



From imperialist war to deepening slump

Major/Kinnock:



Ken Lennox



Edward Sykes

Tories and Labour Party leaders alike enthused over mass slaughter of Iraqis in Persian Gulf War (left). Their hearts also beat as one in war at home against workers, minorities, old, sick, homeless (right).

different name, same game

The American and British rulers—out to plunder the world's oil wealth—perpetrated an obscene and massive blood-bath against the Iraqi people. Bush & Co are building a "new world order" on mountains of corpses. A defeat for the imperialists would have been a victory for the working masses at home and abroad, opening the way to proletarian revolution. The victory of the Anglo-American imperialist-led "alliance" has not only devastated Iraq—with US military commanders saying that at least 100,000 Iraqi troops were killed during the one-sided slaughter—but has left the US forces and their "allies" in the Middle East to oversee a vicious reign of terror and torture, particularly against the dispossessed Palestinian workers of the region.

Those, like the Labour "left" Tony Benn and CND "pacifists" who bayed for UN sanctions to starve the Iraqi people to death can now see the results as whole sections of Iraq are deprived of food and medicine making even worse the horrible destruction left by the carpet bombing. Meanwhile, "liberated" Kuwait has become a killing field. Within days of the US capture of Kuwait City, the Palestinian districts of Hawali and Rega

were sealed off by tanks. While death squads roamed from house to house, seizing thousands and summarily executing scores, US officers kept out Western journalists, human rights groups and the Red Crescent relief organisation. Over 400,000 Palestinians lived in Kuwait before the war, the largest concentration outside Israel and the Occupied Territories, Lebanon and Jordan. It was their labour, along with that of other Arab as well as Filipino and South Asian workers, which created the fabulous wealth of the ruling al-Sabah family and its entourage.

And when it comes to the oppressed Kurds, the imperialists clearly prefer Saddam Hussein. While the "allies", Turkey and Syria, fearing the impact of this uprising on their own Kurdish minorities, shut their borders, the Iraqi Kurds face genocidal slaughter. In counterposition to the nationalists' hapless pleas to the imperialists, we demand a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan.

The bulk of the Labour Party tops supported Bush and Major's imperialist slaughter down the line. The left Labourites of the Bennite ilk supported the war aims of the imperialists, differing only in tactics. Benn's Committee to Stop War in

the Gulf whipped up a vicious red-baiting campaign against those who called for taking a side for the military defence of Iraq, thereby politically facilitating the use of repression by the capitalist state against revolutionaries (see article on defence of SL supporter Alastair Green, page 5). This fact testifies to the fundamental gulf that divides communism and "left" versions of Labourism.

Motivated by the same desire to prop up capitalist profit that led to the carnage in the Persian Gulf, the arrogant exploiters are intent on devastating the living standards of workers and minorities within the imperialist centres. The British economy is collapsing at the same rate as the deep depression of 1980-81: February recorded the fifth largest monthly jump in unemployment in history, with the number of jobless officially over two million and the number of manufacturing workers below five million for the first time ever. And using unemployment as a club against the unions, the capitalists are intent on slashing wages and social benefits.

Just as the US rulers of that bankrupt empire intend to bring "Desert Storm" home, so too do Major and Kinnock

intend to make the working class pay dearly for the economic crisis of Britain. Many working people undoubtedly believed that the demise of the despotic Thatcher would give them a breathing space. The poll tax is a dead duck, although that may not allow the squabble-ridden and waffling Tories to survive as the party of government. The paltry savings on next year's poll tax bill will be largely eaten up by increased VAT, alcohol and tobacco levies, and will be cold comfort for the hundreds of thousands kicked onto the dole queues.

If the "caring conservatism" of John Major's "new look" Tories is a joke in bad taste, what can one say of Kinnock's Labour Party? With Thatcher now out of the way, you'd need a microscope to find a difference in the policies of Major/Kinnock. From the Labour Party's craven support to imperialist mass murder in the Persian Gulf, to their open commitment to the whole gamut of anti-trade union measures and reactionary line on all known social questions, there is truly not an ounce worth of difference. The British working masses need a genuinely revolutionary party, built through exposing and defeating the corrupt Labour Party traitors who enforce capitalist austerity and imperialist war.

Kinnock's Labour Party: enemy of the people

Thatcher conceived the poll tax as a device against higher spending Labour councils, with a phony "popular" imprimatur from the middle classes. Instead this obscene tax aroused massive discontent against the Thatcher government, from the urban poor in the cities to the better-off Tory shires and counties. It was that rare thing in politics: a perfect failure. Today the Kinnockites hypocritically claim victory, but these parliamentary cretins demanded enforcement of the tax, preferring to break the poor rather than break the law. If the tax today is a dead letter, this is certainly no thanks to Kinnock & Co but due to the mass defiance directed against both the Tory government and the Labour Party tops as well as the dawning realisation among the Tories that it was either Thatcher's beloved tax or their seats.

We sought to intersect the mass discontent reflected in the boycott of the tax and noted that mass refusal to pay the tax, intersecting renewed combativity among trade unionists, could well provoke a fundamental social and political crisis. We emphasised that it was necessary to mobilise the organised power of the proletariat to strike against the poll tax as part of an all-sided assault against capitalism. And we warned: "The poll tax per se is not essential to the maintenance of British capitalism, although the arrogant Thatcher is probably irrevocably committed to it. There is a developing bourgeois consensus to withdraw the tax and replace Thatcher with someone with more authority to administer capitalist austerity" (*Workers Hammer* no 113, March-April 1990).

That is what happened, effectively
continued on page 11

ICL withdraws from Revolutionary History editorial board

London
22 March 1991

To the *Revolutionary History* Editorial Board:

This is to inform you of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)'s decision to withdraw from the *Revolutionary History* Editorial Board. The political divergence between ourselves and other members of the Editorial Board, who have been unable to resist using the magazine as a vehicle for current politics, has now come to preclude any legitimate editorial participation on our part. We do not wish to act as a sort of revolutionary "conscience" for those whose ostensible Trotskyism is but a thin veneer covering a capitulationist, social-

democratic core shaped by decades of demoralisation.

The immediate catalyst for our decision is the proposed, draft general editorial for the upcoming issue (Volume 3 No. 4). A pathetic and fatuous attempt to link the proposed contents (on the Trotskyists in WWII) to the recent U.S. oil grab and war in the Persian Gulf, the article doesn't even mention the word imperialist, let alone make any distinction between an inter-imperialist conflict and an imperialist war of deprecation against a neo-colony. Meanwhile it ludicrously defines "technological innovation" since Trotsky's time as... "the missile and the fighter plane"!

You are also deeply disoriented. Any thinking person (let alone Marxist) who

Ukraine Partisans Organize 'Commando' Political Rallies

LABOR ACTION

— 6 February, 1950

course of three to four weeks, they crossed the whole of Poland and Czechoslovakia.

The September issue of *Vpered* carried an interview with the commanders of these newly arrived detachments. (*Vpered* is the paper published by socialist Ukrainian refugee groups in close connection with the UPA.) Following are the highlights of the interview.

Question: Where is the UPA operating in Russia right now?

Answer: "The operation areas of the UPA cannot be considered to be only those where armed resistance exists. The armed resistance of the military detachments of the UPA exists mostly in the Ukrainian Carpathians. But the armed-political underground network exists all over the Ukraine, mostly in cities and larger towns like Odessa, Kryvyj Rig, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkov and the Donetz coal fields.

"In addition, I can assure you that the activities of the UPA are well known all over Russia; in this

Revolutionary History editorial board member Chris Ford apologises for Ukrainian nationalist fascists, attempting to draw spurious distinction between Bandera's Petliuraite "Ukrainian Revolutionary Army" (UPA) and its radical-sounding publicity agents in I Majstrenko's "Ukrainian Revolutionary Democratic Party" (URDP). Max Shachtman's *Labor Action* made no such pretence when it retailed propaganda of URDP's Munich publication, *Vpered*.

seriously worries about the future of our species on this planet thinks about nuclear weapons and ecological disaster, given, e.g., an American imperialist ruling class made socially psychotic by the nation's underlying economic decline, the Zionist madmen who run Israel, and the looming threat of capitalist dismemberment of the USSR, with its many thousands of nuclear missiles. The editorial's series of disingenuous questions smacks of a desire to alibi the dirty war against Iraq; its complaints about "flat pacifism" and "blanket condemnation from the sidelines," reflect loss of revolutionary will, despair and demoralization in the face of very real threats to humanity's future. And of course you end by inveighing against Stalinism as the "agency of the system inside the movement", failing to even mention the main pro-capitalist agent inside the British working-class movement—the Labour Party, in whose wake the British Stalinists have eddied, with only brief interruptions, since 1935.

It is the continued disintegration and collapse of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe which conditions the increasingly all-sided political divergence between ourselves and the rest of the Editorial Board. The grossly anti-communist sketch of Stalin leering over Eastern Europe which appeared on the cover of *Revolutionary History* Volume 3 No. 1 (which we refused to distribute publicly), the desire on the part of a good part of

the Editorial Board to publish patently fascistic Ukrainian nationalist material in that same issue, the attempt of the editor to whitewash the record of the highly dubious Hungarian "anti-Stalinist" Michel Varga, also in that issue (cf our "ICL Statement" on Varga, *RH* Volume 3 No. 1, pp27-8): these are the acts of those who currently howl along with the imperialist wolves, cheering the anti-democratic nationalist movements which openly threaten counterrevolution in the Baltic states. Such "anti-Stalinism" has nothing in common with Trotskyism, which seeks to mobilize the East European and Soviet working classes in defense of collectivized property forms and for their international extension.

As we noted in our letter of 10 July 1990 (edited without our consent and printed without date in *RH* Volume 3 No. 3), the Ukrainian Revolutionary Democratic Party (URDP) material proposed for publication in *RH* was clearly fascistic on the basis of internal evidence. Disorientation is too mild a word for those so blinded by Stalinophobia that they fail to see that the sentence which ended "Bolshevist Bonapartism" by A. Babenko [Ivan Majstrenko] ("Will Europe find in herself the strength and wisdom to defend her right of primogeniture and her priority against semi-Asiatic Moscow?") displays a classic western fascist mindset. But we find it incredible that

continued on page 10

Lenin on Easter 1916



TROTSKY

This year is the 75th anniversary of the 1916 Easter Uprising. Both Lenin and Trotsky denounced those would-be revolutionaries who dismissed the uprising as a "putsch" or "harmful". The extracts below from Lenin show not only his scorn for those who denigrated Easter 1916 and his solidarity with such national revolts, but also his insistence that proletarian revolutionary leadership was needed to ensure

that the struggle for national liberation can be fully successful through socialist revolution.



LENIN

To imagine that social revolution is conceivable without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie with all its prejudices, without a movement of the politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression by the landowners, the church, and the monarchy, against national oppression, etc.—to imagine all this is to repudiate social revolution. So one army lines up in one place and says, "We are for socialism", and another, somewhere else and says, "We are for imperialism", and that will be a social revolution! Only those who hold such a ridiculously pedantic view could vilify the Irish rebellion by calling it a "putsch".

Whoever expects a "pure" social revolution will never live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is.... We would be very poor revolutionaries if, in the proletariat's great war of liberation for socialism, we did not know how to utilise every popular movement against every single disaster imperialism brings in order to intensify and extend the crisis. If we were, on the one hand, to repeat in a thousand keys the declaration that we are "opposed" to all national oppression and, on the other, to describe the heroic revolt of the most mobile and enlightened section of certain classes in an oppressed nation against its oppressors as a "putsch", we should be sinking to the same level of stupidity as the Kautskyites.

It is the misfortune of the Irish that they rose prematurely, before the European revolt of the proletariat had had time to mature. Capitalism is not so harmoniously built that the various sources of rebellion can immediately merge of their own accord, without reverses and defeats. On the other hand, the very fact that revolts do break out at different times, in different places, and are of different kinds, guarantees wide scope and depth to the general movement; but it is only in premature, individual, sporadic and therefore unsuccessful, revolutionary movements that the masses gain experience, acquire knowledge, gather strength, and get to know their real leaders, the socialist proletarians, and in this way prepare for the general onslaught, just as certain strikes, demonstrations, local and national, mutinies in the army, outbreaks among the peasantry, etc., prepared the way for the general onslaught in 1905.

—Lenin, "The discussion on self-determination summed up",
Vol 22, *Collected Works*

WORKERS HAMMER



For a federation of workers republics in the British Isles!
For a Socialist United States of Europe!

Monthly newspaper of the Spartacist League, British section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

EDITORIAL BOARD: Bonnie Bradley (Editor), Jon Branche, Alec Gilchrist, Eibhlin McDonald, Alan Mason, Len Michelson, Ellen Rawlings, Michael Riaz, David Strachan

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Michael Riaz

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Suzan Groves

Published by Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU
Subscriptions: £3.00 for 1 year, overseas airmail £6.00.

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

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



Snark/Art Resource

Victims of a pogrom by Ukrainian White forces under Petliura. Violently anti-Semitic Ukrainian counterrevolutionaries massacred scores of thousands of Jews before being decisively defeated by the Red Army in November 1920.

When the news broke in early March that a woman who had never had sex was undergoing artificial insemination at the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) in the Midlands, uproar followed. Newspapers scooped up the story under the headline "Virgin Birth" and nearly everyone—politicians, churchmen, anti-abortionists, feminists, homophobes, psychologists, misogynists, the British Medical Association (BMA)—jumped in, queuing to make the media take note of their opinion. As the *Times* leader (13 March) notes:

"Resonances echo from the words 'virgin birth'. Who, spotting the phrase in a headline, could resist reading the story underneath? Is it the religious parallel, a hint of the miraculous, that catches attention? Or could it be that women will always bear children, whereas through artificial insemination by donor (AID), one man could—if only in the narrowest sense—father thousands?"

The catchphrase "virgin birth" has been used to describe the process by which single women seek pregnancy through artificial insemination by using donated sperm, with no sexual contact with the biological father. The woman whose case sparked the debate describes herself as "heterosexual", but has "no intention of having sexual intercourse or marrying" (*Guardian* 12 March). So what? This is a matter between a woman and her doctor and the whole fabricated "controversy" a load of codswallop. As the *Times* points out, "single-parent families are hardly a novel feature of the community".

Nationally, it is estimated that already 100 single women have had babies through donor insemination and according to Ian Jones, the BPAS director, 200 of the 1000 women seen by the charity

every year are single. Women who seek pregnancy by this method include lesbian couples, single women who no longer want to wait to have a child, and those who seem to have a commitment to celibacy for whatever reasons. (In fact, the government- and media-fuelled hysteria around AIDS contributed to the growth of what has become known as "trendy celibacy" in petty bourgeois circles.)

Those most vocal in proclaiming this as "unnatural" are the reactionary "right-to-lifers", who have spearheaded the attack on abortion rights as well as the very existence of embryo research. This reactionary cabal intersects as well the anti-homosexual witch hunting campaign which brought you Section 28 and Clause 25, police entrapment and stepped-up arrests, recent attempts to prevent lesbians from fostering or adopting children and gay-bashing attacks on the streets.

Frankie Rickford writing in the *Observer* (17 March) hits on the real nub of the argument:

"In truth, what is at the heart of the protest against virgin births is not the defence of the rights of the child, but a defence of the traditional family and a fear that donor insemination will lead women to reject men."

Artificial insemination by donor (AID) is

a significant scientific breakthrough of benefit to lesbians (who no longer have to practise underground DIY methods of artificial insemination) and women who are infertile or who have infertile partners or no partners. Central to the fabricated hysteria over "virgin birth" is the defence of the patriarchal nuclear family—the main social institution for the oppression of women under capitalism, a bastion of conservatism and conformity and prop for the maintenance of capitalism.

But it's pretty rich to hear about the sanctity of the family and the care of children from this ruling class! The House of Lords narrowly overturned the government's attempt to make single mothers reveal the "fathers" of their children or face loss of already horribly meagre benefit. Overall child benefit was increased at last in this year's March Budget by only a paltry few pence. Free school meals and milk have all but disappeared and rickets (the horror of '30s depression years) in children has reappeared.

The debate over "virgin births" has not been restricted to the reactionary anti-woman, anti-gay cabal. Everyone from romance novelist Barbara Cartland to the Bishop of Durham has got into the act. The British Medical Association

has taken the stand that it would not be "unethical for a doctor to carry out this procedure [artificial insemination on single women] if he or she considered it is in the interests of the patient and if the future of the child was considered" (*Independent* 12 March). Virginia Bottomley, the Health Minister, has now consigned the whole "problem" to the newly created Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority. The Authority will administer guidelines for those clinics "authorised" to provide the procedure; decisions will be left to the "clinicians" who through the appropriate "counseling" procedures will decide who is and who is not to receive the procedure. Such guidelines are of course open to considerable "discrimination" depending on the social climate and the prejudices of the individuals employing them.

As we warned in *Workers Hammer* no 113 (March/April 1990), in an article opposing restrictions on embryo research and the anti-abortion forces behind such restrictions: "Medical science has always been bound and constrained by class society, but it is being increasingly perverted to the standards of moral majority witch doctors." The bigots are at it again over artificial insemination. Their attack on the rights of all women and in particular lesbians must be stopped! ■

Avenge Rolan Adams, Arif Roberts, Simon Yadev! **Smash BNP race-terrorists!**

Rolan Adams, a 15-year-old black student from south-east London was viciously murdered in February by a gang of 14 white, race-hate thugs. In tribute to the young man who loved and composed music, 1500 people crowded the William Temple church last month. As the *Caribbean Times* (26 March) reported, emotions ran high with heart-felt anger as well as sorrow: Rolan Adams is the third black teenager to be murdered by racist scum in the last six months. Another 15-year-old, Arif Roberts, was slashed to death by a racist gang while making his way home for lunch from school last November. Seventeen-year-old Simon Yadev of Bradford was stabbed to death the month earlier while waiting for a bus on his way home from school.

The day after Rolan was murdered, two hundred of his classmates—black and white—demonstrated against rampaging racist terror. In February alone, the Greenwich Action Campaign Against Racist Attacks (GACARA) reports that 28 attacks took place in the area. It is no coincidence that the fascist British National Party set up a headquarters and "bookshop" in nearby Welling some two years ago. The Wild Fowl pub in Greenwich is notoriously infested with racist lowlife: according to the *Caribbean Times*, charges relating to the racist murder of Rolan Adams have been laid against a man seen there in the embrace of a known BNP member. Rolan's brother was injured during the attack and while in hospital received two threatening

telephone calls.

These murderous race-hate attacks, inspired and organised by the fascists and their ilk, must be smashed! The key is the massive and militant mobilisation of the organised working class and all the oppressed to crush the racist terror and drive the fascists off the streets! Mobilise the muscle of the trade unions—no faith in the racist capitalist state, its cops and courts—for integrated workers defence guards! And if the elementary democratic right to self-defence means anything, it means the right to bear arms. A monopoly of arms in the hands of the capitalist state and its dogs of war means that workers and minorities are victimised with impunity. Down with the gun laws!

This proletarian perspective is not what informs those fake leftists such as the Socialist Workers Party who push the cringing reformist notion of "a petition calling for the police to act" in Greenwich and for pressurising the local Bexley Tory council to "reverse its decision allowing the BNP HQ to function" (*Socialist Worker*, 23 March). Calling on the cops to "act" is suicidal—the cops routinely "act" as they did when they gunned down Cherry Groce in Brixton, rioted in Broadwater Farm, viciously framed-up and incarcerated the Tottenham Three. *Socialist Worker* itself notes that the bereaved family of Rolan Adams saw Nazi graffiti in the police station. It is ABC for Marxists that the bourgeoisie will never stop the racist terror which is



Mourners at funeral of Rolan Adams.

endemic to its class rule.

Furthermore, Labour loyalists like the SWP attempt to obscure the criminal complicity of the Labour traitors, in and out of government, as brutal enforcers of racist "law and order". It was Kneel Kinnoch who paid homage to the late PC Blakelock. It was the Labour Party in government which unleashed the infamous thugs of the Special Patrol Group against anti-fascist protesters in Southall in April 1979. Blair Peach, a dedicated fighter against fascist filth and a member of the SWP, was viciously murdered by

the SPG during that police riot. His memory will be honoured only by the struggle to sweep the fascists off the street and the destruction of the vile capitalist system which breeds them.

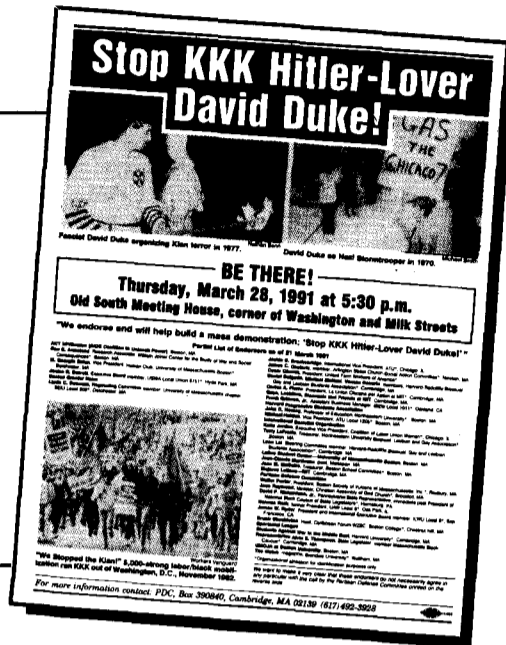
It is necessary to break with the Labour traitors and build a Bolshevik party capable of leading proletarian revolution to clear out the capitalists and their fascist shock troops for good. Along that road, the workers movement will honour its martyrs and its heroes: Avenge the murder of Rolan Adams, Arif Roberts, Simon Yadev! Smash the BNP! ■

Boston, US: demonstration against KKK Hitler-lover

A spirited crowd of over 1500 anti-racists and anti-fascists demonstrated on 28 March at Boston's Old South Meeting House demanding: "Stop KKK Hitler-Lover David Duke!" Trade unionists, black, white, Hispanic and Asian students, members of Boston's large Haitian community, gay rights activists, Jews, Catholics and socialists came together in an outpouring of anger against the appearance in this heavily immigrant and working-class city of the long-time Klan/Nazi race-terror organiser. The Partisan Defense Committee's call for the protest, printed below, details the vile history of this sinister fascist swine, currently running for governor of Louisiana.

Demonstrators determined to prevent the lynch rope and burning cross of Klan terror from invading Boston, chanted: "David Duke, Klan in a Suit—Still a Fascist Killer" and "Duke Stands for Genocide—Klan Terror Will Not Ride!" The protest heard calls for united struggle against Klan terror from trade-union spokesmen, the representative of the Boston chapter of ACT UP and other militants. A message from the Reverend Nelson Johnson of Greensboro North Carolina was sent to the rally saying: "I am one of several people who survived a massacre in this city in 1979, carried out by Ku Klux Klan members

Partisan Defence Committee call for a mass mobilisation to stop fascist swine David Duke! 1500 anti-fascists and anti-racists demonstrated.



and the Nazi Party. Five of my friends were not as fortunate as I, for they were killed on that day." Rev James L Stovall, Organizer and Chair of the Louisiana Coalition Against Racism and Nazism flew up to give a press conference on the struggle against Duke in his home state, where Duke spews his calls for genocide from the halls of the state legislature. Partisan Defense Committee spokes-

man Tom Daley linked the fight against Klan terror to the struggle against racist police brutality such as the videotaped beating of a black motorist in Los Angeles: "Duke and his filth think they have a green light to carry out the domestic agenda of Bush's New World Order. You could run a video recorder almost any day" in Boston's black Roxbury district and "get the same picture".

In a separate protest inside Old South Meeting House in which demonstrators were shouting down David Duke, one of the protesters was charged for alleged assault and battery on a police officer; the Partisan Defense Committee denounced this outrage and demanded the charges be dropped.

Spartacist League speaker Alison Spencer explained that "Every one of us here tonight is engaged in a basic act of self defence. The fascists are emboldened by the official racism of the Democratic and Republican parties. Fascists grow like a cancer, feeding off the unemployment, homelessness, racist police terror that are rooted in the capitalist system. It's time for the working class to organise its own class-struggle workers party committed to the fight for black freedom, to lead the integrated labour movement to sweep fascists like David Duke back into their sewers."

The Partisan Defense Committee initiated the demonstration; we print here the text of the PDC's 12 March call:

Ku Klux Klansman David Duke is scheduled to put forth his "agenda for America" from the hallowed hall of Boston's Old South Meeting House on March 28. David Duke is a fascist. His *continued on page 10*

French fascists rampage against defenders of Vietnamese Revolution

Workers Hammer prints below the greetings sent by the Ligue trotskyste de France to the 28 March demonstration in Boston against fascist David Duke.

Dear comrades,

The Ligue trotskyste de France sends its greetings of solidarity to today's anti-Klan demonstration. At the present moment in France, Georges Boudarel, currently professor of history at Jussieu University in Paris and formerly a philosophy professor who, in 1950, joined the Viet Minh, against the filthy colonial war of French imperialism, is the target of a vicious witch hunting campaign.

In 1950, Georges Boudarel was a philosophy professor in the French colony of Indochina who joined the Viet Minh. At present he is the target of a big lie campaign: the bourgeoisie accuse him of being a torturer. Except his accusers could not find a single prisoner from camp 113 who had been tortured. The torturers in Vietnam were first the French and then American imperialists. Today they're trying to inverse the roles of the executioner and his victims! Torture was imperialism's method of "political reeducation" of the Vietnamese workers and peasants who were fighting for national liberation. Today, the LTF, French section of the ICL, defends the social gains of the Vietnamese revolution which are threatened by the revanchist

Hands off Georges Boudarel!

appetites of the imperialists as well as by Gorbachev's capitulations to them. As for the famine in Indochina, including in the prison camps, it was primarily due to the French blockade: the rice-producing delta was isolated from the areas held by the Viet Minh.

It is no accident that Boudarel is targeted today. The imperialists just won a bloody victory in the Gulf. They now want to take their revenge against the crushing defeat they suffered at the hands of the Viet Minh. We are in a situation where the bourgeoisie is trying

to beat down all its enemies. In France, the dirty imperialism was allowed the bourgeoisie to mount its own repressive police operation, "Vigi-Pirate", which was intended to intimidate that layer of the population which was for the defence of Iraq. In the same way Boudarel is a target because in Indochina he took a side against French imperialism.

The bourgeoisie and its government have given the green light, the fascists have gone into action! Monday, 18 March at about 7 pm, the Action Fran- *continued on page 9*

Partisan Defence Committee rally

Defend the workers movement, left and minorities against state repression

Tuesday, April 16, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square London WC1 (nearest tube Holborn)

Speakers include:

- Ivana Bacik*, Irish Abortion Rights activist
- Keith Bennett, Political Editor, *Asian Times/Caribbean Times**
- Greenwich Action Campaign Against Racist Attacks
- Hands off the Middle East Committee
- Partisan Defence Committee
- Rail, Maritime Transport union member*
- Socialist Organiser Editorial Board
- Spartacist League

*Speaking in a personal capacity

For more information phone 071-485 1396

Drop the charges!

Growing support for Alastair Green defence

"The National Council for Civil Liberties (Liberty) is very concerned about the use of the criminal law to restrict freedom of expression, and that is why we are now acting for Alastair Green as his solicitor."

—John Wadham

In addition to the impressive support from left organisations, trade unionists, black, Turkish and Kurdish groups and students which has been received for the campaign in defence of Spartacist supporter Alastair Green, the prominent civil liberties organisation—the NCCL—has now issued the statement above. Arrested on 2 February at the CND-organised demonstration in London protesting the Gulf War for refusing to stop chanting slogans in defence of Iraq, comrade Green faces charges of "obstructing a police officer" and "threatening behaviour", the latter charge being a Public Order Act offence. In fact, at a New Scotland Yard briefing the day before the demonstration instructions were issued to arrest those raising slogans the police deemed to be "grossly offensive". Thus, the police threatened arrest against those who chanted or carried signs and placards with slogans in defence of Iraq against the imperialist war in the Persian Gulf.

Another eleven demonstrators were arrested outside the Home Office on 20 February while participating in a picket called by Black People Against War in the Gulf to protest the obscene racist round-up of more than 170 Iraqi, Palestinian and other Arab nationals since the war had begun. Citing the Public Order Act, the police decreed that the protesters chanting "US murderers" was an "offence" and twenty minutes later the police waded into the demonstration, began arresting protesters and eventually banned the picket outright.

In the aftermath of the imperialist mass slaughter in the Persian Gulf, the bulk of the victims of the state's viciously racist anti-Arab witch hunt were released from detention. But already many had been either summarily deported or driven out of the country. Actions against the Home Office for false imprisonment and other abuses are reportedly being prepared by those released. Of all the Western countries lined up behind Bush's filthy colonialist war in the Persian Gulf, only Britain interned Arab civilians resident in the country.

The Partisan Defence Committee (PDC), a class struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defence organisation which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people and whose purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League, has undertaken a publicity and fund-raising campaign to mobilise support for Green's defence. Recognising that an injury to one is an injury to all, the PDC also protested the arrest of the eleven from Black People Against War in the Gulf as well as the racist round-up, detentions and internment of Arab people.

The pro-Labour Party *New Statesman & Society* (1 March) wrote: "With Iraq vanquished, it would be a magnanimous



Left, pro-Labour Party press protest against the arrest of Alastair Green

gesture if the British authorities dropped criminal charges against Alastair Green". While of course labelling us as "sectarians" the *New Statesman* does quote at length from our statement after comrade Green's arrest: "The likes of Tony Benn and the CND endorsed the sanctions against Iraq, the prelude to

war... Now the CND leadership—these 'pacifists' whose overriding loyalty is to the warmongering Labour Party—have done their bit to set the stage for police repression against leftists participating in anti-war protests". This of course is a statement of simple fact; the CND cheered on the police actions against

those who would take a side for the defeat of British imperialism while witch hunting leftists within its own Committee to Stop War in the Gulf. Now the Benn/CND Committee grotesquely appeals to the UN imperialist den of thieves for a "just peace" in the Gulf.

Recently, Ron Brown MP for Leith, added his endorsement to the defence. Internationally, the case has received support as well; endorsements have been received from Tokyo, Japan; recently a telegram was sent by the CGT local of CELELEC at Le Havre which read: "We demand that all charges against Alastair Green arising from the demonstration against the war on 2 February at London be immediately lifted. Drop the charges." And, as the partial list of endorsers printed below demonstrates, others from France, Germany and Ireland have added their names to the defence effort. This includes the recent additions of Seán McCann on behalf of the P.O.W. Department, Sinn Féin, Belfast and Seán McGouran, Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association secretary; editor *Gay Star* and editor *Upstart* in a personal capacity.

As we go to press, the Black People Against War in the Gulf still face charges and Alastair Green is to go to trial on 23 April. The PDC is organising a united-front meeting for 16 April at Conway Hall in London demanding: "Defend the workers movement, left and minorities against state repression!" The grotesque abrogations of elementary civil liberties during the Persian Gulf War were a continuation of the British state's notorious system of "injustice" whereby innocent Irish people are imprisoned for years on trumped-up charges and phoney confessions extracted through brutality and beatings, wherein black and Asian people are similarly rounded-up and convicted after gross racist viciousness at the hands of the police. The Guildford Four, the Maguire Seven, the Birmingham Six: these are the living indictments of this system, its courts and cops. To this day the Tottenham Three—framed-up in the aftermath of the police riot in Broadwater Farm in 1985 where the cops came up one short—languish in prison. We say: free them now!

Workers Hammer urges all of our readers to give generously their financial and other resources to this important defence campaign and to come to the PDC meeting on 16 April. Drop the charges against Alastair Green! Defend the workers movement, left and minorities against state repression! ■

Partial list of endorsers of PDC campaign in defence of Alastair Green:

"Drop the charges! No to government censorship and repression of the left!"

Ron Brown MP
Roger Bunn, Musicians Emergency Committee*
Dr Raymond Challinor
Comité de défense sociale
ER Crawford, deputy editor, *Revolutionary History**
Unmesh Desai, Black People Against War in the Gulf*
Paul Foot
Peter Fryer
Dick Hall
Hands Off Iraq Committee
Hands Off the Middle East Committee
JD Hillier, Anti-Fascist Action*
Irish Freedom Movement
Jeunesses communistes révolutionnaires (JCR)
Murtaza Koksai, Chairman, Union of Turkish Workers*
Komitee für soziale Verteidigung
Kürdistan Communist Movement
Kyuon Centre, Tokyo
Georges Labica, professor, Nanterre University
Ken Livingstone MP
London School of Economics Students' Union
Seán McGouran, Secretary, Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association, editor *Gay Star*, *Upstart**
Pascal Marechal, CGT member*
Mark Metcalf, Red Action*
NATFHE, Tower Hamlets College
Bob Parry MP
Partisan Defence Committee
AR Patel, NURMT Assistant Branch Secretary*

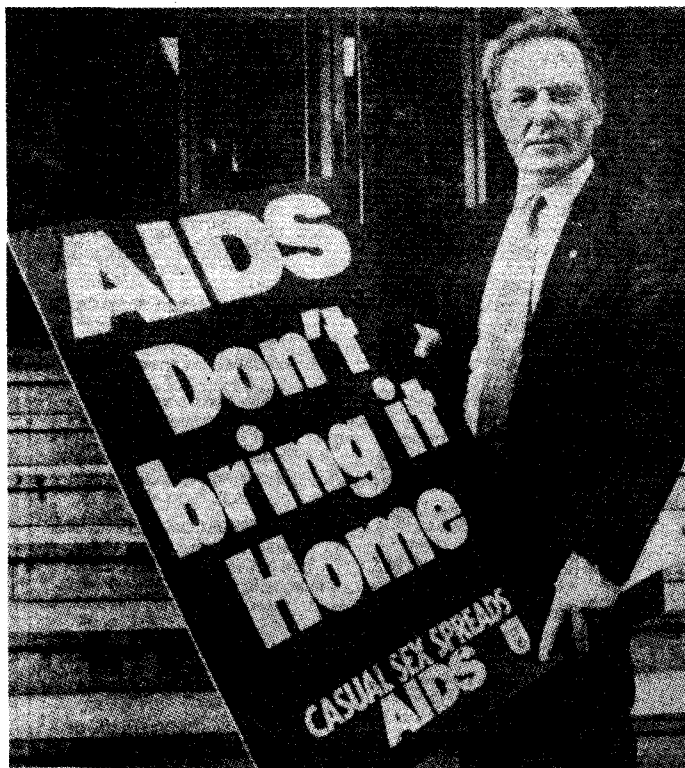
Gilles Perrault
Provisional Central Committee,
Communist Party of Great Britain
Charles Pottins, Jewish Socialists' Group*
Revolutionary Communist Group
Revolutionary Communist Party
Revolutionary History
Revolutionary Internationalist League
Scottish Republican Socialist Party
Sinn Féin P.O.W. Department, Belfast
Carvel Smith, NURMT Branch Chairman*
Socialist Organiser Editorial Board
Spartacist League/Britain
The Reform Society, Ireland
Mark Thompson, North London Hunt Saboteurs*
Hideo Totsuka, Tokyo
Trinity College Dublin (TCD) Labour Society
TCD Republican Society
TCD Socialist Society
TCD Students Union
Ben Wakanabe, Vice Chairman, National Union of General Workers, Tokyo South District *
Workers International League
Workers Party of Scotland
Workers Power
Workers Revolutionary Party (*Workers Press*)
Workers Solidarity Movement, Dublin
* endorsement in a personal capacity

For free contraception and abortion on demand

Ireland: Church hierarchy weighs in against condoms

In early March the Taoiseach, Charles Haughey announced government proposals to lower the age for the availability of condoms from 18 to 16, and lift restrictions on their sale. Instantly the powerful Catholic Church launched a virulent attack on these plans, and within a week the government was in penitent retreat. And while many of the working masses, women and youth of Ireland have a healthy disdain for the pronouncements of the Church hierarchy, particularly when it comes to sex and contraception, the threat posed by this reactionary outcry is deadly dangerous.

Haughey's Fianna Fáil split over the question, with many leading figures, including Senator Des Hanafin, and Minister for Labour, Bertie "heir apparent" Ahern, coming out in opposition to the proposal. At the Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis (National Conference) on 9-10 March one delegate complained: "Wait till we go to Mass tomorrow. Then we'll see the croziers swinging in every direction." Other members at the conference distributed a leaflet attacking Haughey's proposals asking "Has our party sunk so low?" calling on delegates to "protect our children and our party" from "lax laws" (*Irish Times*, 11 March). Haughey's coalition partners, the supposedly secular "Progressive" Democrats, who split from Fianna Fáil in 1985 because of its social backwardness, are in complete disarray over the issue, with two of their six TDs openly opposing the proposal. The opposition bourgeois Fine Gael labelled the government as "aging hillbillies in a desperate attempt to seem trendy" (*Irish*



Irish Times

Fianna Fáil Minister of Health Dr O'Hanlon launching 1987 government "don't have sex" AIDS campaign.

Times, 12 March), and then, after some mealy-mouthed evasion, also came out against lowering the age restriction on condoms.

And what about President Mary Robinson, touted by the Labour Party and the Workers Party, and in the words of one enthusiast "a kind of equivalent secular miracle" (*Guardian*, 27 February), an answer to the moving statues of

the Virgin Mary. Since her election we have witnessed the imperialist carnage in the Gulf, SPUC's continuing fight against abortion, and now this latest assault by the Church on contraception. But the symbol of modernising, secular, right-up-to-date-with-Europe progressive change seems to have lost her voice. Her only action of public note has been to sack the entire staff at her Presidential palace.

In fact Robinson has always kept her liberalism within safe, respectable limits; thus she has opposed abortion rights in Ireland itself. She resigned from the Labour Party in 1985 because she regarded the Anglo-Irish Agreement as too harsh on the Unionists in Northern Ireland. Today there are renewed efforts, represented by the Brooke initiative, to bring an imperialist brokered settlement, including even the perspective of bourgeois reunification. A recent *Economist* (30 March) asserts that "the emergence of a strong, secular republic in the south could do much to encourage a better neighbourliness in the north". Robinson's stance typifies a wing of the southern bourgeoisie which wants some refurbishment and is willing to make a deal with the Ascendancy politicians of the North and the British imperialists—a fact acknowledged by various Protestant leaders in their favourable reactions to her election.

The Catholic hierarchy came out in force on this issue, in defence of its "moral leadership". Archbishops, bishops, local priests vied with each other in a chorus of denunciation. It "could destroy the Irish family as we have known it" (the Bishop of Limerick, *Irish Times*, 11 March) and attacked the "fundamental values of family life" (the Archbishop of Dublin, *Irish Times*, 12 March). Speaking on an RTE national radio station, the Primate of All Ireland, Dr Cahal Daly, stated that, "it is not really a question of Church versus State, but a question of the legislators respecting the moral convictions to which people adhere and

Strike now! Shut down London tube, bus, rail!

On 8 April London Underground workers will vote on a call for strike action. Angry workers from the racially integrated workforce have been demanding a fight back against London Underground Ltd's (LUL) announced "Level Two" sackings of 980 workers. And in early March a leaked LUL management document revealed plans for a further 800 job losses, and the imposition of the wide-ranging attacks on conditions and safety originally included in the 1989 "Action Stations" plan. The LUL management may even be looking to provoke and defeat a strike. The underground workers should give them a strike all right, an all-out no holds barred strike, linking up with other transport workers to also shut down British Rail and the buses.

For years the pressure has been building in transport—long gruelling hours, including split shifts, disciplinary

crackdowns, slashing of staff and implementation of deadly one-person operations (OPOs). London transport workers and passengers daily risk their lives: in a recent incident thousands of people were trapped for hours on the Central Line, and literally had to be walked through the tunnel out of Bethnal Green. For union control of safety conditions with full power to shut down unsafe operations! Reverse the manning cuts, scrap the OPOs! Smash racist discrimination—promotion to be based on seniority with full union control of hiring, upgrading and skills training. A solid, militant strike can beat the bosses and their anti-union laws. Remember—you can't run the buses, tube and rail lines with court injunctions or cops!

In the summer of 1989, underground workers engaged in a series of one-day actions which temporarily checked LUL attacks. But it didn't stop them,

and since that time they have faced incessant attempts by these bosses to make the workers pay for their "business-led" efforts to turn what should be a public service into profit-making enterprise.

In 1989 the strike action was organised against the resistance of the Labourite trade union bureaucracy. The RMT leader Jimmy Knapp was one of the key "left" trade union leaders who prevented the spread of the miners strike in 1985. The bosses are not just counting on the recession and mounting unemployment to frighten workers into bowing down to another attack. They are counting on the Labour Party's trade union bureaucrats to do their best to demoralise and undercut the workers militancy with servile platitudes about being "legal" and not doing anything so ungentlemanly as a bit of class struggle when elections are in the air, and

Judas Kinnock is working overtime to satisfy the capitalists that he is a reliable bet for Downing Street. What is needed is a class struggle leadership ready and willing to mobilise the power of the workers movement.

Together with BR and bus workers, who face the same attacks, the underground workers have the power to bring the heart of capitalist Britain grinding to a halt. Shut the city down tight and see how long it takes the bosses to sue for peace. And an effective and powerful strike ought to demand free public transport—that would be immensely popular with millions of working people in the greater London area who daily suffer from the overpriced, overcrowded, inadequate and murderously dangerous transport service that the capitalist bloodsuckers are imposing on London. For an all-out London transport strike now!

Victims of Labour Government frame-up

Birmingham Six free after sixteen years

On 14 March the Birmingham Six—Patrick Hill, Hugh Callaghan, Johnny Walker, Richard McIlkenny, Gerry Hunter, and Billy Power—were finally released after more than 16 years of racist, vindictive imprisonment for a crime they did not commit. A Labour government presided over this heinous frame-up and rammed through the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act in the climate of anti-Irish hysteria. Upon their release, Patrick Hill stated outside the Old Bailey:

"The police told us from the start that they knew we hadn't done it.... They told us that we were selected and they were going to frame us, just to keep the people in there happy. That's what it's all about: to save face.

"Justice! I don't think the people in there have got the intelligence nor the honesty to spell the word, never mind dispense it. They're rotten!"

The presiding judge at the trial dismissed the charges of torture and forced confessions, claiming that this would have to be the result of a "conspiracy... unprecedented in the annals of British criminal history" (*Economist*, 2 March). The conspiracy to keep the men behind bars for life was pursued with ferocity and went right to the top of the British ruling class. During the appeal hearings defence lawyers again showed how the cops beat "confessions" out of the men, fabricated and rewrote interrogation notes and forged custody documents. Refusing the Birmingham Six leave to appeal in March 1976, Lord Widgery announced that "There was no evidence to suggest the Six had received any knocking about in custody beyond the ordinary" (*Guardian*, 15 March). And in remarks reported in the *Spectator* of August 1990 and then also quoted in the *Guardian* (15 March), Lord Denning was very forthright: "We shouldn't have all these campaigns to get



Finally freed after sixteen years: the Birmingham Six outside Old Bailey, 14 March.

James Gray

the Birmingham Six released if they'd been hanged. They'd have been forgotten, and the whole community would be satisfied."

Immediately after the Birmingham Six were freed, the Home Secretary set up a cover-up commission "to review all stages of the criminal justice process". A target of this body will be Chris Mullin, Labour MP and author of *Error of Judgment—The truth about the Birmingham bombings* who fought their convictions and has refused to name the men he interviewed responsible for the criminal indiscriminate pub bombings for which the Six were framed. Meanwhile, Labour's Roy Hattersley grotesquely lectured that: "While it is important to emphasise that most of our police officers act honourably, and our judiciary

is generally perceptive and fair-minded, the case of the Birmingham Six, following the conviction of the Guildford detainees, has done much to damage the reputation of British justice. It is essential that that damage is repaired as quickly as possible."

The "damage" will not be repaired: British injustice—administered by Labour and Tory governments alike—has been very much exposed for the rotten system that it is. This is the third anti-Irish "terrorism" frame-up to collapse in the past 18 months. In October 1989 the Guildford Four were released. Then the government admitted the case against the Maguire Seven was a fraud. In all these cases, the convictions were based on fabricated forensic "evidence", torture and lies. Recently, four men have been

released following claims of police malpractice and racism in the notorious West Midlands police force which carried out the interrogations of the Six.

Putting the venal judges, politicians and police behind bars for the rest of their lives and millions of pounds would not compensate for what has been done to the Birmingham Six. These men—"guilty" only of being Irish—lost the better part of their adult lives behind bars. Today the victims of a similar racist frame-up—the Tottenham Three—still languish in prison, as do countless other victims of racist British "justice". True vengeance for these victims will be exacted only when victorious workers revolution sweeps this rotten, racist capitalist system away, along with its Labourite flotsam and jetsam. ■

which are influenced by their membership of the Church" (*Irish Times*, 14 March). In fact opinion polls indicate that a majority of Irish people favour lifting restrictions on the sale of condoms.

Haughey's proposals came in the wake of a circuit court decision to increase the fine against the Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA) to £500 for selling condoms inside the Dublin Virgin Megastore. At present condoms can only be sold by chemists, and since more than a quarter of the Republic's 1100 pharmacies refuse to stock them, condoms are not available in many, mainly rural, areas. Moreover since the 1985 Family Planning Act amendment prohibits advertising the availability of condoms, and many chemists keep their stocks hidden under the counter, this is not an insignificant issue in a climate of social and sexual repressiveness. Haughey's minimal dispensations were also the result of public pressure to deal with the AIDS epidemic, after the government's minuscule advertising campaign telling people to stop having sex. In fact the Irish government, true to form, has entirely ignored this disease, and there has been no research funding, serious education at schools, or adequate compensation for haemophiliacs. Their attitude reflects that of the Catholic Bishop of Limerick, Dr Newman, who grossly declared:

"The AIDS issue is a red herring of the

first order.... Those countries of Europe where condoms are to be got here, there, and everywhere are infested with the disease."

—*Irish Times*, 11 March

And his colleague, the Bishop of Meath, Dr Smith, even tried to suggest that condoms were responsible for the spread of AIDS.

The Irish Church hierarchy's reaction is part of a general assertion, from promoting capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe to excoriating "liberation theology" in Latin America, of the Holy Church of Rome's reactionary and authoritarian teachings, that has taken place under Polish Solidarność godfather, Pope Wojtyła. In Ireland the Church establishment is also reacting to the perception that Mary Robinson's election heralds a period of secular and liberal change. With the politicians of Fianna Fáil—old style operators hitherto attuned to the faithful's obligation to have quiet chats with the bishops before making any proposals on the social terrain—seemingly infected with this liberal mood and talking of legislation and white papers on contraception, divorce and homosexuality, the Church wants to call a halt. The bishops' spokesman, Dr Duffy, insisted upon their right and duty "to proclaim the moral law" and they expected convinced Catholics, including legislators, to take account of this (*Irish Times*, 14 March).

Historically the Church has played a key role in the consolidation of a reactionary bourgeois state in the Republic. With the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, the Catholic Church consolidated a leading role in both social and political life, taking upon itself the control of health, education and the "moral well-being" of Irish society. De Valera's constitution of 1937 was written in close collaboration with leading elements of the Church and codified the clerical nature of the state. Though the Church failed to get the Canon law incorporated in the Constitution, Article 44 recognised its "special position", and the influence of the Church was strong, particularly as regards the role of women, the family and so-called "moral" issues. According to Edward Cahill, a Jesuit and one drafter of the 1937 Constitution:

"Women are not suited for certain occupations, a woman is by nature fitted for home work; and it is this which is best adapted to preserve her modesty and promote the good upbringing of Children and the well-being of the family."

—Quoted in C Curtin et al, *Gender in Irish Society*, 1987

Though a referendum in 1972 removed Article 44 from the Constitution, the influence of the Church in the state remains strong and pervasive.

The Church owns and controls 88 per cent of all secondary schools, most of the hospitals, and huge plots of real estate.

Their stranglehold on the health service, and the desire to keep Irish women "in their place", led to the biggest church/state row in 1950-51 when the then Minister for Health, Dr Noel Browne, attempted to introduce the Mother and Child Scheme, a limited free health programme for pregnant mothers and young children. Within months the Church crushed the scheme and had the government brought down. Prior to this the Church played a key role in the Cold War purges of the workers movement, getting the Labour Party to expel its left wing on charges of "Bolshevism" and to drop its constitutional aim of a "Workers Republic". In the 1970s when the government made its only "serious" attempt to introduce non-denominational schools, the Church bitterly and successfully opposed the proposal. In Northern Ireland it openly opposes integrated education.

Though not as openly, the Presbyterian churches there are also committed to segregated education. On social issues they vie with the Catholic Church in reaction. It was their pressure which halted the extension of the British 1967 Act decriminalising abortion to Northern Ireland, forcing thousands of Northern women to travel to Britain for expensive abortions. In the 1980s when prominent southern gay activist, Senator David Norris, took the Irish state to the Euro-

continued on page 11

Soviet Union...

(Continued from page 12)

Europe to the Middle East.

The military's increasing anger crystallised and came to the surface when the Lithuanian nationalists declared "independence" last March. Here, finally, the military cadre were determined to draw the line against further retreat. Deputy chief of staff General Vladimir Denisov wrote in the trade-union newspaper *Trud* that "the carrying out of the policy of the present Lithuanian leaders for secession is pregnant with danger for the security not only of the Baltic republics and the USSR, but for all of Europe". A Sajudis activist who negotiated with the Kremlin leadership reported that Aleksandr Yakovlev, then Gorbachev's chief lieutenant, "kept talking about the colossal pressure they were feeling from the Army".

Ever since, the pressure on Gorbachev from the armed forces has intensified, especially with US imperialism flaunting its power in the Persian Gulf War. This autumn, the Soviet president originally wanted to cancel the traditional 7 November parades commemorating the anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution to avoid trouble. The mayors of Moscow and Leningrad declared there would be no celebrations. But the military high command insisted that the Revolution Day parades be held, and so they were (see "Soviet Union: Winter of



Perestroika produces economic chaos: Muscovites clamouring outside bank after government scraps large-denomination ruble notes.

tarian revolution. They were not seeking to make Soviet Russia into just another world power, peacefully coexisting for decades with the imperialist powers. Stalin sought to exterminate the internationalist traditions of the Red Army by killing Tukhachevsky, Blücher, Gamarnik (the brilliant Jewish chief political commissar) and the other Red commanders from the Civil War, just as he killed the surviving leaders of the Bolshevik Revolu-

tion following the suppression of the Revolution of 1905: "What you want are great upheavals. But what we want is a Great Russia!" This cry of reaction is now emblazoned word for word on the banners of today's ultra-nationalistic "Fatherland" group. Petrushenko's fellow "red colonel" Alksnis recently went on television with the popular pro-tsarist TV journalist Aleksandr Nevzorov, where they jointly attacked the Baltic separatists. Alksnis openly proclaims, "I find more in common with Nevzorov the monarchist than Comrade Yakovlev the Communist."

If Petrushenko echoes Stolypin, some of his fellow "patriots" sound like the tsarist Black Hundreds or their spiritual heirs of today, the Russian fascists of Pamyat. Major General Viktor Filatov, editor of the influential *Military-Historical Journal*, reprinted a 1910 book in praise of the Russian army which recommended that Jews not be taken into military service alleging that they are physically weak and lacking in character. General Filatov was planning to reprint that notorious forgery of the tsarist bureaucracy, the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion", as an authentic religious document "like the Bible or the Koran"! That such anti-Semitic filth appears in a journal of the Soviet armed forces should scandalise and infuriate genuinely Soviet-patriotic officers.

While many officers would be embarrassed by such patent ravings of obscurantist racialism, the Russian Orthodox church—the strongest bastion of mediaeval obscurantism—is now addressing appeals to the military, seeking to subvert the army formed to defend the workers state. The German imperialists, who strove to carve up the Soviet Union in 1941 through Operation Barbarossa, now send columns of demobilised Soviet Army trucks home loaded with German care packages. According to the nightly news programme *Vremya*, these were handed over to the Soviet Army as a gift to the Russian Orthodox church!

Appeals to Great Russian chauvinism have led to the undermining of the multinational Soviet Army, inciting ethnic blood feuds among soldiers, and between soldiers

and officers, and played a large part in the rise of pogromist "national militias" in the republics. The fact that Alksnis (with Gorbachev) spearheads the ideological campaign against the Baltic restorationists with the Russian monarchist Nevzorov's reportage plays right into the hands of the Baltic separatists, who slanderously identify the Soviet Union with the tsarist empire. Military officers who want to defend the Soviet Union on a socialist basis must take as their model the communist internationalists of Trotsky's Red Army, not the Stalinist criminals who usurped power and murdered the earlier revolutionary generation.

At present the military hardliners have a conservative attitude towards economic change because the "democrats" link capitalist restoration to the break-up of the USSR and global appeasement of Western imperialism. However, anti-Western Russian nationalism can also serve as an ideological basis for capitalist counterrevolution. The ideology of the tsarist autocracy was Russian nationalism in its most obscurantist, mediaeval form. Slavophile reactionaries like Dostoyevsky denounced the soul-destroying materialism of the Western bourgeois world. This in no way prevented the tsarist bureaucracy from promoting capitalist development under the direction of Western European financial centres, especially the Paris Bourse. (To this day French rentiers still expect to cash in on their tsarist bonds.)

Particularly after the Revolution of 1905, the weak Russian bourgeoisie came to see it needed the knout of the tsarist autocracy to protect capitalist property. In this period the prime minister Stolypin consciously fostered the development of wealthy peasant smallholders (*kulaks*) as a counterweight to the revolutionary and socialist proletariat.

In many respects the "red colonels" of Soyuz are similar to Slobodan Milosevic, the hardline Stalinist boss of Serbia, the dominant national republic in Yugoslavia. Milosevic is a rabid Serb chauvinist who is threatening war against the secessionist republican governments of Slovenia and Croatia. At the same time, he is carrying out a Polish-style economic "shock treatment" dictated by Western bankers. Over half a million Serbian workers are to be thrown into the streets as thousands of "unprofitable" enterprises are shut down. New laws in Yugoslavia allow for the wholesale privatisation of socialised property. A regime of "patriots" like Petrushenko and Filatov in Russia would act in much the same way as their Serbian counterparts.

A return to Stalinist order?

General Filatov ranks Gorbachev with Lenin and Stalin as the three brilliant Soviet leaders of the century. But he says that Gorbachev "should find another Beria. Now we have means of persuasion, but no means of compulsion, and one cannot exist without the other. That is nonsense. Gorbachev has a carrot, but no whip." General Filatov and his friends may long for a return to the Stalinist order. But the conditions which underlay the Stalin regime of the 1930s-40s and the very different conditions underlying the Brezhnev regime of the '70s do not exist in the Soviet Union today and cannot be



Soviet veterans of Afghan war left out of 9 May World War II victory parade. Gorbachev's abandonment of Afghanistan has emboldened US imperialism.

Decision", *Workers Vanguard* no 515, 30 November 1990). When a week later Gorbachev addressed 1000 military officers, he met with undisguised hostility.

Of all sections of the bureaucracy and intelligentsia, the military cadre most keenly feel the loss of Soviet power and influence in the world. A junior officer at the elite Lenin Political-Military Academy in Moscow, Major Yuri Laskin, told an American journalist: "The Communist Party made our country a great state—a superpower, as you call it" (*Washington Post*, 20 November 1990). Major Laskin no doubt deeply believes, because he has been so taught, that the goal of the October Revolution was to transform backward Russia into a global superpower on a par with the United States. The underlying vision of the Bolshevik Revolution outlined in Lenin's *The State and Revolution* is quite alien to the Lenin Political-Military Academy. Lenin, Trotsky and their comrades saw the Russian October as the first act of an international proletarian revolution which would lead to a global communist society through the withering away of the nation-state.

This vision was shared by the officer corps of Trotsky's Red Army. Marshals Tukhachevsky, Blücher and their comrades were fighting for a strong Soviet state as a bastion of international prole-

lution. In this blood sacrifice to "peace" with imperialism, Stalin criminally sabotaged the defence of the Soviet Union and vastly facilitated Hitler's invasion.

Then, as now, the Stalinist bureaucracy used Russian nationalism in the service of conciliating imperialism. The difference today is that Stalin's heirs, both in Yeltsin's Russian parliament and in the army, have jettisoned even deformed "socialist" elements of Stalinism and keep only the Great Russian nationalism. Whereas Stalin spoke of defending "the socialist Fatherland", the Soyuz leaders speak of defending "the Fatherland". Whereas Stalin called for "building socialism in one country", the "red colonel" Petrushenko offers "the future of a great Russia":

"The sustenance of the liberals, the so-called 'democrats,' has been Western propaganda. We have two camps now in this country: the democrats and the patriots. The democrats have had their day. We, the patriots, will now dictate the future direction of the country. We are people who don't rush off to the U.S. to read lectures or open foreign bank accounts. We stay at home and think through our plans for the future of a great Russia."

—*Washington Post*,
28 December 1990

Petrushenko is here echoing the famous declaration of the tsarist minister



Keller/NY Times

Russian-nationalist hardline Stalinists: anti-Semitic Major General Viktor I Filatov (left) and Soyuz spokesman Colonel Viktor Alksnis.



Guardian

recreated.

The hardline military man Filatov, like the pro-Western "democrats", reduces the Stalin regime to police-state terror personified by Beria. However, Stalin appealed to and exploited the enormous reservoir of *socialist idealism* created by the October Revolution. Even staunch anti-Stalinists who lived through the 1930s, such as the humanistic writer Anatoli Rybakov, recount the enthusiasm with which workers, poor peasants and leftist intellectuals threw themselves into the industrialisation drive and collectivisation of agriculture. "Socialism in one country" was a lie, but it was a lie deeply believed by Communist militants at the time. Nikita Khrushchev, who typified the worker turned party functionary of the 1920s, recalls that in 1930:

"As Stalin was speaking, I thought to myself, 'Here is a man who knows how to direct our minds and energies toward the priority goals of industrializing our country and assuring the impregnability of our Homeland's borders against the capitalist world; the well-being of the people is obviously in firm hands.'"

—Khrushchev Remembers (1970)

During and after World War II, Stalin was able to mobilise the Soviet patriotism of the masses. In the late '40s the workers and collective farmers dedicated themselves to rebuilding their war-devastated country. The pre-war level of industrial output was restored within five years.

However, after Stalin died in early 1953, the Kremlin oligarchy could no longer rule through a combination of mass political mobilisation and police-state repression (ie totalitarianism). The attempt to do so would have led to a popular revolt such as occurred at the time in Eastern Europe (East Germany in 1953, Poland and Hungary in 1956). Under Khrushchev and even more so under Brezhnev, the Soviet leadership based its popular appeal on consumerism. During the 1970s the Soviet Union was governed by a tacit social contract. The people were guaranteed employment without having to work hard, a stable cost of living and a level of consumption substantially higher than a generation earlier. In return the people were expected not to meddle in politics, allowing the *nomenklatura* to run the country as it saw fit.

However, during the late 1970s the economic conditions underpinning the Brezhnevite social contract rapidly eroded. The one-sided concentration on heavy industry during the Stalin era made it relatively easy for his successors to rapidly increase the output of consumer goods by shifting the direction of investment. But beginning in the mid-'70s the Brezhnev regime *cut back* the rate of industrial investment in order to keep up with the American arms build-up without reducing living standards. By 1980 the Soviet industrial plant was relatively more antiquated by world standards than it had been a decade earlier.

Until around 1970 the Soviet Union still had a large pool of surplus labour in the countryside. Thus the transfer of young people from rural villages to urban factories

Moscow,
23 February:
over one-quarter
million Soviets
demonstrate on
Army Day. Poster
demands that
Bush stop
bombing and
killing Iraqis.



or Siberian mines in itself raised the overall level of labour productivity. However, during the 1970s the continuing exodus of farmers' sons and daughters weakened and unbalanced the Soviet economy. The rapidly shrinking and ageing workforce on the collective and state farms is the main reason why the enormous agricultural investments of the Brezhnev era failed to produce a comparable increase in crop yields.

The inflationary boom in the world market price of oil, natural gas and gold in the 1970s provided a major windfall for the Soviet economy. The inflow of petrodollars enabled the Brezhnev regime to maintain a relatively high level of investment, military spending and consumption. In particular, large quantities of feed grain for cattle were imported so that Soviet citizens could eat more meat.

No small part of the external stability enjoyed by the Brezhnev regime was paid for by the heroic revolutionary war of the Vietnamese, who took the heat of American imperialism. (Today, children of these heroes toil in unspeakable poverty as immigrant workers in the Soviet Union.) The collapse of the world oil-price boom in the early '80s signalled the collapse of the Brezhnevite Stalinist order.

The "red colonel" Petrushenko blames the rise of the "free market" intellectuals to positions of influence on the pernicious doings of Western propagandists. However, the generation of party first secretaries represented by Gorbachev, Yeltsin and Shevardnadze were not somehow seduced by the intellectual arguments of Milton Friedman or Friedrich Hayek (whom they doubtless never read). The drive towards a "market economy" was a reactionary response to the *objective impasse* of the Soviet economy after six decades of bureaucratic parasitism and mismanagement in the name of "building socialism in one country".

Dominant elements of the bureaucracy and intelligentsia saw no other way to increase productivity and efficiency than the whip of market competition (the whip of another Beria wouldn't do it). This was clearly stated by the economist Nikolai Shmelyov, who in 1985 was the first to openly advocate unemployment as a means of improving labour discipline:

"Today it is, I believe, clear to everyone that we owe disorderliness, drunkenness, and shoddy work largely to excessively full employment. We must discuss fearlessly and in businesslike terms what we could gain from a comparatively small reserve army of labor.... A real danger of losing your job and going onto a temporary allowance or being obliged to work wherever you are sent is a very good cure for laziness, drunkenness and irresponsibility."

—quoted in US Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Gorbachev's Economic Plans* (1987)

Formerly married to a daughter of Khrushchev, Shmelyov is here speaking as a bona fide member of the *nomenklatura*, not some out-of-the-way "dissident". Today, such opinions are rampant throughout the intelligentsia.

Naturally, Soviet working people dread the prospect of a transition to a "market economy". The most hated and despised class of people in the USSR today are the price-gouging petty capitalist entrepreneurs ("cooperativists") and the "Sovbour" party bureaucrats who are now looting everything they can from the collective economy to finance their buy-in to the new property-owning class. A poll, reported in the *Wall Street Journal* (2 January), indicates that only 5 per cent of the Soviet population supports allowing the market to determine prices, while 75 per cent want to preserve controls on at least some consumer goods and services. Soviet working people desperately want to preserve their jobs, maintain a

stable cost of living and restore consumption to pre-perestroika levels.

However, they do not want to return to the bureaucratic commandism and police-state controls of the Brezhnev era. The "red colonel" Petrushenko may believe that "We, the patriots, will dictate the future direction of the country", but that will not be so easy. It is not only the intellectuals who have utilised the freedoms created by the disintegration of the old Stalinist order. In the summer of 1989 coal miners went on strike in the Donbass of the eastern Ukraine and Kuzbass in Siberia and effectively took over these regions.

Since then there have been numerous strikes and job actions, many of them organised by official trade unions which are no longer under tight bureaucratic control. In December a conference of 3000 enterprise directors in Moscow called for a three-year ban on strikes. If the army and police move to suppress striking workers and their unions, the "law and order" hardliners will lose much of the public sympathy they now have as a reaction against the prevailing political and economic chaos.

Soviet working people must understand that both the "democratic" intellectuals and "patriotic" colonels are products of the terminal degeneration of the reactionary and parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy. Both are enemies and oppressors of the proletariat in the interests of world capitalism, the "democrats" of Yeltsin's camp more directly and consciously so. It is high time that the multinational Soviet proletariat comes forth in its own defence, against the forces of capitalist restoration, in the process sweeping away all wings of the bureaucracy.

It is the ghastly legacy of this bureaucracy that the gains of the October Revolution, chiefly the planned collectivised economy—which represents the greatest victory for the proletariat in history—lies in shambles. The privileged *nomenklatura* has plundered and undermined the Soviet economy for decades. Now they are preparing the death blow: the parasites are ever more openly sabotaging the economy so as to paralyse working-class resistance and are looting everything to buy their way into the top of a new order of direct imperialist exploitation and mastery over the Soviet peoples. Soviet workers: every position must be defended against the parasitic bureaucracy and the gathering forces of bourgeois mafias.

The Stalinists committed monstrous crimes, demanded great sacrifices of the Soviet working people and told endless lies, all in the name of "Communism". But in the coming class battles in defence of the working people, it is the internationalist programme of Lenin's Bolsheviks, carried forth by the Trotskyist Left Opposition in the 1920s and the Fourth International founded in 1938—and the International Communist League today—that must point the way forward.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 521, 1 March 1991

France...

(Continued from page 4)

çaise fascists attacked the Jussieu campus, where Boudarel teaches. Since then a number of fascist raids have taken place and yesterday, 27 March at noon, thirty fascist thugs, helmeted, armed with baseball bats and shouting "Boudarel, criminal!" attacked LTF militants, students and members of workers organisations at the Mont-Saint-Aignan campus, near Rouen. This attack targeted the united front rally called by the LTF for 1 pm around the slogans, "Hands off Boudarel!" and "Stop the Witch hunt!", which could not be held.

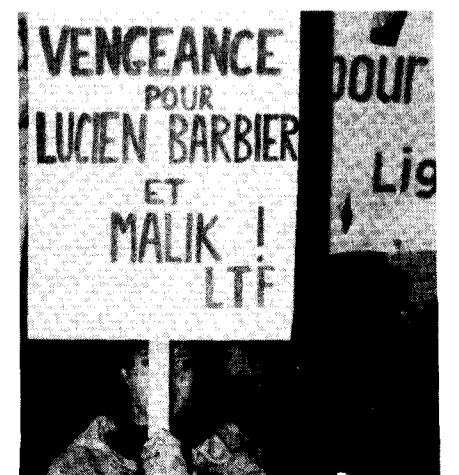
This fascist raid took place the same

day that Action Française and National Front scum called for a demonstration at Odéon, ending at the Jussieu campus in central Paris. But the signatories on a petition to defend Boudarel have no strategy to organise his defence against the murderous intentions of the fascists since putting pressure on the government is a dangerous illusion which leads to defeat. Education Minister, Lionel Jospin called Boudarel a "kapo in ... a concentration camp". It is necessary to look to mass mobilisations of students, professors and campus workers and especially, towards the working class and the unions.

This fascist raid took place the day after the point-blank assassination of young Djemel Chettouh by a security guard at a suburban Paris shopping mall. This was a logical conclusion of the gov-

ernment campaign of police terror which targets Beurs and "immigrants"—the "enemy within" during the Gulf War.

At Rouen, a few hundred experienced unionists could make these Hitler-lovers eat the dust. In Paris, the situation calls for somewhat larger mobilisations. But a demonstration one-tenth the size of the biggest pacifist demos would be sufficient. The moment is long overdue to stop the fascists through united action of all their intended victims. The organisations of the working class—parties, unions—Beurs, "immigrants", former porteurs de valise [French militants who actively supported Algeria in the war against French imperialism], students, teachers, campus workers, all of us must mobilise to defend Boudarel against the attacks of the reaction and its fascist vanguard. ■



French Trotskyists say: Vengeance for racist murders!

Boston...

(Continued from page 4)

"agenda" is *genocide* of black people, Jews, Catholics, immigrants, Hispanics, Asians, gays, unionists, leftists—most of us. As an elementary act of self-defense, all intended victims of the race-hate terror David Duke threatens must mobilize in a massive, integrated, defiant demonstration to stop this fascist—*genocide is not debatable!* In 1773 Old South Meeting House was the organizing center against British tyranny and where the march to the Boston Tea Party began. In 1991 let's make it the site of organized opposition to the lynch mobs David Duke seeks to whip up! Demonstrate outside the Old South Meeting House, Thursday, March 28 at 5:30 p.m.! Be there!

Today David Duke hides the white hood and the swastika under a three-piece suit—don't be fooled by this fascist with a face-lift. Duke got his start as a swastika-clad Hitler-lover at Louisiana State University and was known as "The Nazi of L.S.U." He went on to become the "Imperial Wizard" of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, a media-sharp storm-trooper for racist reaction who expanded the Klan's influence from Louisiana into the rest of the South and into New York, New England and California. Duke says the Nazi Holocaust of six million Jews was a "myth" and sold Nazi tracts out of his "legislative office." Under the "Rebel" label Duke has marketed songs like "Some Niggers Never Die" and "Kajun

Washington, DC,
November 1982:
SL-initiated
Labor/Black
Mobilization
stops the
fascist KKK.



Ku Klux Klan." Duke organized a vigilante "Klan Border Watch" in southern California, targeting immigrant workers from Mexico and Latin America for extermination.

The founder of the sinister "National Association for the Advancement of White People," Duke was formerly in the fold of the Dixiecrat Democratic Party. In 1988 he ran for President on the ticket of the Populist Party—a nest of fascists including the paramilitary anti-Semites of Posse Comitatus and die-hard racists of the bomb-throwing States Rights Party. In 1989 Duke joined the Republican Party and rode the coattails of Reagan/Bush reaction into office as a Louisiana state legislator. Today he comes to Boston on the wind of Bush's "Operation Desert Storm" to set a chill-

ing example of what the "New World Order" means at home for minorities and all decent people.

Duke's Klansmen have long had their sights set on Boston for recruitment for racist terror. They were emboldened by the outpouring of race hatred in the streets which killed busing for school integration. But this town of multi-ethnic and heavily Catholic immigrants was not fertile ground for these cross-burners and white supremacists whose aim is a bleached white America of total conformity. Now that the "Massachusetts Miracle" has bottomed out into a nightmare of unemployment and desperation, now when Confederate flags fly at Harvard, now when unbridled cop terror is unleashed in black communities (as in the grotesque Stuart case) and now when

skinhead fascists attack gays, Jews and Asians, Duke hopes to cash in in Boston and deflect anger away from united class struggle against this whole system of racist capitalist oppression and into race hatred to divide and conquer us.

Even in this deeply class- and race-divided city, sectors of the organized labor movement represent a potentially powerful weapon in the struggle for social justice. Our unions represent the unity of all working people against the race-haters and we must use our social power, as those who produce the wealth of society, in struggle against the exploiters. When labor has flexed its muscle in defense of all working people the fascists have been stopped cold, as they were in the massive labor/black mobilization initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee which stopped the KKK and Nazi skinheads from parading for genocide through the streets of Philadelphia in 1988.

In October 1982, decent people of Boston took a solid anti-racist stand and stopped the KKK from marching in Boston's Government Center. 1,500 people—including Irish from South Boston and Dorchester, Italians and Portuguese from East Boston and Somerville, students from Cambridge, blacks from Roxbury, unionists, and leftists scored a big victory over the race-haters who would divide and destroy us if left unopposed. That's the kind of action that's needed today. All out on March 28 to stop the deadly threat David Duke stands for! ■

Revolutionary History...

(Continued from page 2)

such screed could be defended by reference to the writings of Marx and Engels, as Chris Ford does in his letter in *Revolutionary History* Volume 3, No. 3 (Spring 1991). The Russia Marx and Engels wrote of had been ruled for centuries by tsarism; a few years later it became clear, at least to Lenin, that Russia had been thrust onto the road of capitalist development and clear to Trotsky that this would mean capitalist enterprise in its most advanced form. Out of the contradiction between a backward and autocratic Russia and a developing new economy and social classes arose the February and October Revolutions of 1917. Most of the editorial board seems content to let Chris Ford have the last word on this subject; we do not want to be part of an editorial board where this has to be a subject of debate.

From 1949-1953 the American Workers Party (WP) of Max Shachtman and (for a brief period in 1950-51) the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of James Cannon acted as publicity agents for the URDP, to their shame and later embarrassment. The most one can say about the Workers Party in this regard is that its publication of articles which hailed the murder of Soviet General Votutin in the midst of WWII (one of which was proposed for publication in *Revolutionary History*) was at least consistent with their failure to defend the USSR from Hitler. Moreover, the Shachtmanites' support to the Ukrainian nationalists presaged their 1958 liquida-

tion into the Cold War Socialist Party. In any case neither the WP nor the SWP made the distinction between the URDP and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) which Chris Ford insists on. Both portrayed the UPA as a sort of underground wing of the URDP and both uncritically hailed the UPA's guerrilla struggle against the Stalinist regime. The WP's *Labor Action* carried regular reports of UPA activity; the 6 November 1950 issue, for example, mourned the death of UPA General Taras Chuprinka (Roman Shukhevich).

The UPA was founded in 1940 in the newly Soviet-occupied western Ukraine, in collaboration with the Wehrmacht and explicitly to fight against the Red Army. It is well known that all wings of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism collaborated with Hitler when he invaded the Ukraine in 1941. The Nazis quickly revealed they had very little regard for Slavic "untermenschen" and even less for Ukrainian independence; nationalist sentiment quickly turned against them. Nonetheless the UPA spent more time fighting the red anti-fascist Soviet partisans than it did the Germans, even according to the slavish apology for the nationalists written by John Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (Columbia University Press, 1963). Armstrong says that the Stefan Bandera wing of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (the OUN-B) dominated the UPA by the Fall of 1942; we assume that the Bandera forces are the supposed "left" wing of Ukrainian nationalism which Chris Ford refers to. Before the Banderaites won control of the UPA it had been collaborating with the remnants of S. Petliura's Ukrainian government in exile.

Armstrong never mentions the fact that anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic pogroms were synonymous with Petliura's Ukrainian-nationalist White forces who massacred tens of thousands of Jews during the Russian Civil War. Petliura has been the hero of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism ever since, and Armstrong can't help but use a quote which reveals much about Ukrainian nationalism after 1941:

"Regardless of the negative attitude toward the Jews as a weapon of Moscovite-Bolshevik imperialism, we regard it as inexpedient at the present stage of the international situation to take part in anti-Jewish actions, in order not to become a blind tool in foreign hands and not to divert the attention of the masses from the principal enemies."
—Conference of OUN(B), 1942

The Ukrainian nationalists also found it inexpedient to mention capitalist restoration after the Ukrainian masses had experienced the mass murder and looting of the Nazi occupation. After 1942 most Ukrainian nationalist organizations (with the possible exception of the Monarchists) changed their tune in order to avoid losing all credibility; the UPA started talking about socialized property and even "classless society." Chris Ford provides all the quotes.

But the fascist social character of the Bandera forces never changed. Mikhail Baitalsky, a Jewish Ukrainian Trotskyist imprisoned in Vorkuta with some of Bandera's forces in the early 1950s, describes their all-pervasive anti-Semitism in the installment of his memoirs just published in the March issue of the *Bulletin In Defense of Marxism*. He also writes what he learned of activities of the Banderaite "partisans":

"In the months when we were located near Kovel, I learned of the fate of several little nearby places and settlements. I will not speak of the fate of the local Jews; you can imagine what happened to them. But Poles also lived there. The Bandera forces butchered, one after another, all the Polish families who had not managed to go into hiding. They slaughtered them not with guns but with sabers. They derived pleasure from hacking up other peoples' children with their bare hands and massacring women. Uk-

rainian women who lived in these villages told me about this."

Up until the end of the war the UPA collaborated with the Germans and one can only shudder when imagining the probable nature of their anti-Soviet guerrilla activity after the war. Armstrong reports that they made the chairmen of the new collective farms special targets. Needless to say they had little popular support. Most UPA units had escaped into the waiting arms of western intelligence forces by 1947. By 1950 they had little in the way of operational forces in the Ukraine. Kim Philby reports (*My Silent War*) that continued support for Bandera was a bone of contention between MI6 and the CIA in the early '50s; luckily Philby was in a position to spike both the CIA and MI6's attempts to give Bandera's bands concrete assistance.

As for Ivan Majstrenko, he was part of the Borot'bist current of left Ukrainian nationalism which was won to the Bolshevik Party in the early 1920s and he may genuinely have been a communist once. But after he joined forces with the UPA he was only an insignificant publicity agent and left tail on Banderaite fascism. In 1948 his URDP joined the Ukrainian General Council (Rada) formed in Munich, home base for anti-Soviet western intelligence agencies and all their captive-nations hangers-on. The Marxist ideological veneer of the URDP didn't fool much of anybody—except some erstwhile Trotskyists, blinded by their own Stalinophobia.

Mikhail Baitalsky didn't hail the Banderaites as fellow fighters in the struggle against Stalin; we can't be part of an editorial board which allies with their virtual equivalents in the Soviet Union today.

Naturally, however, our members internationally will want to read such interesting archival material as you produce, which was the reason for our original involvement on the Editorial Board of *Revolutionary History*.

Fraternally,
Alastair Green
for the International Communist League

Spartacist League/Britain

Glasgow PO Box 150
Glasgow G3 6DX
041-332 0788

London PO Box 1041
London NW5 3EU
071-485 1396

Dublin Spartacist Youth Group

PO Box 2944
Dublin 1
01-530921

Major/Kinnock...

(Continued from page 1)

removing the poll tax as a central issue for revolutionary political struggle. While the Labourite windbags in parliament are making the most of the Tories' difficulties in extricating themselves from the poll tax, militants will not easily forget who stood where. It was not only the open Kinnockites and their partners in the trade union bureaucracy who either opposed or sought to derail real struggle. The cowardly legalists of the Militant tendency, the leadership of the poll tax federation, threatened to fink to the cops after the police riot in Trafalgar Square a year ago. Labour-led councils throughout the country enforced the tax down the line. In some areas, Labour "lefts" postured by personally not paying the tax, while simultaneously setting and enforcing high bills for everyone else—and cutting jobs and services to boot! Such antics triggered strike action by justly outraged council workers in London's Lambeth borough and in Liverpool.

The imposition of the poll tax first in Scotland was an aspect of the oppression of the Scottish nation. There the prolonged historical betrayals of the Labour Party have fuelled the growth of nationalism and the Scottish National Party (SNP) has been able to cash in on Labour's abysmal stance of collecting the poll tax. But the SNP's "can pay, won't pay" call was windbaggy; in places where they controlled the councils the SNP implemented the tax. These aspiring rulers of a devolved capitalist Scotland fear and loathe the unleashing of the social power of the organised workers movement. During the 1988 protests against the Tory attacks on the NHS, the SNP told their members not to bother with them. The SNP is happy to be the lapdog of the imperialists—including the

English imperialists—as long as it is given its own piece of turf to exploit. Thus, solidarising with "poor little Kuwait", the SNP "critically supported" the imperialist troops in the Gulf. It would quibble over the numbers of Scottish troops mobilised, but it was on board for the "allied" war against Iraq. The SNP also accuses the British government of being "soft" on the Soviet Union over the Baltics and demands that it recognise the counter-revolutionary parliaments of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia (*Scots Independent, March*). And while the Baltic nationalists aspire to oppress the Russian and Polish local populace, significantly the SNP incorporates racist elements whose attitude to the Asian minority in Scotland is akin to that of the fascist National Front. The task remains to build an authentic communist alternative to the Labour traitors and Tartan Tories of the SNP in Scotland.

Depression Britain: poll tax goes, dole queues grow

The Thatcherite dream of "popular capitalism" has been a nightmare. The recent edition of the Central Statistical Office's publication *Social Trends* pointed to the growing inequality in British society, where "the rich get richer, the poor poorer and the rest live on credit" (*Financial Times*, 17 January). Last year saw a record number of people losing their homes through repossession or falling behind in mortgage payments. Cardboard cities for the homeless proliferate, NHS bed closures for 1990 alone meant delays for 340,000 operations, while industrial accidents are rife. Major talks rubbish about "citizens charters" and upgrading essential public services, while at the same time the government attempts to slash 2000 jobs on the already horrendously undermined London transport system. Far from cutting their profits to invest in improving the shabby quality of life here, the British bourgeoisie and their Labour lackeys will all the more relentlessly attack the living standards of the British working masses.

A central factor in the Tory coup against Thatcher was widespread dissatisfaction by the British bourgeoisie at her inability to hold down the rate of inflation. Both the anti-Thatcher Tories and the Labour Party want to enlist the German banks to discipline the working masses. Under the provisions of the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM), uncompetitive industry cannot improve its position through currency devaluation. Instead the factory gates are closed. In presenting his budget, aptly dubbed "good for business", Chancellor Norman Lamont in part invoked ERM rules to justify the maintenance of deflationary measures like high interest rates—and correspondingly high mortgage rates. Put bluntly, the bosses want to drive down wages with the cold douche of mass unemployment. Significantly, in countries subject to the discipline of the ERM, unemployment has been even higher than in Britain: in Spain the rate is 15.8 per cent, in France 9 per cent and in Italy 9.8 per cent.

The bosses' federation CBI has advocated that its member companies freeze pay or defer settlements during the recession and claims that 10 per cent of its organisations are already doing so. IBM, Philips and the hotel chain Trusthouse Forte have formally frozen pay for up to six months. Pointing to such evidence, one business columnist gloated: "Suddenly we seem to be winning the prize that eluded this country through the whole of the 1980s: establishing a wage bargaining system that ensures companies adjust pay to what they can afford, instead of following some national 'going rate'" (*Independent*, 23 March).

But depression measures alone cannot destroy a militant labour movement. Thus, the miners waged a heroic year-long strike against massive pit closures. This strike was only defeated by the unspeakable treachery of the Labour/TUC tops. The gutlessness and perfidy of these labour bureaucrats have emboldened the employers further. To thwart the bosses' attacks today, militant class

struggle and a revolutionary leadership in the unions is called for. Workers must fight for what they need, and not what this clapped-out capitalist system can afford. For mass strikes and plant occupations against factory closings! For work sharing at full pay! For a sliding scale of wages to meet the cost of inflation! The workers movement must champion the interests of all the oppressed, forming defence guards to defend against racist/fascist attacks, and to protect those facing evictions and assaults by bailiffs and poll tax enforcers. Such class struggle, based on a fighting anti-capitalist programme, can turn the tide and open the way to a struggle for proletarian power.

An amusing cartoon in *Labour Briefing* (April) lampoons "Kneel" Kinnock who, having purchased a new pair of spectacles, mutters to himself: "I can see things not visible to the ordinary human eye... Like the difference between the Labour and Tory programmes for the next election." But the *Briefing* cynics are so imbued with Labourism that they fully intend to "fight" for a Kinnock government anyway. Ditto for the likes of the SWP and Militant and the centrists of Workers Power whose latest issue sports the headline: "Finish Off the Tories!" Over the war, Workers Power also claimed it was possible to build an "anti-imperialist" movement in conjunction with the pro-sanctions, pro-UN Tony Benn/CND cabal who devoted their time to witch hunting and setting up leftists for state repression.

On the left there are many who know that the Labourite road is deeply antithetical to a perspective of proletarian revolution. It could hardly be clearer than it is now. We struggle for a revolutionary regroupment of forces under the banner of Leninism-Trotskyism, part of the fight to forge a genuine Bolshevik Party through splitting the working-class base of the Labour Party away from its pro-capitalist tops. The time is long overdue to split from Labourism and fight for Leninism. ■

Ireland...

(Continued from page 7)

pean Courts over its laws against homosexuality, Ian Paisley and his Free Presbyterian Church campaigned around the slogan "Save Ulster from Sodomy". Protestant sectarians in the North ostensibly base themselves on 18th century liberalism, which seems quite enlightened compared to 17th century Catholicism. But in fact their organisations are more akin to 20th century fascism and are merely masquerading as 18th century liberalism. Clerical reaction is deeply embedded, both north and south, and only confirms James Connolly's prediction that imperialist, communal partition would bring a "carnival of reaction".

In recent years the Church's grip on society has been eroded by urbanisation and partial industrialisation. A third of the population now lives in the Dublin metropolitan area, undercutting the old rural bastions of religiosity and priestly control. A recent survey shows that 82 per cent of the population still attends weekly mass, but in Dublin and Cork city the figure is much lower at 64 per cent. And in the heavily unemployed and working class area of Tallaght in Dublin only one in ten attend mass weekly. Still the Catholic Church and its reactionary allies have won every major "moral" battle of the eighties. They forced and won the 1983 referendum to make abortion constitutionally illegal. In 1986 a campaign of fear squashed divorce reforms. Abortion counselling and information services have been under repeat-

ed attack. These "crusades" left Anne Lovett, a frightened pregnant teenager dead in a grotto trying to give birth in secrecy, and meant the gross victimisation of Joanne Hayes in the Kerry babies case. And today, with recession, mounting unemployment, and the stopping-off of the traditional safety valves of migration, the Catholic Church and Irish capitalist bosses alike want to see that the working class, and its specially oppressed women and youth, accept their misery and poverty as "the will of God", that there is no "flying in the face of God" such as strikes and social struggle.

The pressure of bourgeois and Catholic order extends beyond the servile reformist Labour and Workers parties. The republicans of Sinn Féin, in keeping with their nationalism, have repeatedly refused to approach any social issue that might alienate Catholic reaction. The fake left of the Socialist Workers Movement and Militant are happy to keep the present abortion information campaign simply to that, information. The working-class women of this island need free abortion on demand, rather than expensive clinics somewhere in Britain. But this elementary demand is conveniently relegated to the centrist confession boxes of its more "theoretical" publications by the Irish Workers Group. The IWG's capitulation is not narrowly or in the first instance to clerical reaction. Rather like the other fake leftists they wallow in the Labour Party and popular frontist milieu. Thus their omissions around the women question are of a piece with neglecting to mention Northern Ireland and the elementary demand for British troops out in

their statement for the November presidential elections.

This country doesn't need faint hearted "leftists" but a revolutionary party. Religious reaction and communal division are integral to the maintenance of capitalist exploitation and immiseration in Ireland. Without mobilising the working class to overthrow capitalism there will be no escape from the imperialist oppression, sectarian bloodletting and grinding poverty that have been the island's plight for so long. The glaring democratic demands arising in relation to the oppression of women and the role of the Catholic Church can only be won in the context of

an organised working-class struggle for socialist revolution. That is what the Dublin Spartacist Youth Group is fighting for. *For free quality secular education at all levels, a free secular health service, free abortion on demand, free availability of contraceptives, decriminalisation of homosexuality, the complete separation of church and state. For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For the immediate unconditional withdrawal of the British army from Northern Ireland! Not Orange against Green but class against class! No to forcible reunification! For an Irish workers republic part of a socialist federation of the British Isles!* ■

WORKERS HAMMER

Marxist monthly newspaper of the Spartacist League

1-year subscription to *Workers Hammer* for £3
(Overseas subscriptions: Airmail £6.00)

1-year subscription to *Workers Hammer* PLUS 24 issues of *Workers Vanguard*, Marxist fortnightly of the Spartacist League/US for £8.00
All above subscriptions include *Spartacist*, organ of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

3 issues of *Women & Revolution* for £1.50

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone _____

Make cheques payable/post to: Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041, London NWS 3EU

Pro-imperialist "democrats", hardliners and Gorbachev

Where is the Soviet Union going?

Responding to an appeal by a spokesman for the armed forces calling on "all Muscovites to come into the streets" on Soviet Army Day, 23 February, several hundred thousand gathered in Manege Square near the Kremlin under the slogan "the party and the army are one". The demonstration was also called by the "Soyuz" (Union) grouping of parliamentary deputies of Russian-nationalist Stalinist hardliners. In the crisis atmosphere engulfing the Soviet Union, Soyuz spokesman Colonel Viktor Alksnis declared that "Our offspring will curse us if we let the union collapse", warning of the danger of "civil war". Denouncing those who say "Down with the empire", Alksnis openly appealed to reactionary Russian nationalism, invoking the "forefathers [who] died on the battlefields of Borodino" fighting in the tsar's army against Napoleon.

The square and the adjoining streets were a flood of people with red banners. In response to Russian Republic leader Boris Yeltsin, the darling of the pro-Western "democrats", who last week provocatively demanded on nationwide TV that Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev resign, signs declared "Traitor Yeltsin Resign" and "Yeltsin Equals Civil War". There were also signs denouncing the US war on Iraq, including "Bush! Stop the Bombing and Don't Annihilate the Citizens of Iraq". But alongside "Hands Off Lenin" banners there were monarchist emblems, and the demonstration was permeated with outright anti-Semites, with signs putting the Star of David next to the word "Enemy".

The Army Day mobilisation comes only days after a group of 29 organisations—including Soyuz, the Russian Communist Party and the United Front of Toilers (OFT)—issued an appeal in the Soviet Army paper *Krasnaya Zvezda*: "The country has reached a critical point after which come anarchy and chaos, the collapse of the state, poverty and bloodshed." Saying that "fascist-type forces" whose aim is the destruction of the USSR have taken power in parts of the country, they set up a "working conference to consolidate all patriotic and internationalist forces" (*Financial Times*, 18 February). With the prospect of draconian price rises on basic consumer goods in the offing, the situation in the Soviet Union is explosive.

Increasingly, military men have put themselves forward as leaders of the "conservative" Stalinist forces. Many Western observers now consider that Gorbachev has become a captive of the hardliners in the military. Speculation over and even the expectation of a military coup to restore

Part 2: Rise of the military opposition

order have become commonplace in Soviet political life, from the Kremlin to the factory floor. In his bitter resignation statement as foreign minister in December in which he spoke of the spectre of "dictatorship", Eduard Shevardnadze lashed out at the

largely judge our work" (quoted in Dale R Herspring, *The Soviet High Command 1967-1989* [1990]).

The military's dissatisfaction with the effects of economic stagnation was one of the factors leading to Gorbachev's taking



Raymer/National Geographic

Retired Soviet Army officer confronts anti-Communist demonstrator at last year's May Day celebration in Red Square.

"boys in colonels' epaulets" who accused him of selling out to the imperialists. He was referring to the so-called "red colonels" Alksnis and his fellow Soyuz spokesman Vladimir Petrushenko.

It would, however, be wrong to think that the military cadre were from the start hostile to Gorbachev's perestroika and longed to return to the "good old days" of Brezhnev. In the late '70s the Brezhnev regime, facing an economic slowdown, cut back on military procurement, much to the dissatisfaction of the generals and admirals. A section of the high command, led by then chief of staff Nikolai Ogarkov, publicly campaigned for a sweeping modernisation of the USSR's weapons systems, especially its conventional (non-nuclear) arsenal. Brezhnev defended his economic priorities against Ogarkov and his military colleagues by arguing in 1981: "What we are talking about—foodstuffs, consumer goods, the services sphere—is a question of the daily life of millions of people. . . . It is according to how these questions are answered that people

over the Kremlin in 1985 and introducing perestroika (restructuring). The military wing of the bureaucracy had no desire to perpetuate the consumerism and lax labour discipline of the later Brezhnev years, and was willing to experiment with market-oriented measures as a promised means of accelerating economic growth. In the initial period of the Gorbachev regime, official military journals, like *Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil* (Communist in the Armed Forces), ran articles by prominent "reform" economists advocating decentralisation, enterprise autonomy and a greater role for profitability. Writing in 1986, the American Sovietologist George Weickhardt commented:

"...the armed forces have not taken the lead in economic reform, but have become part of a coalition backing the Party on the limited measures it has attempted so far. No military dissent from the Party's reform program has yet appeared in the numerous references to current measures in the military press. Neither has any military leader

criticized the Party's reform measures as too limited or too far-reaching, at least not in the open way that Ogarkov criticized the Party's allocation of national resources."

—"The Soviet Military-Industrial Complex and Economic Reform", *Soviet Economy*, July-September 1986

Military opposition to Gorbachev was not provoked by his market-oriented economic policies but rather by the effects of his "new thinking" in foreign policy, ie, appeasement of the NATO powers, and its domestic repercussions. To prepare the Soviet public for the unilateral pullout from Afghanistan, Gorbachevite propagandists deliberately fostered pacifistic and anti-military sentiments. In 1987 General V Serebriannikov lashed out at "certain writers and publicists" for expressing "decadent and cowardly thoughts which sow the seeds of pacifism".

The withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan at the beginning of 1989 enormously emboldened Western imperialism and set the stage for the subsequent collapse of Soviet power in Eastern Europe, reversing the historic effect of the Red Army's victory over Nazi Germany. The final step was when early last year Gorbachev gave the green light to the capitalist reunification of Germany, leading to the establishment of a powerful Fourth Reich dominating Europe.

The abandonment of Eastern Europe also led to material privation for the Soviet troops who had been stationed there. Army chief of staff Mikhail Moiseyev exclaimed last spring: "We will bring the troops home, but no one has clearly thought what it will cost. Families will find themselves without apartments or work, children without schools" (*Time*, 9 April 1990). Some units brought back from Eastern Europe have been forced to live in tent cities. And with the economy in chaos, there are no jobs available for demobilised soldiers or officers.

Gorbachev and Shevardnadze promised that the abandonment of Eastern Europe would mean the end of the Cold War and a new era of peaceful collaboration with Washington, Bonn and the other NATO capitals. Instead, American imperialism, perceiving that the Soviet leadership has lost its will to fight, launched its greatest military power play since Vietnam—the invasion of the Persian Gulf oil fields and war against Iraq. Five years ago Washington would never have risked carpet-bombing Iraq, a Soviet client state, for fear of igniting World War III. Patriotic Soviet officers and soldiers are rightly appalled by the catastrophic developments from Central

continued on page 8

Return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky! For a Socialist Union of Soviet Republics!