiate the reopening of the pit with the SWMF alone.

But men at Dare and Parc pits at Cwmparc decided to stay down until the SWMIU was driven out for good, saying that they were 'prepared to stick down until they achieve their demands, providing that the dispute does not last longer than the Great War'. Within days the owners caved in: no victimisations, no scab labour and no recognition of the SWMIU. Class struggle was the way to bury the Spencerites!

The role of the Communist Party

But after 1935 militant actions in the South Wales coalfield were increasingly stifled by the union leadership -- and the blame for this lies firmly at the door of the Communist Party. In 1936 Arthur Horner became president of the SWMF. At the time he was the best-known CP trade union leader in the country. When he was elected the CP had turned towards the policy of establishing a Popular Front of all 'anti-fascists' and 'progressives', in other words unity with a wing of the capitalist class. In South Wales this translated into appeals to save South Wales industry, in exactly the same way as the TUC appealed to the capitalists to save British industry. The highlight of the CP's popular front strategy was its 1936 Hunger March. The Eurocommunist authors of the official history of the SWMF describe the march:

'The vicar of Treherbert gave a religious send off to the seventeen local marchers. The crowds and marchers recited the Lords Prayer and the vicar told them that the church in Wales supported their fight and asked them to be well-behaved. At Cardiff, the Rev. W Jones told the marchers that if Jesus Christ were on earth he would have been on the march.... The Salvation Army launched the Cwbran contingent with prayer and music ending with "God be with you till we meet again".' (Hywel Francis and David Smith, *The Fed*)

At a time when tens of thousands of Welsh miners itched for militant struggle against the bosses and hundreds were heroically volunteering to fight Franco in Spain, the CP

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Notts scabs early in strike, 1984; today as in 1926 Spencer 'union' is creature of anti-communist strike-breakers.

aims of these talks were no different from the aims of the Spencerites -- two of the bosses' representatives on the committee were also sponsors of the NPTUM. Just as Lynk is the other side of the coin of today's 'new realists', the differences between Bevin and Spencer were over tactics, not aims.

What 'Mondism' meant in practice was soon seen in Notts. In March 1928, 800 NMA loyalists at Welbeck colliery were sacked in a dispute over the NMIU. In response the TUC held a ballot of all Notts miners. Over 32,000 voted for the NMA and only 2533 for the Spencer union. The TUC's response was to do nothing but hold a series of public meetings.

ery and settled for a small pay rise.

The growth of renewed confidence was nowhere more apparent than in South Wales. With its proud traditions of militancy and internationalism the obscenity of the Spencerite union was too much to bear. In October 1935 South Wales exploded. Reluctantly supported by the leadership of the South Wales Miners Federation (SWMF), 14,000 men at Cory Brothers and Ocean Coal companies came out on strike to get the Spencer union out of the pits. Despite the union leaders' waverings the men at Cory Brothers returned almost totally triumphant, only two scabs holding out. Ocean Coal proved more intransigent in defence of the Spencerite

Spencerism...

(Continued from page 7)

channelled this fighting spirit into reformist, class-collaborationist dead-ends. Just as this strategy did nothing for the unemployed, it meant sabotaging the fight against the Spencer union. The 1936 campaigns against the last outposts of Spencerism at Bedwas and Taff Merthyr were explicitly opposed to the militancy that had stopped Spencerism elsewhere in 1935. Despite a four-to-one ballot vote against the SWMIU at Bedwas and much sentiment for militant struggle Arthur Horner, under government pressure, pushed through a deal which included no guarantees against victimisation, compulsory binding arbitration and a no-strike agreement until 1941. At Taff Merthyr a demoralised workforce narrowly voted for the Spencerites and Horner saw to it personally that opposition to a deal similar to the one at Bedwas was crushed. Thus the amalgamation with the SWMIU was largely on the latter's terms.

The battle of Harworth

The anti-Spencer fight in the scab stronghold of Notts saw a similar story of militant struggle derailed by bureaucratic sellout, with far more disastrous and lasting consequences. In February 1935 the council of the NMA reluctantly handed over its negotiating powers to the MFGB leadership, who quite rightly suspected that a majority of the NMA membership had begun to grow in a number of pits and sizeable NMA minorities could now be found up and down Notts. Despite the best efforts of the MFGB and the government to engineer an amalgamation as quietly as possible, militant struggle broke out at Harworth colliery in North Notts in 1936. Two boys were attacked by colliery officials and after a



Notts scab with friend at 1984 Tory party conference.

series of skirmishes over the next few months a full-scale strike for union recognition broke out.

Massive police protection was brought in for the scabs. Hundreds of men and women were arrested. The 1936 Public Order Act, ostensibly enacted to stop fascist marches, was used for the first time -- to stop pickets. The MFGB leadership discussed amalgamation terms with Spencer but the MFGB conference rejected the terms and called a national ballot for strike action. Nearly 450,000 miners voted for strike action in support of the Harworth strikers, with only 61,000 in opposition. At the same time thousands of busmen all over the country were striking for a seven-and-a-half hour day. The government began to worry, not least with the coronation of George VI only a few weeks away, and ordered the MFGB, Spencer and the coalowners to reach agreement.

Given determined leadership by the MFGB not only could Spencerism have been crushed but a working-class offensive could have been launched against a government preparing for World War II. But the MFGB leaders meekly opened up discussions again with Spencer.



George Spencer (seated, far right) with his executive committee.

Prominent on the negotiating committee was Arthur Horner, fresh from stamping out militancy in South Wales, putting the CP's popular front into practice. Within a matter of days it was announced that the NMA and NMIU would fuse to form the Notts Federated Union. Spencer was to be life president and representative on the MFGB Executive, the current wage agreement (which had seen Notts wages fall) was to run for another six years, and there were to be no strikes until a five year period had elapsed. In short the MFGB had accepted all of Spencer's main demands. The Harworth strike was called off with only 350 out of over 900 men getting their jobs back, and eleven strikers and a miner's wife were given jail sentences of hard labour. They had been sacrificed by the MFGB leadership, the Labour Party and the Communist Party in order to get a deal that would preserve class peace. The bitter fruits of this betrayal are still being reaped today.

Remember the lessons

For many decades now, the British capitalists' best defence against working-class revolt has been the Labour and TUC misleaders. It was the betrayal of the General Strike which led directly to the development of Spencerism. Similarly today the betrayal of the miners by Kinnock, Willis et al has fuelled the scab operation of Roy Lynk. The labour movement leaders in the 1920s and 1930s were unable and unwilling to fight Spencerism precisely because they shared the same class-collaborationist outlook and party with Ramsay MacDonald and George Spencer. Today too Kinnock and Lynk share that same party and that same hostility to workers' struggle. And as it was with Spencer and MacDonald, the knot of class collaboration is sealed by anti-communism: both Lynk and Kinnock hail the biggest Spencerites of them all, counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarnosc.

Like AJ Cook in the 1920s, the Labour and TUC lefts are incapable of providing alternative leadership because they too are wedded to the unity of a party that includes scabs and their supporters. Benn and Skinner, and even Arthur Scargill, refused to break with Kinnock even at the height of his anti-miner demagoguery, just as Cook refused to break with the betrayers of the General Strike. And look at when the Labour 'lefts' get into office: during the last Labour government it was none other than Tony Benn, as Energy Secretary, who engineered the divisive productivity deals which helped cement the majority of Notts miners' opposition to the NUM leadership and to the 1984-85 strike.

As for the Communist Party, it was Arthur Horner who sabotaged the South Wales miners' fight to crush the Spencerites. It was the CP which turned the anger and militancy of thousands of workers looking to communism in the 1930s into the impotent, class-collaborationist popular front of bishops, lords, Liberals and Labourites. The Eurocommunist CP leaders of today simply take the popular front to its logical conclusion, anti-communist social democracy. Meanwhile the *Morning Star* oppo-

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sition, which idolises Arthur Horner, merely acts as publicity agents for the 'left' union bureaucrats.

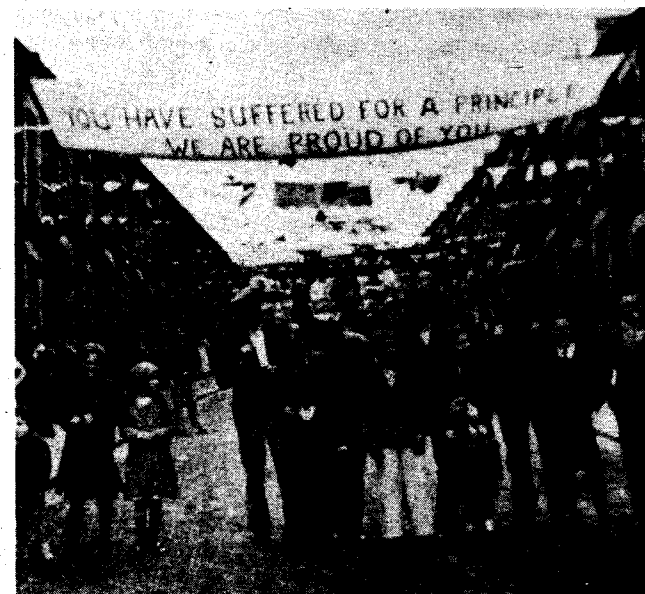
And the fake revolutionaries who tail behind the Labourite reformists today try to rewrite the history of Spencerism to justify their own rotten politics. Characteristically *Socialist Action*, deeply embedded in the Labour Party, fails even to mention that George Spencer was a Labour MP in a 19 July piece 'What is Spencerism?' And the violently anti-Soviet Socialist Workers Party's opus on 'Fighting the scab union' (*Socialist Worker*, 20 July) covers up the Spencerites' vicious anti-Sovietism and anti-communism. In small ways as well as large these phonies reveal their bankruptcy.

George Spencer, Ramsay MacDonald, Labourites of a feather...

There is however an important difference between the outcome of 1926 and today. Whereas the betrayal of the General Strike and its drawn-out aftermath was a deeply demoralising defeat for the entire working class, 1984-85 saw a very different kind of defeat. Thatcher and MacGregor failed in their attempt to crush the NUM and force miners to return to work on their knees. Instead the NUM, though bloodied, marched back defiant, with tens of thousands of militants steeled in battle and in many cases revolutionised by their experiences, determined to regroup in order to fight another day. The key is to learn the lessons of defeat -- above all that trade-union militancy, even that of a leader like Arthur Scargill, is not enough. A revolutionary political alternative to Labourism must be forged.

Lynk's operation must be defeated and the vast majority of the Notts miners won back to the national union. Despite their record of scabbing it is possible to win a majority even in Notts, as the fight against Spencerism there in the 1930s demonstrated. But the fight against the Spencerites cannot be effectively waged by relying on the Labour Party. Look at Mansfield Labour MP Don Concannon, one of Lynk's prime backers; remember how it was a Notts scab leader who made the key pro-Labour Party speech at the early July NUM conference, on the very eve of the split. With his violence-baiting and ballot-mongering, echoing Roy Lynk and David Prendergast (not to mention Maggie Thatcher and Ian MacGregor) at every turn, Neil Kinnock was the political godfather of today's Spencerite split. Yet even Arthur Scargill remains tied to Kinnock and committed to fighting for another Labour government.

What is needed is a new type of party, a revolutionary party built on the traditions and programme of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party and the early Communist International. A



Treharris, South Wales, 1936: Taff-Merthyr strikers welcomed home after release from prison.

party that would channel the anger and militancy of thousands of workers into challenging the rule of the capitalist class and its hangers-on. A party that would champion the rights and give a lead to the struggles of women, blacks, Asians, the Irish and all oppressed. A party committed to revolutionary internationalism, forged through splitting the working-class base of the Labour Party away from the pro-capitalist misleaders. Trapped within the framework of the left wing of Labourism any opposition to capitalist oppression, however militant, will only find itself being handed back on a plate to the Ramsay MacDonalds and Neil Kinnocks of this world. Break the spiral of defeat -- Forge a new, revolutionary party to defeat the bosses' attacks and lead the struggle for working-class rule! ■

Miners, railmen...

(Continued from page 12)

commuter belt services, particularly in the London area, were starting to be significantly affected. Glasgow SOGAT printers blacked BR newspaper adverts for blacklegs. Support for the railmen was widespread not only among trade unionists but within the general public, who don't relish the prospect of being mugged or even burnt to a crisp in a driver-only train simply to suit Thatcher's ambitions to wipe out the trade union movement.

The Tories openly flaunted their intention that the rail unions would be the next target after the miners. Yet Knapp joined with fellow 'left' Ray Buckton of ASLEF to shove a 4.9 per cent wage agreement down his members' throats last year, thus sabotaging joint strike action with the NUM. Since then he has derailed the fight over one-man operation on London Underground, beaten back widespread opposition to accepting Tory ballot law at the recent NUR conference, and tried (unsuccessfully) to get the 1984 conference to accept BR's union-busting driver-only scheme. Then last month, with more than 300 of his members victimised by BR management and hundreds more engaged in unofficial strike action, Knapp said openly: 'The thing that worries me is a bloody confrontation' (*Observer*, 25 August). Too true!

Unlike the NUM leadership a year ago, Knapp played it all by the (bosses') book, discouraging unofficial strike action and imposing the Tory-dictated ballot. Meanwhile Scottish ASLEF leader (and, not coincidentally, Scottish Labour Party head as well) John Walker openly endorsed BR's scheme with Ray Buckton's thinly-veiled acquiescence. It's not just the right wing who are strikebreakers and scabherders! Railwaymen need one solid militant industrial union, but it will not come about under the likes of Knapp and Buckton, who are concerned only with protecting the security of their own jobs. That 48 per cent of guards balloted still voted for strike action saddled with this lily-livered 'leadership' is evidence of nothing so much as a will to fight despite all obstacles. Dump the 'left' traitors! Reinstate the sacked guards! Mobilise to turn back BR's union-bashing drive!

Smash the scab split!

The National Union of Mineworkers remains the spanner in the works of Labour/TUC 'new realist' unity. As one anonymous 'senior Labour strategist' told the 22 July *Times*: 'Benn, Livingstone, Skinner, Militant Tendency, all the other bogeymen won't matter. Scargill will. The public are scared of what he might represent....' In other words: the ruling class is deathly scared of the sort of class confrontation the miners strike represented. So the Labour/TUC misleaders are determined to prevent a replay and to grind the NUM's face in the dirt to prove it. Even the NUM-sponsored resolution demanding simple justice for jailed and sacked miners under a future Labour government has been composited to death by the 'left'-led National Communications Union. And Willis & Co are still set to oppose it! They want to let the miners rot in jail.

The miners strike, and most recently the Notts-centred Spencerite split, has acted to revitalise the Cold War division in the labour bureaucracy which reached its peak in the SDP split and the 1981 Tony Benn/Denis Healey Labour Party deputy leadership contest. The new anti-Communist 'alternative TUC', Mainstream, backed by staunchly pro-CIA right wingers like Terry Duffy and Eric Hammond, openly embraces the Spencerite scabs. Indeed Mainstream's vice-chairman just happens also to be vice-president of the so-called 'Union of Democratic Miners', England's answer to the CIA-funded Polish Solidarnosc.

The last two months have shown that the Spencerite scab splitters are an isolated minority among miners and can be beaten. But to do so effectively means recognising that Kinnock and Willis's hearts are with Lynk and his lot, who share their 'democratic' anti-communism, their violent hostility to class struggle, their record of campaigning for a strikebreaking ballot and their slanderous denunciations of strikers' 'violence' in the face of unprecedented police-state terror. Lynk in turn offers Kinnock friendly 'advice' that 'Nottinghamshire miners [ie the scabs] represent the truer body of the Labour movement and not the extremists' (*Times*, 15 July).

In practice there is precious little that

differentiates Kinnock, Willis & Co from the arch right-wingers and scabs. So they blatantly accommodate Duffy and Hammond, who have got on the Tory teat and engineer 'sweet-heart' no-strike deals. And they go out of their way to politically conciliate the Notts split without openly repudiating the NUM and its massive authority within the working class. Meanwhile the 'left' conciliate Kinnock and Willis. In the course of the strike thousands of miners' families were split apart on the question of scabbing, but Tony Benn, Dennis Skinner and Arthur Scargill would not and will not split politically from scab-lovers Kinnock and Willis. What we said the day after the scab split applies even more today: '... this anti-union breakaway can be nipped in the bud. But that requires not only an organising drive but a political counter-offensive by NUM militants. For if the Tories are the paymasters of this scab split, the Labour Party leadership under Kneel Kinnock is their political godfather' (*Workers Hammer* no 71, July/August 1985).

And this is the nub of the matter. If a picture can tell a thousand words then the platform at the Durham miners gala in July did it. Kinnock sat at one end, Scargill as far away as possible at the other. They studiously avoided shaking hands. Kinnock, roundly booed and jeered as a scab, reviled the thousands of strike militants present and all they had fought and sacrificed for in no uncertain terms. Scargill got up to receive loud applause, congratulate the strikers, and ... reaffirm his commitment to seeing Kinnock in Number Ten.

Forge a revolutionary party!

NUM militants have just gone through a very powerful and quite revolutionising experience. Some of the best strike militants, lacking a political answer to the treachery of the Labour Party, see in the NUM itself a political organism. And indeed right now the NUM partakes of some of the feeling of a political party of what is, in fact, the vanguard of the proletariat.

But the National Union of Mineworkers is a trade union, not a political party. Leninists, revolutionary Marxists, believe in *political division* and *trade union unity*. That is why we oppose the Tory-inspired Notts split. The scabs have to have their backs broken, but in five years time they or their children could be good strike militants. To the extent that the NUM today does act as a political vehicle, it serves as a transmission belt to catapult the best militants right back into the laps of Kneel Kinnock and Noose Willis, with large doses of soft-soaping 'socialist' rhetoric by the likes of Benn, Scargill and Skinner to ease the way. The task of the hour is to forge a revolutionary vanguard party through breaking militant workers from the Labour Party misleaders, right and 'left' -- a party rooted in the trade unions and based on the lessons of the international workers movement, above all of the Russian workers revolution of 1917. This is what the Spartacist League fights for.

As for the lot of self-styled 'revolutionaries', groups like *Socialist Action* and

Socialist Organiser have simply embraced left-Labourite politics, dubbing themselves 'Bennite' and 'Scargillite'. While the Communist Party leadership openly champions Neil Kinnock and reviles the NUM, the *Morning Star* opposition hails the housetrained 'left' bureaucrats like Knapp and Buckton. *Militant*, worried about witchhunts and declining support, pleads with Kinnock to 'unite', while the Socialist Workers Party, having written off the prospects of class struggle for the past five years, courts *Militant* in its turn. And so on down the line.

To a man, they all cover for the TUC's left flank. Foremost among them is the so-called Workers Revolutionary Party/*News Line*. This outfit, hoping workers will forget their despicable role in setting up Arthur Scargill for the anti-communist witchhunt at Blackpool '83, now lobbies their anti-communist chums on the TUC to support jailed and sacked miners, GCHQ workers, council workers, etc etc.

We need workers rule

This country is too far gone for band-aid solutions that don't rock the boat. What industrial plants and skills haven't been destroyed by the ravages of capitalist competition and decay, Thatcher seems hell-bent on destroying maliciously... This country depends on fossil fuel, yet they're prepared to destroy the mining industry to teach the miners a lesson. Even the most modernised steel factories are not safe from the threat of closure. Simply to secure a safe train ride to work, or a plane ride for holiday, or a factory to work in, requires a head-on confrontation with the government. Behind it all lies an ominous drive to thermonuclear war against the Soviet Union. And if you dare to complain, or be a strike militant, or a communist, you know damn well MI5 has your number. The clear message from the ruling class is: don't get in the way or you'll get it.

Well, the clear message from the miners strike is: it's better to fight on your feet than to die on your knees. But to win requires a political perspective that goes beyond simple trade-union militancy. Jimmy Knapp's worries about confrontation are not simply signs of a weak heart and queasy stomach: the Labour/TUC leaders fear an all-out confrontation with the capitalist state more than anything else, because they have nothing to put in its place. That was why they refused to join the miners in struggle when it counted. That is why even the likes of Scargill will stick with Kinnock through thick and thin, because they can see no farther than having a Labour majority in the bosses' Parliament. And when Labour does get in government, it manages capitalism no less than the Tories. What's needed is a leadership committed to the struggle for workers power, a workers state, not through parliamentary tinkering but through the revolutionary expropriation of all the bosses and banks. Only such a leadership is capable of mobilising across union and craft divisions, across racial and sexual lines, across national borders. From the gold miners of South Africa to the coal miners of South Wales we need an internationalist party of socialist revolution. ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE EVENTS



Black workers are revolutionary powerhouse

South Africa: Smash apartheid slavery!

BIRMINGHAM

Thursday, 3 October, 7.30pm
Guest speaker: Wally Roberts, Lea Hall NUM
(in a personal capacity)
Spartacist Society meeting
Private Dining Room
Guild of Students, University of Birmingham
Edgbaston, Birmingham
For more information phone 021-236 9774

SHEFFIELD

Tuesday, 8 October, 7.00pm
Spartacist Society meeting
Octagon Centre
Sheffield University
Western Bank
Sheffield
For more information phone 0742-587282

LONDON CLASS SERIES

- Wednesdays, 7.30pm, General Picton, 2 Wharfedale Rd, London N1 (near Kings Cross)
1. Marxism and the fight against racial oppression 4 September
 2. Imperialism and the anti-Soviet war drive 11 September
 3. Government terror from Orgreave to Brixton to South Africa: Marxism and the state 18 September
 4. The struggle to build the Leninist/Trotskyist vanguard party 25 September

For more information phone 01-278 2232

No trust in Indian bourgeoisie! Defend the Tamil people!

Even as Sri Lanka president JR Jayewardene's representatives were meeting with Tamil nationalist leaders at talks in Thimpu, Bhutan in early August, JR's Sinhala-chauvinist troops carried out a bloody massacre of hundreds of Tamils in the occupied Northern town of Vavuniya. When, several days later, the sham 'negotiations' finally broke down, Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi retaliated in anger against the Tamils, deporting three spokesmen for the Eelamist organisations, Dr Anton Balasingham, CS Chandraghasan and N Satyendra from their refuge in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu has since erupted in massive demonstrations of outrage and protest against the central government, including school boycotts and protest strikes on the railways, and leading to massive arrests. Indeed the Gandhi government has been forced to rescind the deportation order of Chandraghasan, who demanded to be returned to India after being flown to the US. We print below a slightly edited transcript of a speech by Spartacist League speaker Cheryl Myall to a 100-strong demonstration in London, 1 September in protest against the recent massacre:

I want to bring you greetings and express the solidarity of the international Spartacist tendency with the struggle of the Tamil peoples. The brutal massacre of Tamils at Vavuniya recently demonstrated that the only deal that JR wants to negotiate is a deal that is signed in Tamil blood.

I am particularly proud to be able to speak to you as a representative of the Spartacist tendency, because to the best of our resources in every country we have sought to mobilise in defence of the Tamil people.

Now we are internationalists, we see the struggles of the working class and of all the oppressed peoples around the world as part of the same struggle.

Jayewardene is not only the butcher of the Tamil people, he also oppresses and exploits the Sinhala working class. Now we know that it is the labour of the Tamil estate workers that has earned the profits for the Sinhala-chauvinist capitalists in Lanka. That is why we

chant along with you, 'Ceylon tea means Tamil blood!' [applause] But the Tamil workers have been denied and stripped of all their citizenship rights. We in the Spartacist League fight for full citizenship rights for all workers, of Tamils in Lanka, of black South Africans who are foreigners in their own country, of black and Asian people in Margaret Thatcher's racist Britain. And we demand the right of asylum for all Tamil refugees who are fortunate enough to escape Jayewardene's bloody terror and make it to Britain.

In Lanka we have fought for solidarity with the Tamil people amongst those sections of the Lankan population who have good cause to hate Jayewardene and his class. Notably the predominantly Sinhalese women workers in the Free Trade Zone who are superexploited for the profits of the multinationals. We believe that there are people amongst the Lankan population, the Sinhala population, like these women, who can be won to the struggle for Tamil freedom.

Now I want to say something about the events of the last few days. The deportations of Tamil leaders from Tamil Nadu, unfortunately confirms something which we have warned against, and indeed which we have had many discussions about with many of you here today and that is -- that the Tamil people must not rely on the Indian capitalist class to aid their liberation struggle. If you look at the situation created by the Indian bourgeoisie in places like the Punjab or in Assam, then you can predict that any capitalist solution to these communal conflicts will necessarily lead to a bloodbath. India's role in the region is one of divide and rule. This is the role they inherited from the British. Remember the Sirima-Shastri pact!

But the other side of it is that the Tamil people do have real allies. They have allies in the working people of India. The struggle for Tamil liberation is a source of inspiration for all the workers and oppressed throughout the whole region. For example, in Tamil Nadu, following the deportations, there were rail strikes and there have been thousands of arrests of people who have undertaken



Spartacists protest Lanka butcher Jayewardene's 1983 visit to London.

protest actions in support of the Tamils from Lanka. Here are the real allies of the Tamil people. With an internationalist and revolutionary perspective, the Tamil struggle can be the leaven for socialist revolution throughout the entire region.

Lastly, we're internationalists and what I said previously about the Tamil workers in South India being a springboard to revolution throughout the whole continent ties in with what we put forward, and that is for a federated workers republic of Lanka and Eelam in the context of a socialist federation of South Asia.

Lastly, every atrocity committed by Jayewardene and his army thugs is aided and abetted by Margaret Thatcher's SAS advisors and by her arms [applause]. These are the things that go towards Jayewardene's bloody pogrom against the Tamil people. Then there is Reagan who wants Trincomalee. He wants it as a base alongside Diego Garcia and he'll have this base over the blood and over the corpses of the Tamil people. And of course, he wants Trincomalee because it is part of the international capitalists' aim to wage war against countries like the Soviet Union and Vietnam.

Today, comrades, in South Africa, black gold and coal miners start a strike against apartheid terror. We in the international Spartacist tendency have sought and have organised international solidarity with these struggles as he have done with yours. That's why we say, 'Same enemy, same fight, workers of the world unite!'

Thank you. ■

Solidarity...

(Continued from page 3)

institute a permanent, blanket boycott of all goods to or from South Africa since, again, our aim is not the economic strangulation of the country but a struggle for black-centred proletarian power. But under circumstances like today of sharply heightened repression and revolt, labour political boycotts of all South African shipping in protest against the state of emergency are appropriate and necessary, alongside the obviously essential blacking of military cargo.

Predictably, it is the same liberal/reformist 'Sanctions now' crowd who inevitably seek

to sabotage such class-struggle actions. For the likes of the *Morning Star*, pleas for sanctions are a conscious substitute for mobilising their substantial working class base in effective industrial action. When the Stalinists and reformists were pushing a similar campaign for imperialist sanctions by the League of Nations against Italy's invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, Leon Trotsky wrote:

'The truth is that if the workers begin their own sanctions against Italy, their action inevitably strikes at their own capitalists, and the League would be compelled to drop all sanctions. It proposes them now just because the workers' voices are muted in every country. Workers' action can begin only by an absolute opposition to the national bourgeoisie and its international combinations. Support of the

League and support of workers' actions are fire and water; they cannot be united. ('Once Again the ILP', November 1935)

The British working class has a history of international solidarity actions. This ranges from the material aid given by British unions to Irish workers during the 1913 Dublin general strike/lockout, through the successful campaign to stop British military intervention against Soviet Russia in 1919-20 (the 'Hands Off Russia' campaign).

Today widespread sentiment for action in support of South Africa's oppressed masses is evident among the British working class. The recent Women Against Pit Closures conference in Sheffield gave standing ovations to a speech from a representative of the South African trade union movement. NUM members at an early August meeting of the National Rank and File Miners movement voted to send a £115 donation to South African miners. NUM members in particular remember the inspiring financial support these deeply oppressed black mine-workers gave to their heroic 1984-85 strike. Indeed that the NUM leadership has not even seen fit to mobilise the union's banners on anti-apartheid protest, much less to initiate and organise effective material and industrial support for the embattled black masses of South Africa stands as a sharp indictment of its nationalist-reformist outlook.

Above all, the Southampton dockers' blacking action showed what can be done. But the key is leadership. Organising effective working-class solidarity with the anti-apartheid struggle is part and parcel of a struggle against our 'own' capitalists, who are not potential allies but bitter enemies of the struggle against oppression around the world. ■

We encourage our readers to send messages of support and financial donations to: NUM (South Africa), PO Box 10928, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa. Bank account no 8001659294, Barclays Bank, Bree Street East, Johannesburg.

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South Africa...

(Continued from page 1)

South African gold stocks down 20 per cent in a matter of weeks, as foreign investors dumped billions of pounds worth and reinvested in Canadian and Australian gold. This spontaneous 'disinvestment' puts paid to the liberal/reformist myth that the multinational financiers can be pressurised into 'moral protest' against apartheid. As the hard-headed *Financial Times* (2 August) noted, 'company and investor response to the South African crisis owes less to the prospect of sanctions than to complex calculations about the future strength of the Rand...' We say: the vast wealth of South Africa does not belong to the City or Wall Street to dispose of as they see fit but to the black workers who have created it.

If gold is the key link between the South African apartheid state and world capitalism, it is also the key link internally between South African capitalism and the apartheid slave labour institutions. From the discovery of diamonds in the 1860s and especially gold in the 1880s, the development of the mining industry, initially under British imperialism, created the racist 'migrant' labour system. A massive pool of superexploited, unskilled black labour, stripped of every civil and human right, was created through the colonial subjugation of neighbouring black states and blacks in South Africa. South African blacks were made 'foreigners' in their own country, relegated to the scattered parcels of the poorest land occupying 13 per cent of the country, the bantustans, their movement outside the bantustans regulated by the hated 'pass laws'.

The rise of the South African NUM, as well as a labour shortage, has compelled the apartheid bosses to gradually increase black miners' wages. But the NUM has only begun to touch the issue central to apartheid in the mines: the issue of 'migrant' labour. By law, 97 per cent of the black labour force in the mines must be recruited from either the bantustans or 'independent' black states like Lesotho and Botswana -- more than 40 per cent is from outside South Africa. Militants can thus be deported en masse back to these hideously impoverished areas where thousands more are waiting to take their jobs. When 42,000 miners downed tools last spring at the world's largest gold mine, Vaal Reefs, management deported over 14,000 strikers. Only half got their jobs back when the NUM interceded. But the courage and combativity of these miners clearly remains unbroken.

In the context of this country in which every non-white is rendered a 'foreigner' and thus denied citizenship rights in their own land, it is particularly integral to this struggle to raise the demand for full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers. The apartheid terror state is universally hated by the workers and colonial slaves of the world who see in it the intensified mirror of their own degradation and exploitation. This is particularly so for every foreign worker everywhere. The Spartacist tendency has been unique in stressing the centrality of the demand for full citizenship rights for foreign-born workers around the world -- whether it be the Tamils in Sri Lanka, the southern European/North African workers in Western Europe or the Hispanic and Haitian workers in the US.

What is to be done?

The last time that these draconian 'emergency' measures were introduced in South Africa was 25 years ago, in the aftermath of the massacre of 69 unarmed blacks protesting against the hated pass laws in the township of Sharpeville. A 156-day 'state of emergency' was used to jail more than 11,000 black activists. Every major anti-apartheid organisation, including the ANC and SACP, was driven underground as their leaders were killed, imprisoned or forced into exile. Black resistance to white racist rule was broken for a decade. But the anti-apartheid revolt today is both wider and more militant than the protests of the 1950s.

A new generation of black youth is not content to remain within the confines of the 'nonviolent' civil disobedience tactics that dominated those protests. This generation is conscious of the humiliation of mighty America by Vietnam, the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique, and the turning back of the South African military by Cuban troops. Most important in the present wave of anti-apartheid struggle has been the growth and organisation of the six-million-strong

black working class.

For months South Africa's black nationalist leadership has myopically viewed the massive, mounting unrest in the black townships as the beginning of the end for apartheid. At a press conference in late June ANC leader Oliver Tambo triumphantly declared: 'They [the black masses] are creating the conditions for the escalation of our attack leading towards the situation where it will be possible for us to overthrow the apartheid regime' (*Guardian* [New York], 24 July). Under the slogan, 'Make South Africa ungovernable, make the apartheid system unworkable', the ANC is little short of calling for an insurrection. But a decisive military confrontation at this time along national lines will be a disaster for the black masses.

In a revealing survey, a recent MORI poll of blacks in South Africa claims that over 70 per cent of blacks reject the possibility of a peaceful dismantling of the apartheid system, while 80 per cent still believe in the possibility of a multiracial state (*Sunday Times*, 25 August). We Marxists, too, recognise that there can be no gradual dismantling of the apartheid state, ie white capitalist rule. We have also pointed out that the present balance of forces militarily is highly unfavourable to the unarmed black masses. Five months ago we soberly warned:

'Blacks have made it clear that they are not taking this oppressive situation any more. And the white population is armed to the teeth, determined to defend what they've got. The coasts are secure, there is a belt of cowed black African states to the north, and the struggle is along white-black national lines. So long as the national principle predominates, in a military confrontation, now and for the next period the whites will win hands down. The danger is of a pointless bloodbath....' ('South Africa: Razor's Edge', *Workers Hammer* no 68, April 1985)

Smash apartheid! For workers revolution!

One of the key features of the upsurge against the 1984 constitutional 'reforms' was its multiracial character. Indeed the real threat the apartheid regime sees in the liberal UDF is that it unites all the victims of apartheid -- blacks, coloured and Indian. When Victoria Mxenge, one of the lawyers in the UDF treason trial and herself a UDF supporter, was brutally shot and hacked to death, there was a spontaneous multiracial outpouring. The racist regime and its stooges are doing all within their power to break up this important multiracial unity. The intercommunal violence of Zulu against Xhosa and Zulu against Indian which has taken place in the Durban area in recent weeks is dangerous and destructive to the anti-apartheid cause. All signs point to the sinister involvement of KwaZulu Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and his Inkatha thugs. The *Financial Times* (9 August) noted that 'the violence against Indians ... reflected the fact that the predominant anti-apartheid movement in the area, the Inkhata [sic] movement of Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, does not believe that all disadvantaged races need fight together in the "liberation struggle"'. In the midst of the intercommunal attacks, Buthelezi held 'emergency talks' with Botha's minister of 'Law and Order', from whence he proceeded to Jerusalem to hobnob with the Zionist regime which is one of South Africa's major arms suppliers.

Many liberals and reformists now throw up their hands over South Africa and counsel despair and quiescence, or empty moralistic gestures. For there is no bourgeois-democratic solution to the conflicts raging in South Africa. One man, one vote would deprive the whites not only of political power but of their economic dominance. There is, however, a progressive solution, but it must break through the framework of capitalism and nationalism. In South Africa there is a black proletariat with a growing sense of its power. The class principle can prevail.

But economic mobilisation is not sufficient, and insofar as black workers today are being mobilised politically, it is as cattle to haul the ideological cart of nationalism. What is needed is the organisation of South African black labour for its own class rule, a black-centred workers government, through forging a multiracial Leninist-Trotskyist party. Instead of the mass starvation and intertribal civil war which has devastated 'independent' neocolonial black Africa, proletarian class rule in South Africa will open the way to socialist construction in which whites will have a necessary place. And it will be the motor force for genuine

national emancipation and social revolution throughout the desperately oppressed African continent.

In South Africa, the most elementary democratic and national demands -- for the right to vote, for the right to live with one's family, for the right to strike, for the right to a decent education for one's children -- mandate a fundamental social overturn of apartheid capitalism. By its very compression of social oppression, South Africa is a paradigm of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution: 'The complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation' (*The Permanent Revolution* [1930]).

For proletarian internationalism!

South Africa's black miners gave a concrete demonstration of proletarian internationalism last year when, despite their desperate poverty, they sent a generous contribution to the British miners engaged in their historic class battle. Today this support must be returned with interest. The entry of the South African miners on the field of battle is a crucially important new development.

Particularly in Britain, the major centre of imperialist investment in apartheid South Africa, the working class must strain every muscle to ensure the victory of their class brothers and sisters in South Africa. Blacking of South African cargo and political protest strikes against the 'state of emergency', solidarity action against South African multinationals and particularly British-based gold mining companies like Gold Fields -- are urgently necessary. This is the test of the mettle of the British labour movement. Workers around the world must rally to the courageous black South African miners! For international labour action to defend the black, coloured and Asian masses in South Africa! Down with the 'state of emergency'! Free Nelson Mandela and all victims of apartheid terror! Smash apartheid -- For workers revolution! ■

John Shorthouse...

(Continued from page 5)

class will help you in bloody Thatcher's Britain. She hates everyone. She goes after the blacks, the Asians and the Irish to strike fear into the rest of the population. Today Kings Norton is in shock: parents won't let their children out at night and people wonder what's going to happen next. Not even sleeping in your own room is safe now.

What's needed is a mobilisation of the Birmingham trade union movement and minority communities, particularly the heavily racially integrated nearby BL Longbridge plant, to protest against this horrific killing. The heroic miners united all sections of the oppressed and held Thatcher's terrorists-in-blue at bay for twelve months -- it is this social power that must be harnessed to fight for integrated trade union/minority defence guards that could stop the killer cops in their tracks. That fight must include the revival of the old Chartist demand that every citizen have the right to bear arms. The cops would think twice before smashing down doors if they thought Magnum force might be on the other side, and little John Shorthouse might be alive today.

Birmingham is renowned for the 'success' of its so-called community policing programme which is praised by Labour and Tory alike. Now, Labour MPs are calling for a public inquiry to 'maintain confidence in the police' as the Labour chairman of Birmingham City Council Police Committee put it. The reformists of *Militant* (30 August) add their plea: 'The labour movement in the Midlands must demand that the police be brought under democratic public control....'

There is nothing to enquire about! The killing of John Shorthouse is the real face of the heavily-armed, increasingly militarised prepared British police. As the miners strike proved conclusively to millions, they exist only to defend and uphold the racist, exploitative capitalist system. Militant trade union/minority protest must be organised to demand vengeance for John Shorthouse, for the putting away of baby killer Chester. Working class justice under a workers government will have long memory and a long arm; police terror will not go unpunished. ■



Len Murray and Frank Chapple orchestrate anti-communist witchhunt of Arthur Scargill at 1983 Blackpool TUC (centre). Striking Notts miners, May 1984 (left), railwaymen in miners solidarity demo (right).

Dump the TUC scabherders - Unchain the unions!

Miners, railmen under the gun

This is a good time to remember how South Wales miners dangled a noose in front of TUC chief Norm Willis in return for services rendered last year. Having done all in their power to stab the miners during their strike, the TUC traitors and their parrots of the 'left' now want to bury every last vestige of that heroic battle in order to convince the bosses that Neil Kinnock is their man for Number Ten. And that means leaving hundreds of miners and railmen, sacked, victimised or imprisoned, to twist in the wind, leaving minorities defenceless in the face of racist/cop terror, knuckling under to anti-union laws and savage cuts. Well, in the words of the miners strike song, 'Hang, hang, hang the bastards!'

To millions of workers, women and oppressed minorities, the miners strike showed that there is an alternative to waiting for scab-lover Kinnock and swallowing defeat -- that class struggle is the road to stopping the vicious torrent of Tory attacks. And the fast-spreading rail strikes in Scotland, South Wales and the Southeast last month showed how workers remain ready to fight in defence of their jobs and union rights. What's needed is a new kind of strategy, a new kind of leadership -- one that won't kneel to Neil, that won't bow to the bosses' state, that won't link arms with open strikebreakers and scabherders. Simply to hold the line against Tory attacks requires the forging of a new, revolutionary leadership!

Kneel Kinnock, a scab's best friend

Every day the arrogant bitch in Downing Street makes clear to yet another sector of the population that she's prepared to treat them just as she did the sailors aboard the *Belgrano*. Youth on the dole are told to live in tents, black and Asian people are told to drop dead and even five-year-old children get murdered in bed by trigger-cops. The deliberately insulting and provocative huge pay rise for 'top people' virtually eliminated the Tories' massive majority in the Commons. Thatcher's arrogant censorship of the BBC interview with Sinn Fein spokesman Martin McGuinness led to a 24-hour shutdown by BBC

staff and an outcry in the liberal media. She stands unique even among her fellow imperialist cutthroats in actually *welcoming* Botha's 'apartheid forever' speech. Meanwhile every union-buster in the business, from Eddie Shah to Robert Maxwell of the *Mirror* to British Rail's Bob Reid is encouraged to act as though this were South Africa.

But the Iron Bitch can be fought -- and beaten. Thanks to the year-long battle of the miners Thatcher is more vulnerable and isolated than ever before, hated the length and breadth of the country. More than anything else, what props up Thatcher and the capitalist class is the Labour/TUC misleaders.

The setting for this year's gathering of the Trades Union Congress is more than ironic. Two years ago Blackpool was the scene of a vicious witchhunt aimed at isolating Arthur Scargill and the NUM on the eve of the impending Tory attack. Even as the right-wing TUC misleaders nailed Scargill on the cross of

anti-communism (for his opposition to Polish Spencer 'union' Solidarnosc), they set about to crucify the whole working class with their so-called 'new realism' -- down-the-line capitulation before Thatcher's anti-union offensive. The NGA printers got it in the back, then GCHQ civil servants. But the miners took on Thatcher and left Kinnock and Willis in a mess. Now Willis and Co want to pick up where they left off two years ago. And today the TUC 'lefts' join in the defeatist chorus of 'new realism'.

Even as the bureaucrats sabotage struggle today, they acquiesce to, or simply appropriate, Thatcher's programme in order to convince the ruling class that Labour will be an acceptable, 'respectable' and 'responsible' governmental alternative. They are pushing a Social Con-trick Mark II, dubbed 'A New Partnership, A New Britain'. They want a 'positive framework' of laws regulating trade union activity. They signal acceptance of the Tories' 1984 ballot legislation. In sum: wage control, maintenance of anti-union laws, no-strike agreements. The scabherders are calling the shots, the 'left' are in wholesale retreat and the phoney revolutionaries hang on to their coattails in the name of unity.

Thatcher targets rail unions

Look at the rail strike and the role of Jimmy Knapp, the darling of every 'left' when he took over the NUR from Sid ('Sell 'em out') Weighell a couple of years ago. August saw weeks of repeated unofficial strikes, solidarity actions, lockouts and finally mass victimisations as NUR guards fought British Rail's arbitrary and deliberately provocative introduction of driver-only operation. Key

continued on page 9

Support victimised miners, railworkers!

More than three hundred British Rail guards are now sacked, victims of British guards and Thatcher's bloodlust. They join many hundreds of NUM militants (over fifty of whom are in jail), facing a lifetime of misery on the dole. On 16 August 147 Glasgow NUR guards were sacked for refusing to work one-man trains, then the following week 56 more were sacked in Immingham, Humberside and many more in South Wales. In all thousands of guards were served with dismissal ultimatums over one-man trains. As a result of Jimmy Knapp's willingness to play ball with Tory anti-union laws, British Rail is now twisting the knife, using the question of the sacked men as a pistol pointed at the head of the union, to force it to drop even the least semblance of opposition to BR's job-slashing, union-busting plans. They must not be allowed to get away with it!

The whole of the trade-union movement

must take up the cause of the sacked miners and railwaymen, demanding their immediate reinstatement, and must demand freedom and jobs back for all the class war prisoners rotting in Thatcher's jails. Whereas the miners returned defiant in defeat, knowing they had fought a solid year-long struggle against the Iron Bitch, the NUR militants who fought and were sacked are now being abandoned without a solid strike. Undoubtedly the wretched TUC, now joined by the new 'left' new realists like Knapp, will seek to bury the fight for the sacked miners as they are now doing with the railers. Stop this treachery! Reinstatement the sacked miners and railwaymen now! Class war prisoners out of jail!

We urge readers to send donations for sacked miners and their families to: Miners Solidarity Fund, St James' House, Vicar Lane, Sheffield.