

Thatcher's Cold War heats up at home

Smash Tory anti-union rampage!



Vicious cop rampage against NGA mass picket at Warrington, 29 November. Remember the Pentonville Five (1972), saved by threat of general strike.

'The whole country is watching us!' Those were the words on the lips of many a trade unionist outside the scab print works of Eddie Shah's Messenger group when 4000 members of the embattled National Graphical Association and other trade union supporters confronted an army of 2000 scab-herding cops. Behind Eddie Shah and his small-time scab racket stand his brain-trusters of the zealously anti-union Institute of Directors, the press barons of Fleet Street and the Tory government. Behind the NGA must stand, as it has not so far, the full weight of the organised working class in this country. The bourgeoisie wants to relegate the trade unions to the status of friendly societies of a century ago, wiping out the right to strike, to picket, to enforce the closed shop that were established through struggle. It must be stopped!

The ruling class's provocative and thinly veiled attempt to smash one of the strongest unions in the country is the product of years of capitulation and vacillation by the reformist bureaucracy and a sharp reflection at home of the imperialist drive to war against the deformed/degenerated workers states. Across the board, from the closed shop and the right to strike to the greatest single gain of the proletariat this century, the creation of a planned economy in the Soviet Union, the capitalists are seeking to destroy every significant gain of the workers. This is their answer to a profit system collapsing into crisis. Our answer must be to wrench industry, finance and transport out of their hands through the workers seizure of power.

Whether under Labour or Tory administration,

the capitalist state has been trying to hamstring and cripple the powerful British unions for decades -- from Wilson's 'In Place of Strife' to Heath's Industrial Relations Act to Labour's social contract. Now Thatcher's crew are imposing the Prior and Tebbit acts which effectively outlaw the right to picket and preparing new legislation which brings internal union affairs directly under the control of the bosses' state. The struggle for trade union independence from the capitalist state is an immediate, burning question.

The imposition of a £175,000 fine/court bill on the NGA and the sequestration and seizure of its funds and assets -- the 'legal' theft of union property -- is a decisive escalation in the anti-union offensive. This is an historically strong craft union with a firmly established closed shop tradition and a union-controlled hiring list. When the NGA shut down Fleet Street in a weekend protest strike over the court decision, the press barons seized the opportunity to try and smash the union once and for all in its own bastion in order to introduce job-slashing new technology. From the bosses' view-

point new technology is synonymous with reducing the number of workers. The working class should not oppose new technology, as long as it is not at the workers' expense. That means maintaining and extending union control of hiring -- modernisation without sackings. Make the bosses pay for modernisation -- divide the work among print workers with no reduction in wages! Half the newspaper chains locked out the returning workers with a mass sacking; shamelessly the NGA leadership ordered the other half to return to 'business as usual' instead of shutting down all of Fleet Street as part of an all out print strike, and seizing the print works as ransom against the court theft.

The ferocity of the Tory drive against the unions was expressed in full force at the Warrington mass picket on November 29. Two thousand cops in riot gear ready to crack skulls, their numbers removed to avoid identification. They were there not simply to defend some small-time scab printer, but to teach the workers a bloody lesson. They deliberately smashed up the NGA sound system early on. These were the lessons learned by the British bobbies from their brutal assaults against black and Asian youth in the inner cities two years ago. And these are the people whom Militant supporters on the picket line defend as 'workers in uniform'! On the NGA buses returning to London on the Wednesday morning there was widespread dissatisfaction and anger at the lack of leadership on the picket. With an all-out strike behind it, an explicit call for organised solidarity action and a class-conscious picket

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'The worst punishment a communist could suffer was to be outside the party'

Dear comrades,

With this letter I am applying to rejoin the Spartacist League. I have thought and read a lot since I quit, especially in the last two months, and I believe that I understand the fundamental political basis of the revisionist, opportunist positions I generated and articulated in the last period of my membership. I know that the habits, impulses, petty-bourgeois background that fostered these positions are not combatted or overthrown all at once or through individual effort, but only through participation in the fight to build an international revolutionary party, in differing circumstances and in many struggles. Nevertheless I consider myself to be in agreement with the iSt's programme, and I want to make my contribution to the party, to fight to really assimilate and act on that programme.

When I quit I didn't want to work out why I just wanted to get out. In my resignation letter I acknowledged particular differences that I had had, but never their real roots in the Cold War attacks of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Since February I had to think about where I was going. I could leave politics entirely, go and earn a lot of money and become an unalloyed petty-bourgeois creep. I could try and be just a 'sympathiser' of the SL, which amounts to putting off any real decision. I could ignore and reject what I knew of Trotskyism and become a very highly cynical ORO. What that meant came out pretty vividly when Tom Riley of the ET phoned me, arguing that the SL/ANZ faction fight was an apolitical tussle over power, concealed behind slogan formulation differences (ie the Russian question is a tenth-rate issue), and quite unable to offer any criticism of the SL/US's actions and perspectives for victory to the PATCO strike, despite all the slighted ballyhoo over flying. Talking to Riley made me acknowledge clearly that my own political trajectory, stripped of local peculiarities, was leading to the same social-democratic anti-Spartacism. Finally I could try to figure out what I had been doing politically from the standpoint of seeking to become a revolutionary, a party member, again. I have done the last because I knew whenever I allowed myself to think about it seriously that the maniacal brutality and oppression of declining capitalism can *only* be ended by socialist revolution, and that I had fled in the face of the potential for serious struggle against the nationally-limited, petty-bourgeois 'parody of Trotskyism' I was advancing.

The common thread that links the positions I espoused in the run-up to quitting is capitulation to the pressure of the British bourgeoisie in the period of Cold War II -- ie world capitalist crisis and decline generating anti-Soviet war preparations, swelling inter-imperialist rivalries and great-nation chauvinism, across-the-board attacks on the working class, especially women and minorities. This is not the post-1968 era, with defeat for the US in Vietnam fresh in the mind. The bourgeoisie is not in the main seeking popular front coalitions to harness

the working class in class collaboration. We are seeing the inevitable fruits of reformist betrayal, the failure of socialist revolution in the heartlands of imperialism -- naked assaults on all the gains of the working class, above all the highest gain of the USSR. The class struggle in every country and in international relations has become more vicious, open, violent and explosive. In this period the totally inadequate, and therefore reactionary, far-left 1970s style radicalism has shown its true colors over every major test of the class struggle, tailing Khomeini in Iran, siding with imperialism in Afghanistan, boosting clerical restorationism in Poland. My particular political weaknesses, which taken together can be summarised as an incomplete break from the petty-bourgeois, parochial politics of the British 'Trotskyists', spread their tentacles as the heat came on. The central characteristic of this political trend was little Englandism. I did not strive to approach every question first of all from the international standpoint. And as British imperialism declines and war fever mounts the provincial, smug arrogance of the labour bureaucracy (ultimately the mentality of the ascendant British bourgeoisie of the middle nineteenth century) more and more passes from national narrowness and indifference into open chauvinism and xenophobia. Within the

stability and parliamentary democracy, all bought at the expense of millions of colonial helots (as George Orwell put it, if Britain had had no empire it would have been a cold, wet collection of poor islands in the North Sea, subsisting on herring and potatoes), add the resentment of decline and a workers leadership which has never even made a pretence at Marxism and internationalism and the end product is a potent obstruction to the independent struggle of the working class. Once you lose sight of the need for conscious combat with an internationalist programme against the social-chauvinist misleaders then you open the door to every kind of bourgeois ideology.

'Fog over the channel -- continent isolated'

My political positions showed that fact systematically. I viewed the anti-Soviet war drive as something distinct from the domestic attacks on the working class, apart from the political developments in the Labour Party. For me the real question in determining what the British bourgeoisie did was the state of the British economy, the balance of forces between the trade unions and the ruling class. 'International issues' I saw as an add-on the way the ruling class talks about foreign policy. This is completely undialectical. First of all, Britain is not an independent operator: everything depends on its relationship with the US. On a more fundamental level, the war drive against the USSR is not a 'sideline' to the real business of Tebbit bills or dismantling the NHS. We live in the imperialist epoch. The productive forces generated by capitalism are constricted by the nation state. Every advanced country in the capitalist world is continually looking for the 'best' division and redivision of the backward, ex-colonial countries. And as the slump squeezes the bourgeoisies, they look with greater and greater desperation at the workers states whose existence deprives capitalism of enormous productive resources and arenas for exploitation.

World War III will continue the unfinished imperialist business of WWII -- the dismemberment of the USSR. There is no solution to the economic crisis in any imperialist country, let alone Britain with its gross structural backwardness, by domestic reaction alone, whereas the conquest of the USSR and the other deformed workers states could as Trotsky put it, give capitalism a fresh lease of life for a period. War is not an optional extra, a policy decision, it is integral to capitalism in the imperialist epoch. For the bourgeoisie the struggle to break the unions, and to witchhunt ostensible Marxists and union activists is the same struggle as the preparations for a war of conquest with the Soviet bloc, the same as the subversion of Poland from within. The vanguard of the imperialist bourgeoisies looks at its aims in a unified way, everything directed at rolling back the gains of the proletariat, up to and including October. Revolutionaries similarly understand that the struggle to overthrow capitalism (which is ultimately the only real defence of the USSR) is impossible without consciously combatting at every step the political preparations for anti-Soviet war, bringing the real goals of imperialism into view from behind the 'democratic' mask and showing how only a party dedicated to the defence and extension of the achievements of the world proletariat can fight successfully against the capitalist offensive in any individual country.

The clearest example of this was the Washington anti-Klan demonstration last year. The SL was the only organisation capable of standing firm and mobilising the labour/black forces to stop the Klan, precisely because only the SL has fought against the bipartisan anti-Soviet war drive of both Democrats and Republicans, right back to Carter's human rights campaign. That means that on the central question of the day only the SL has been able to maintain an independent working-class line, to oppose the pop-frontist rebuilders of the stinking Democrat coalition, and to see that the mobilisation of the key black component of the American proletariat is strategic to the defeat of capitalist war and austerity. The same can be



Spartacist contingent at CND demo outside Brighton Labour Party conference, 2 October 1983.

workers movement such attitudes form an asphyxiating chain tying the proletariat to the war machine of the bourgeoisie, and leaving the ground free for state-organised or state-sanctioned racist scape-goating and terrorism, strengthening the capitalists against the entire working class.

The gamut of my opportunist positions and centrist waverings can be traced back to this one point. I never really understood why the British section was subjected to prophylactic attack after attack by the comrades of the international on the 'Fog over the channel--continent isolated' spirit. Of course, I thought, all the labour bureaucracies in every country are social-chauvinist, reflect the nationalism of the bourgeoisie. But there is a particular virulence and backwardness to British social-chauvinism. Trotsky pointed out in *Where is Britain Going?* in the chapter 'One or two peculiarities of Labour leaders' that

'An island position, wealth, success in world politics, all this cemented by Puritanism, the religion of the "chosen people", has turned into an arrogant contempt for everything continental and generally un-British. Britain's middle classes have long been convinced that the language, science, technology and culture of other nations do not merit study. All this has been completely taken over by the philistines currently heading the Labour Party.'

Compound this with decades of relative social

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SPARTACIST BRITAIN

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You can't fight Eurocommunism with Stalinism

Euros sweep CPGB congress

'The Communist Party is Eurocommunist. It passed a vote in support of Solidarity in Poland. But the imputation is that to be a Communist is to be uncritically pro-Soviet. It is not so.'

So spoke Monsignor Bruce Kent in his own defence against the tirade unleashed by the Tory establishment for his address to last month's congress of the Communist Party. In his own way the Catholic priest and CND head rather accurately characterised the present-day CPGB. Its decline and the deep divisions between the Eurocommunists and the Moscow-loyal wing which have been sharpened and exacerbated by the onset of Cold War II were to the fore at the 38th congress. The party's membership is scarcely 15,000, of whom only 6495 are dues-paying. General Secretary Gordon McLennan included a threat of purge in his opening address, and as the congress proceeded an increasingly self-confident Euro majority escalated its threats. The three central functionaries of *Morning Star*, editor Tony Chater, Mick Costello and David Whitfield, along with other prominent 'tankies' were unceremoniously dumped from the national executive. To underline the message, youth supporting *Straight Left* were excluded from observing the conference and forced to sell *Soviet Weekly* outside the conference building. No wonder Bruce Kent could tell LBC radio that the CPGB are 'by no means pro-Soviet'.

Kent's speech to the congress, in which he 'warmly' praised the CP for keeping 'the peace movement going through the lean years' (alongside the Quakers), was hailed as the 'highlight' of the congress by Chater's *Morning Star*, which ran the banner headline 'Partners in peace'. And with few exceptions the 'tankie' delegates to the conference joined in a standing ovation for Kent. When one conference delegate dared to protest Kent's presence, the Euro platform snapped back: 'Bruce Kent's views are in the spirit of our party!'

But not our party! On the morning of the October 1981 anti-missiles march, the same day *Morning Star* carried the banner headline 'Defend Britain', the *Times* devoted fully one third of an article to slanderous accusations by Kent that the Spartacist League was 'usually extremely disruptive' and 'liable to cause a breach of the peace'. What the *Times* and Kent clearly objected to was our stated intent to march with the banners 'Smash Nato -- Defend the Soviet Union' and 'Stop Solidarity's counter-revolution'. Kent told the *Times* 'This is a peace march' and 'the Spartacists are no part of CND'. If the Tankies don't like Kent's fulsome praise for the anti-Marxist *Marxism Today*, then here is even better proof of what Bruce Kent stands for: Little England pacifist anti-Sovietism.

In an attempt to rally support against the Euro offensive, AUEW-TASS general secretary Ken Gill abandoned the customary detached posture of the CP's most prominent trade union bureaucrats towards inner party discussion. Gill decried the party leadership's obsession with 'other social forces outside the trade union movement' (a reference to the Eurocommunist interpretation of the 'broad democratic alliance' as a popular front with the SDP, wet Tories, etc, etc). And he went on to allude to the parallel between defending the trade unions and the workers states. Euro after Euro got up to denounce him.

But what was Ken Gill doing when Cold War right wingers at the recent TUC Congress launched a hysterical anti-communist tirade against Arthur Scargill for daring to express the simple truth that Polish Solidarnosc was 'anti-socialist'. Did he take the floor to counter these attacks and say 'we won't be your tools to line up the workers behind your anti-Soviet war drive?' No, that might have disrupted the 'broad left' alliance with the 'left' social democrats. This is the sort of thing that happens when you start with peaceful co-existence -- you make peace with your own bourgeoisie.

It was no accident that Monty Johnstone, the CP's Trotsky 'expert' was chosen to introduce the Poland debate for the Euros. He launched his defence of Solidarnosc against the 'tankies' with: 'Your position on the undifferentiated nature of Solidarnosc is the same as those Spartacist Trots out there, outside our own conference'. Echoing the CIA's call for 'free trade unions' in Poland, Johnstone came to the heart of the matter when he emphasised that the CPGB's conception of 'socialist democracy' is 'visual-

ised in the British Road to Socialism which lies behind the stand we take on Poland'. In other words parliamentary reformism in Britain, and capitalist counterrevolution in Poland. Poland is the touchstone of social democratic loyalty to the bourgeoisie, and the Eurocommunists are lockstep with anti-Soviet, pro-capitalist social democracy.

Our pamphlet 'Solidarnosc: Polish Company Union for CIA and Bankers' has been a best seller among CPers trying to marshal arguments against the Euros. As the Poland debate was about to begin one dashed up to a Spartacist seller to buy his copy, exclaiming 'That's the one I want'. And an East European observer suggested we should donate one to prominent Euro Bill Innis. But, contrary to Johnstone, the tankies don't have the same position as us. Their failed amendment on Poland 'fully supports the Polish United Workers Party in their struggle to consolidate socialism'. As we wrote in

states which are ruled by parasitic bureaucracies whose nationalist programme of 'socialism in one country' undermines the defence and extension of the gains of October. For proletarian political revolutions from Havana to East Berlin to Moscow! Many CPers, recoiling from outright and total capitulation to the social democracy, want some positive, at least sympathetic, attitude to the USSR. But a revolutionary answer is not to be found in apologies for Stalinist betrayal.

For decades the whole reformist strategy of the CP has centred on being a second-rate Labour Party promoting 'another' Labour government or putting pressure on 'progressives' to 'fight the right'. The main protagonists inside the Communist Party today all act within this framework. Those CPers who object to the abject tailing of social democracy and who espouse 'pro-Sovietism' must face the fact that the Moscow's



Morning Star

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Jobless get organised

CND leader praises Communist role

Partners in peace



CND leader Bruce Kent yesterday at the party's congress. Criticisms of Polish martial law upheld

The Communist Party congress which opened at 10.30 last night rejected criticisms of the party's opposition to the adoption of martial law in Poland. An amendment, urging a change in the party's position on the 'Solidarnosc' issue, was defeated by 150 votes to 92.

CND's Bruce Kent blesses CP congress. Soviet Union needs revolutionary-internationalist defence, not pacifist prayers.

our leaflet:

'The Jaruzelski regime might have spiked Solidarnosc bid for power in December 1981, but the PUPP Stalinists and their apologists do not have a programme to resolve the protracted crisis in Poland. *Straight Left* and *Morning Star* talk about the "mistakes" of the Polish leadership and "regeneration". But the Jaruzelski regime continues to prostrate itself before the main base for social counterrevolution, the landed peasantry and the Catholic church. They let Wojtyla, pope of reaction, conduct his anti-communist crusade across Poland last June. And Tony Chater's *Morning Star* blithely commended the pope's "strong affirmation of the freedom and national identity of Poland". And while the Euro-feminists happily support movements in Poland and Afghanistan which have targeted the rights of women, *Morning Star* (21 June 1983) presents the Polish church's "case" against abortion. The Polish working class must be mobilised behind its true class interests: for the strict separation of church and state, for Soviet/Polish workers' unity in defence of the Soviet bloc against capitalism-imperialism, for trade unions independent of bureaucratic control and based on defence of socialised property, for the cancellation of the imperialist debt, for collectivisation of agriculture, and for soviet democracy. The Stalinist regime can't and won't do this -- it requires a Leninist-Trotskyist party. What is needed in Poland is a political revolution which will overthrow the conservative, parasitic, repressive bureaucracy and replace it with working class organs, democratically elected soviets committed to the perspective of international socialist revolution.'

It is not only Poland but all the workers

bureaucracy's reactionary programme of peaceful co-existence with imperialism is incompatible with revolutionary struggle to overthrow the so-called 'democratic' bourgeoisies, and with the struggle for class defence of the Soviet Union in counterposition to petty-bourgeois pacifism. Only the Trotskyist programme of socialist revolution in the West and political revolution in the degenerated and deformed workers states can lead to world socialism.

Do you comrades want to spend the next period with your main activity being the frantic scramble to retain control of *Morning Star* against the Euros' share buying offensive and incessant bureaucratic manoeuvring against a Euro majority which is already moving to expel oppositionists. Look at the content of *Morning Star* under Chater, and remember that its policy is utterly in line with that laid out by JV Stalin and all the editions of the *British Road to Socialism* -- the attempt to wean Britain from the American alliance and make imperialist Britain a 'friend' of the Soviet Union. The *Straight Left* grouping simply extends this policy towards complete liquidation into social democracy. And the tiny Leninist grouping has nothing more than 'sophisticated' dilletantish explanations of every Stalinist betrayal committed.

A lot of CP supporters now recognise the Spartacist League as the real Trotskyists. Those who want an alternative to Eurocommunist anti-Sovietism, bureaucratic backstabbing and apologies for class betrayal must look beyond the CP. Today it is the programme of the Trotskyist Spartacist League which upholds the banner of Leninism, proletarian internationalism and the defence of the Soviet Union. Trotskyism is the continuity of Leninism. Break with the CP's class collaborationist deadend, and as a number of ex-CP/YCL members have done, join us. ■

Stop racist anti-union frame-up!

Freedom and jobs back for Ray and Lauren!

Oakland, California -- More than 400 militant protesters in Oakland, California, October 29 put the Alameda County District Attorney (DA) and Pacific Telephone ('Ma Bell') on notice: Stop the racist, anti-union frame-up of Lauren Mozee and Ray Palmiero! The predominantly black demonstrators, many of them trade unionists and their families, had come out in the drizzling rain to march and rally for 'Freedom and jobs back for Lauren and Ray!' In addition, massive leafletting, posters, radio shows, newspaper articles and publicising by the unions have made this case widely known throughout the area.

Lauren and Ray were facing seven and a half years in prison for doing their duty as unionists during the recent national phone strike. While on the picket line in Klan-infested San Leandro, Lauren was called a 'black nigger bitch' and hit in the face by racist scab assistant manager Michelle Rose Hansen. Because Lauren defended herself against this violent company assault, because her companion Ray came to her assistance, the two are facing multiple felony assault charges. They have been fired from their jobs and denied unemployment benefits.

The phone company, the cops and the DA are using this gross frame-up to send a message to the population: black people don't have the right to defend themselves against racist attack, workers don't have the right to defend their picket lines.

Ma Bell and the DA may have thought the working people of Oakland would quietly stay 'in their place' while two left-wing activists in the union were picked off. But this blatant act of politicised racism in the service of union-busting is being opposed by a vigorous public campaign of protest and exposure. The Phone Strikers Defense Committee has marshalled an impressive united-front defence effort which has been endorsed by labour organisations representing many thousands of workers, prominent public officials, numerous left-wing and community activists. Among unionists and students, and in the neighbourhoods where supporters of Ray and Lauren went to get the word out about the demonstration, the victimisation of Mozee and Palmiero has become widely known and broadly opposed. It is because the victimised militants are determined to fight this vendetta not just in court but through labour/black protest action that the DA has backed off from one of the phony charges and the phone company has distanced itself from scab Hansen.

From the steps of the Alameda County Courthouse, Lauren Mozee explained the stakes:

'As everyone knows, I'm a victim of a racist, anti-labor frame-up. Why? One, I'm a black woman. Two, Ray and I are an interracial couple. Three, I'm a militant -- I said militant -- trade unionist. A former member of the Black Panther Party for many years. And I'm a firm believer -- I said firm believer -- in socialism. I've always been a fighter against racism and cop terror, and a fighter for unity of the working class against the bosses. Now for these things and for doing my duty on the picket lines ... I've been victimised.

'... It's not Ray and myself who are the criminals here. The criminals are Ma Bell, the San Leandro Police Department and the District Attorney.'

The demonstration brought out a serious hard core of people who know who the real criminals in this country are. Prominently displayed from the podium were large portraits to honour the memory of two black victims of racist killer cops: Patrick Mason, the five-year-old child shot to death by an Orange County cop last March, and Charles Briscoe, the 37-year-old Machinists union official brutally gunned down in 1979 by Oakland cops.

The demonstration was a point of intersection for deep and desperate concerns of militant blacks and unionists. Striking workers came out, integrated couples came and brought their kids. Many participants were people who have had direct or close family acquaintance with cop violence.

Some of the most active workers for Lauren and Ray in the weeks before the demonstration were members of the Labor Black League for Social Defense (LBL). The LBL was formed here around the Spartacists' Martha Phillips election campaign last March, which had heavily stressed the hideous pattern of racist killings by East Bay cops and the need to fight Klan terror through labour/black mobilisations like last year's November 27 mobilisation in Washington, DC. The LBL demonstrated with the Spartacist League in September demanding 'Vengeance for Patrick Mason!'

Among the unionists who provided stewards to help ensure an orderly march and rally were dockers, machinists, Teamsters and Steelworkers. These brothers know that the attack on Ray and Lauren is an attack on the right to have real picket lines -- and if you've got no picket lines, you've got no union. As the marchers proceeded from the Oakland City Hall to the Alameda County Courthouse, they passed a small picket line of striking bookstore workers. 'Picket lines mean don't cross!' chanted the demonstrators in solidarity.

About 50 phone workers participated in the demonstration. We spoke with Darlene, a young black member of CWA Local 9415 who began working together with Lauren and Ray in the Militant Action Caucus during the recent strike and witnessed Hansen's attack on Lauren. She told us: 'A lot of young people today don't realise the struggles their forefathers went through to



Oakland, 29 October: 400 demonstrators demand: Lauren and Ray must not go to jail!

get unions -- the deaths, the arrests, just to have a picket line.' Darlene emphasised that defending Lauren and Ray is integral to fighting continuing company harassment and victimisation.

Supporters of Lauren and Ray organised nationwide. A busload of supporters, including several phone workers, rode up from LA to participate in the march and rally. Backers of the defence effort in more distant areas collected signatures for telegrams of support and funds for the Phone Strikers Defense Committee. In Chicago, 150 striking school workers and 56 phone workers (CWA Local 5050) signed statements in solidarity with the demonstration's demands; 96 Detroit workers, many from the giant Ford River Rouge plant, sent a telegram and \$305.05; in New York City, 156 transit workers and 71 phone workers (CWA Locals 1101 and 1150) signed their names for support telegrams; 152 Howard University students also sent a solidarity message to the demonstration.

Locally, campaign volunteers were excited about the way the case has become a real issue in the unions and neighbourhoods. One comrade



Ray and Lauren on phone workers strike picket line.

told a story about one of the monitors: 'A black steward in a Teamsters bottlers local took 15 leaflets from one of our people on the street, handed them out, then he xeroxed 700 on his union machine and took them to the work locations represented by his local. Then he called us up and asked for 200 more for friends.'

At the demonstration, the disciplined protesters were not cowed by the Oakland cops' attempts to harass and provoke them. As the march arrived at the Fallon Street entrance to the courthouse, some six motorcycle cops zoomed through crowds of demonstrators on the street. This attempt to 'clear' the street contravened a prior agreement between march organisers and police officials. After the demonstration, we learned that the cop sergeant in charge there, one Nolan Darnell, was the first cop to open fire the night Panther Bobby Hutton was blown away!

Union speakers included Willie Lee Bell from IAM Local 739, a close friend of slain Machinists officer Briscoe. Alameda Supervisors chairman John George termed the racist slur against Lauren 'fighting words': 'If we don't fight back for somebody saying something like that, then that's an assault, an insult to all black women. We ought to slap that person in the face.' Among other endorsers of the demonstration were Congressman Ron Dellums; Angela Davis, S Deacon Alexander and Rose Chernin, National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression; Nelson Johnson, Communist Workers Party; and Muhammad Ali.

Speaking for the Spartacist League, Diana Coleman received a warm reception from the demonstrators when she explained:

'Reagan and his millionaire cronies, they hate black America and they hate the unions. But I will tell you, you cannot fight Reagan with Democrats. We need labour action to bring down Reagan.... We of the Spartacist League intend to build a mass, class-struggle workers party. Not the kind that simply participates in elections but a fighting workers party.... The working people produced everything in this country and that's what we want. We want everything! We want our own workers government and you need a workers party to get it.'

Nothing is fair or democratic about this sick, decaying system: that's why killer cops walk the streets and a black five-year-old lies in the grave. That's why Michelle 'Scab' Hansen has her job today while Ray and Lauren, with three children to support, have virtually no income and are being dragged through the bosses' courts, forced to wage a staggeringly costly legal defence campaign to stay out of jail.

The October 29 demonstration is an example in action of the Spartacist League perspective of forging a multi-racial vanguard party to lead the working class not only in effective struggle to defend the rights of labour and the oppressed but to fight for what we really need -- a workers government to put the bosses and their state apparatus of repression out of business once and for all. Or, as Victor Pamiroyan of ILWU Local 6 said at the rally, 'Maybe one day as workers we'll put companies on trial, and we'll be the jury and the judge!'

Abridged from Workers Vanguard no 342, 18 November 1983

Interview with POEU militant 'Shut down the City!'

Spartacist Britain: What's the background to this dispute?

Reply: Obviously it's part and parcel of the Tories' union bashing attacks on the working class. They've been planning the privatisation of British Telecom since they came to power in 1979. Basically, privatisation is an excuse for ripping up every agreement with the union, every gain the union has made. They're commonly talking about a figure of between 40 and 50 thousand redundancies. And you can bet the new companies being set up, like Mercury, will try to be like most of the micro-electronics and computer industry -- non-union. Just look at who's running Mercury -- Michael Edwardes, the great friend of Leyland workers. And it means the telephone service will worsen for most ordinary people. Over the last few years, BT's resources -- with the help of our pension funds -- have been directed into the business centres. So while the ordinary customer uses an ancient phone and gets crossed lines, dealers in the City are using equipment which is more advanced than anything in the US or Japan.

Well, for ages the POEU was simply producing propaganda about what a bad thing this would be and relying on parliamentary pressure. Traditionally the POEU has been what the press calls 'moderate', you know, supporting government wage freezes, productivity deals and so on. The general secretary, Bryan Stanley, began his climb to the top as part of a right-wing group called the 'Bloc' who were dedicated to preventing 'communist infiltration' of the union during the last Cold War. I guess by last spring, with the bill to sell off BT due to be passed in June, even Bryan Stanley must have realised that they'd better look like they were doing something.

So there were two selective strikes called, but these were called off as soon as the general election was announced. I mean Michael Foot didn't want to have the Labour Party associated with workers actually taking strike action. And at the same time the Broad Left got a majority on the NEC for the first time ever -- basically on a promise of carrying out a real fight.

The new leadership did step up the action a little after the election. They blacked work for the backers of Project Mercury. Later the NEC called a work-to-rule in the three London international exchanges. This was pretty successful in terms of disrupting international traffic and within days, half the lines weren't functioning.

So management reacted in the most provocative way imaginable -- and this really shows how they were out to break the union. They seized each of the exchanges in military style raids in the early hours of the morning. When members of the NEC tried phoning each other, a lot of them found their phones were 'out of order'.

Spartacist Britain: How did the union respond to this provocation?

Reply: Well, the response of the membership has been pretty solid. Almost everyone refused to cross picket lines. On the other hand, the leadership has been at best pathetic and most of the time downright treacherous. Their tactics of

'selective action' say that it's okay to cross picket lines if you're not going to do blacked work. Well I say you shouldn't because picket lines mean don't cross! They're the battle line of the class struggle, you're on one side or the other.

Spartacist Britain: You were one of the fifty POEU members BT threatened to sack. How did that come about?

Reply: Okay, on the Monday morning after the lockout management gave us an ultimatum: either back the union and risk being sacked or agree to work normally and be a scab. Me and the vast majority backed the union. Three days later, the union leadership sent us back to work. They told us to sign a statement that we would work normally, which was the very thing people had come out over.

A couple of weeks later I was suspended for refusing to work on a piece of equipment which the union had blacked. Management said that I had agreed to work normally. So I said that my idea of working normally was obeying union instructions. So they suspended me again. And I've been out ever since.



POEU strikers picket Telecom. Picket lines mean don't cross!

Spartacist Britain: What do you think should have happened after the lockout?

Reply: At the next union branch meeting, I argued for a motion for a strategy of militant action. Here we were faced with a threat not just to our jobs, but even to the existence of our union. The first point I made was this lockout at the international exchanges -- it shouldn't have been BT who locked us out, we should have bloody well locked them out and occupied! The union leadership talked about selective action. Well, for a start we should have selected the City for some real strike action, pulled out every Telecom worker in the area and from there extended the strike nationally. So my motion said, Shut down the City! Boy, imagine the screams from the ruling class when the communications networks of the stock exchange, the banks and insurance companies began to crash. It'd be incredible. And with the POEU being threatened with use of the Tebbit Act, I said we should in no way comply, we had to smash this reactionary piece of legislation and call on the rest of the trade union movement to join us.

Spartacist Britain: That's obviously not what happened.

Reply: No, a couple of weeks after that the national union leadership capitulated to the court injunction which ordered the union to lift the blacking of Project Mercury. The TUC's been promising to fight the Tebbit Bill since it first came up. First they said they would fight it when it became law. Then they said they'd fight it when it was first used. Now it was used, against us, and all they said was we had no choice but to obey the law. And the POEU leadership just said if we didn't go along with the court decision our union would be destroyed. In fact the opposite is true -- if we go along with these laws the unions will be destroyed.

Spartacist Britain: When the Broad Left took over in the POEU, many of our fake-left opponents hailed it as a victory for militant class struggle. It hasn't shaped up that way, has it?

Reply: The rest of the left press tries to make it sound like the Broad Left capitulated to the right wing. But that's ridiculous, the Broad Left had a majority on the NEC, they had control. Militant has four supporters on the NEC. They voted against obeying the injunction and called it a 'setback' in their paper. But they did nothing to fight against it, because at bottom they have the same line. A few weeks before that, we went to a public meeting organised by the British Telecom Unions Committee, where Phil Holt, who's a prominent Militant supporter on the union exec, was a main speaker. After the meeting a couple of blokes who were angry about having to sign the statement to return to work came up to him. His answer was that you had to sign it under the Tebbit Law.

What was also interesting about that meeting was the way that when I said we couldn't put any faith in the Labour Party, a number of Broad Left supporters got up to say Labour was the answer. You know, you had 'left' MP Jeremy Corbyn talking about how great it was that the Kinnoch/Hattersley NEC backed the campaign against privatisation. But a lot of the unionists in the audience clapped when I said the attacks didn't start with the Tories and the answer was a real class struggle strategy.

Look, the whole campaign against privatisation has been focussed on the idea of 'Hands off BT', 'save BT', save 'our' nationalised industry as though it was a step toward socialism. Of course we're in favour of essential public services like telecommunications being nationalised. The working class had to fight to get the National Health Service, crummy as it is. But basically I'm not interested in whether my boss is Sir George Jefferson or somebody from private industry. What matters is that through privatisation jobs, working conditions and the power to fight against attacks on them are being destroyed.

And the BTUC propaganda has increasingly become patriotic, nationalist rubbish. So they put out leaflets and newsletters which say, oh, British Telecom could fall into the hands of Japanese and American investors and shock, horror, this would be a threat to Britain's national security. In other words, we're better at saving this system than Margaret Thatcher. Well, it's true that BT is essential for Britain's 'national security', you know, stuff like being part of the NATO communication network and Special Branch phone tapping. Bloody hell, these are things the working class must oppose!

Spartacist Britain: Where do you think it should go from here?

Reply: Well, the union leadership are telling all the strikers to go back to work. The NEC put out a statement a couple of weeks ago about 're-dedicating' itself to the struggle against privatisation, blah, blah, blah, and a 'shift of tactics', but what it really means is that everything is being channeled back into a publicity and parliamentary campaign. BT management are making it clear that if we go back on their terms they're going to make the union eat shit, and especially go after the militants. Instead of going back to work, we should be coming all-out alongside the NGA and organise a powerful counteroffensive against the Tory union-bashing.

Spartacist Britain: As you know it's not just here that there are attacks on the unions. In the US, our comrades are heavily involved in the defence of two phone workers, Lauren Mozee and Ray Palmiero, (see article in this issue).

Reply: So, Ray and Lauren were picked on for a whole number of reasons, not least because they want to turn their union into one which really fights. I know they're members of the Militant Action Caucus in the American phone workers union, which is fighting for a class-struggle leadership. And, that is just the type of leadership the POEU needs. One which says picket lines mean don't cross, full stop. One which fights for an industrial union, including the women operators who are treated as second class citizens. One that fights for jobs for all and work sharing on full pay. One which is internationalist, which fights like hell when right-wingers like Losinska and Duffy try to get our unions to endorse Reagan's Korean jet provocation against the Soviet Union or witchhunt Arthur Scargill for saying the truth about Solidarnosc and the warmongering of Maggie Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. So I think we need to build a leadership in the union which is committed to winning the fights of today and showing workers that the only decent future lies in the working class taking power. ■

HOTLINE
HANDS OFF TELEPHONES CAMPAIGN

Mrs. Thatcher is in danger of doing more harm to Britain's defence than Blunt, Burgess and Maclean put together!

HOW WE'RE CARRYING ON THE FIGHT TO SAVE B.T.

THE AMERICAN...
YOU MUST BE OUT OF YOUR MIND...
PUBLIC OPINION SWINGS OUR WAY! THE MESSAGE GETS ACROSS

You don't believe it? Well, see inside

POEU's 'Broad Left' leadership pushes social-democratic nationalism -- no answer to Tory attacks.

Don't mess with the Russians...

(Continued from page 12)

Times, 30 September). This thinly disguised call for capitalist counterrevolution in the DDR (East Germany) is really a call for a 'Fourth Reich' to dominate Europe, this time under the rule of 'democratic' German capitalism. As in two previous world wars, the fundamental military obstacle will be Russia.

German imperialism is no more pacific than its American, British and French allies. It merely has a rather different strategy than the Reaganite first-strikers for reconquering the Soviet bloc bureaucratically degenerated/

sighted way to divide the West European imperialists from Reagan's America. While the Reaganites are certainly consumed with first-strike madness, the notion that Margaret Thatcher, Francois Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl are 'peace-loving' is a dangerous illusion indeed. Defending his nuclear arsenal before the UN, social-democratic Cold Warrior Mitterrand proclaimed that 'my country is independent', that France would 'not be exposed to the risk of seeing the modernisation of its defence come under the control of the two superpowers'. Yet there is no doubt that it is the Russians who would be the target of France's 'independent' force de frappe! As for the Americans, Reagan has made it clear that it is not the policies of the Soviet, Vietnamese, Cuban and Polish deformed workers states and the Nicaraguan Sandinista petty-bourgeois nationalist regime that the US opposes, but their very existence.

From Grenada to the shores of Tripoli

The tiny island of Grenada, with an army good only for shooting

Bringing 'democracy' at bayonet point to Grenada is a replay of the colonialists' 'white man's burden'. And what 'democracy'! The governor-general, Sir Paul Scoon, representative of the Queen, promptly banned all public assemblies and meetings, instituted searches without warrants and announced plans for press censorship! Now it is revealed that prisoners were held for 'interrogation' in tiny isolation booths, wooden crates with a few slits and tiny holes for ventilation: a new version of the Vietnam 'tiger cages' for suspected Viet Cong.

The Wall Street Journal (28 October) proclaimed that Grenada had buried the 'lesson of Vietnam' and proved its opposite: that the US should 'use military power to achieve its political goals'. It's an open secret that the Reagan gang is now preparing an invasion of Sandinista Nicaragua to follow up their Grenada 'win'. The New York Times (11 November) reported a secret meeting last month of the military chiefs of Panama, El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala to study 'the legality of joint military action against Nicaragua'. Asked if the US would 'aid' an invasion by its puppets, National Security Council head Robert McFarlane replied, 'Yes, we support them.' But Nicaragua could be the political graveyard for Ronald Reagan, as well as the physical graveyard for his contras. Unlike the Grenadian New Jewel Movement, which took power through a military coup, the radical-nationalist Sandinistas toppled the hated Somoza regime through a mass insurrection and civil war. The Nicaraguan people will fight like hell to prevent the Somozaist butchers from returning. And next door in El Salvador, the leftist insurgents are wiping up the puppet army which seems close to collapse.

Faced with the CIA war against its strategic industrial facilities, Nicaragua's military arsenal to defend its airspace and coastlines is pitifully inadequate. The Sandinistas are now asking foreign governments for anti-aircraft defences as well as combat airplanes. The chance of Washington's allies, like 'socialist' Mitterrand's France, providing this aid is nil. The Soviet Union is the only real possibility. We say: send advanced weaponry to Nicaragua! When the Spartacist tendency first raised the slogan, 'Nicaragua needs Soviet MIGs', the reformist 'left' scoffed at this as bizarre. But who today will deny that the Sandinistas desperately need these weapons to defend the revolution against the CIA and contras? Defence of Cuba/USSR begins in Central America!

Even in an impoverished country like Nicaragua, oil is the lifeblood of the economy. Meanwhile, equally or more ominously, Exxon, which owns the country's only oil refinery, has said it will not transport oil to Nicaraguan ports due to 'safety considerations'. The state-owned Mexican oil company, PEMEX, has for now agreed to continue supplying Nicaragua with crude oil but only if the Sandinista government arranges transport. And the contras have publicly threatened to blow up tankers delivering Mexican oil to Nicaragua. Mexican workers must demand that the De la Madrid regime continue deliveries of oil to Managua. And Soviet/Cuban naval forces must convoy the urgently needed fuel to Nicaragua.

The efforts of the soft cops of the Contadora group (Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and Panama) to mediate a negotiated settlement in Central America is an attempt to avoid the domestic repercussions of either direct Yankee intervention or social revolution. The Contadora call, which Castro endorses and the Sandinistas have accepted, for a halt to all arms deliveries in the region (including aid to Salvadoran leftist insurgents), the withdrawal of military advisers (including Cubans) and early elections, is a formula for the prostration of Sandinista Nicaragua before the US war machine and the strengthening of the internal fifth column. Even a 'compromise' settlement such as a government of 'national unity', no doubt involving reactionaries like Archbishop Obando y Bravo, would only be a brief transition to bloody counter-revolution.

To be successful, the answer to the CIA and the contras is to wage a revolutionary war -- for workers revolution throughout Central America and extending north to Mexico with its several millions of proletarians. And meanwhile there must be sharp class struggle in the United States to bring Reagan down. This is the programme of the Trotskyists, of permanent revolution requiring the construction of authentic Leninist-Bolshevik internationalist parties.

Even more imminent than direct US invasion of Central America is the prospect of Reagan touching off a major war in the Near East. Despite all their talk of Syria as a 'Soviet proxy', much of the US ruling class knows that Damascus strongman Assad is just as treacherous as was Egypt's Sadat, who dumped the Soviet alliance a



German 'peace movement' pushes resurgent German nationalism; Trotskyists of TLD fight for revolutionary internationalism, defence of Soviet Union.



deformed workers states. As the Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands (TLD), German section of the international Spartacist tendency, wrote last year:

'The German bankers do not want a third world war now, whether fought with nuclear or conventional weapons, because they would lose it now. Thus, the German bourgeoisie is striving to undermine the planned economies through credits, commodities and joint projects and at the same time to penetrate these with bourgeois ideology in social-democratic colors with the support of the corrupt Stalinist bureaucracy.' ('The Ominous Resurgence of German Nationalism', Spartacist [English Edition] no 35, Autumn 1983)

But the legitimate fear of nuclear annihilation and national sentiments of the German masses can be mobilised on a communist programme. The TLD calls for the revolutionary reunification of Germany as the motor for a United Socialist States of Europe. While the 'peace movement' is going through the motions with impotent mass demonstrations against the Pershing and Cruise missiles, the German Trotskyists demand: 'Stop NATO first-strike weapons with workers' strikes!' (Spartakist, October 1983) The call for labour action against the missiles is not a cry in the wilderness, moreover. Thus at the recent congress of the Metal Workers Union, some 58 resolutions were proposed on the issue of the new missiles, including several advocating work stoppages. (The union tops' response was for a 5-minute 'warning strike!') In response the TLD raised the demand for a two-day general strike against the deployment of Pershing and Cruise missiles. Linked to the recent wave of strikes, this could prepare a really hot time for the German bourgeoisie and bring down the Kohl government through strike action.

No detente illusions but workers revolution!

Stalin's successors in the Kremlin are once again seeking a deal with resurgent German nationalism, hoping in their usual short-

down its own unarmed citizens, was supposed to be a quick, tidy military operation for the American war machine. 'Operation Urgent Fury' was a diversion to draw attention away from the bloody mess in Lebanon, where US military headquarters were blown away and some 240 Marines killed. Maybe it would give Reagan a 'Falklands factor' to get himself re-elected as well. Grenada did manage to drive Lebanon off the front pages for a few days, but when reporters were finally permitted on the island they found the fighting neither quick nor tidy: it took 6000 'crack' American troops, 20 naval warships and several squadrons of Air Force fighters and helicopter gunships almost a week to take Grenada in the face of heroic resistance by 700 Cuban construction workers.

All the talk of Cuban troops was a lie: the US just couldn't accept that older Cuban volunteer militarily-trained construction workers would fight like hell. As Fidel Castro pointed out in a press conference in the early morning hours of October 26, 'Proof of the fact that they are construction workers is the excellent airport they built in such a short time, where dozens of US planes landed, even though it is not finished yet.' Told by their leaders to defend their camps with energy and courage if fired upon, they did so. Indeed, the Reagan administration ought to be mindful that the Cubans only defended themselves. As one reporter put it:

'But many of the Cubans make a single forceful point. If they had intended to be aggressors, they would have shot a great number of the first wave of US troops as they dangled from their parachutes in the sky. Their positions would have been chosen with that in mind, and they would have made a better job of holding off the invasion' (Times, 7 November 1983).

decade ago in exchange for US weapons and Saudi petrodollars. Washington is threatening a punitive attack on Syria in order to force Assad to do Washington's bidding (pull his troops out of Lebanon, recognise an Israeli protectorate south of the Awali River, etc) or else face the consequences. But whatever Washington's war plans and scenarios, a US/Israeli attack on Syria, now Russia's main military client in the region, can easily and quickly escalate into a nuclear World War III.

Syria is the Kremlin's most important client state in the Near East. Several thousand Soviet military advisers are now with Syrian forces, and many of these would certainly be killed in any major US or Israeli attack. Facing American war provocations and war moves around the globe (above all, the deployment of first-strike Pershing 2 missiles in West Europe), Soviet leaders may well not allow their Syrian ally to be humiliated and defeated at the hands of Reagan and his Zionist henchmen. Even Washington's staunchest anti-Soviet NATO allies -- Thatcher's Britain and Mitterrand's France -- are worried that Reagan is playing a dangerous game on the Lebanon/Syria front. London warned the US not to retaliate against Syrian-backed forces in Lebanon for the bombing of the Marines' Beirut headquarters. Likewise Paris expressed concern about the 'risks of an escalation in the Middle East'.

In the 1973 October War between Israel and the Arab states, Nixon resorted to nuclear brinkmanship to warn off the Soviets from intervening on Egypt's behalf. That was during the heyday of 'detente'. Now the Russians are in Syria in a big way, and Reagan is 'going for the big one' against the Soviets' 'evil empire'.

Reforging the Washington/Jerusalem axis

At bottom the present fighting in Lebanon is a continuation of the centuries-old communal/sectarian conflicts between Muslims and Christians, Sunnis and Shi'ites, Druze and others. A victory of the 'other side' (whoever that is at any given moment) against the US and the Phalange would simply lead to new conflicts and deals among the myriad feudal warlords of Lebanon.

Trotskyists demand the immediate withdrawal of all imperialist troops from the Lebanon: British, French and Italian as well as American. The slogan 'Marines out of Lebanon, now, alive!' raised by our American comrades evokes the widespread anti-government outrage felt by the American masses at Reagan's squandering of life in the Lebanon 'quagmire', reviving memories of Vietnam. We recognise a fundamental difference between American intervention in Lebanon and in Vietnam. In Vietnam, US imperialism intervened to suppress a social revolution. In that war, the defeat of the US expeditionary force and the Saigon puppet army was key to victory of the social revolution. However, if US military intervention escalates to a war with



Detroit, 25 October: SL/US protests against US war moves in Near East, rape of Grenada.



Reagan ordered US imperialist rape of Grenada (top) as diversion from bloody mess in Lebanon.

Syria drawing in the Soviet Union, then for all class-conscious proletarians, the duty of unconditional military defence of the USSR against imperialism would be posed.

Especially after that truck bomb demolished Marine headquarters at Beirut airport, US rulers were furious with their Israeli allies for precipitously pulling their forces out of central Lebanon. The Israeli army is supposed to police the Near East for US imperialism, not the other way around. So Reagan is now pressuring Israel to step up its involvement across the board.

However, Washington's current policy of pushing Israel into a war with Syria is a dangerous game, for it threatens to further destabilise the Zionist fortress internally. The invasion of Lebanon in June 1982 deeply polarised Israeli society, including its armed forces. Had Begin/Sharon ordered the Israeli army to take Beirut, staggering casualties would likely have caused an explosion on the home front and in the army as well. The Zionist butchers did not withdraw from the Shuf Mountains because they suddenly lost their taste for Arab blood. The occupation of central Lebanon was bleeding Israel, not least economically.

If the Lebanese adventure has proved to be a Pyrrhic victory for the Zionists, it did achieve its main aim: the destruction of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as an independent military force. Yasir Arafat (and unfortunately not he alone) is now paying the price for withdrawing PLO fighters from Beirut and inviting in the US Marines and other imperialist 'peacekeepers'. The PLO commandos were dispersed in concentration camps across the Arab world, while those remaining in Lebanon increasingly came under the control of the Syrian army. Assad has moved to take over the Palestinian movement, in part by exploiting justified hostility to Arafat's sellouts among many PLO militants. We are witnessing the destruction of the PLO as its remnants become clients of various mutually hostile reactionary Arab regimes.

The simultaneous crisis of Zionism and the Palestine national liberation movement offers a crucial opportunity to crystallise an Arab/Hebrew communist vanguard. A Trotskyist party must be based on this fundamental understanding: that there will be no future for the Hebrew-speaking people in the Near East without the destruction of the Zionist state; and there can be no national liberation for the Palestinian people without breaking from Arab nationalism. The only road to peace and justice for both peoples is through a binational Arab/Hebrew workers state, in the framework of a socialist federation of the Near East.

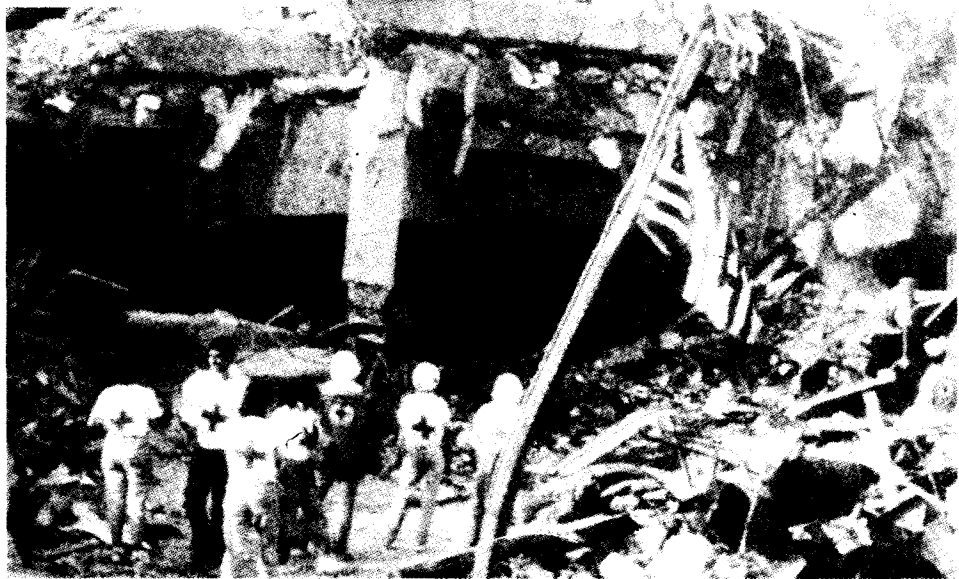
Smash the anti-Soviet war drive!

It will take more than a 'Grenada high' to restore the 'American century' which ended in the swamps of Indochina as the most powerful imperialist war machine in history was defeated

by the heroic Vietnamese peasants and workers. In raping Grenada Reagan sought to retaliate for the American humiliation -- not only in Beirut but in Cuba, Nicaragua, and above all Vietnam. A revolutionary war throughout Central America would threaten Yankee imperialism with a new Vietnam-type defeat, this time in its own backyard.

Behind America's bullying arrogance is the cowardice of a reactionary social class. The insane warmonger Reagan, like Hitler, is the personification of the deeply irrational capitalist system in its death agony. Private property and the nation-state, the cradle of the bourgeois revolution, are now shackles which strangle and deform the productive forces.

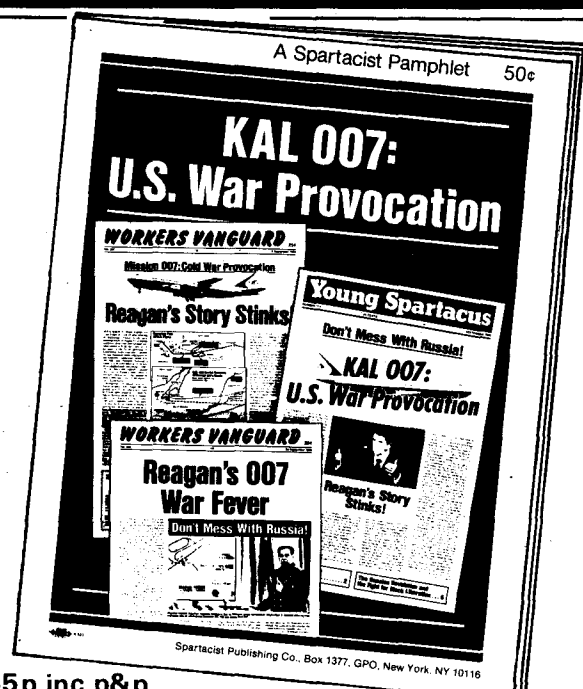
The crisis of American capitalism today is not the crisis of a single country but of the entire imperialist system. The US is the number one enemy of the world's working peoples. But



for revolutionaries in the other imperialist powers, especially Britain where Yank-baiting is the calling card of left-Labourite and Stalinist chauvinism, it must be underlined: the main enemy is at home! 'Anti-Americanism' does not equal anti-imperialism. In the mouths of the reformists anti-American rhetoric only serves to amnesty one's own bourgeoisie. For example, opposition to US policy in Central America is fully compatible with the social-democratic line of 'political solution' to cheat the Salvadoran masses of victory and pave the way for more slaughter at the hands of the military.

Whatever their tactical differences Britain, France and Germany along with the US believe that the only way out is through reconquering the one-third of the world which has been liberated from the grip of capitalism. Reagan and Thatcher see the hand of Moscow behind every struggle for national emancipation and social justice because these struggles can only be fully victorious through the revolutionary expropriation of capital and the establishment of proletarian property forms as in the 1917 Russian October Revolution. Defend the Soviet Union!

Adapted from Workers Vanguard, nos 341, 342, 4 and 18 November 1983



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Reapplication...

(Continued from page 2)

said of Central America, where the iSt's unique perspective of workers revolution, expressed in what ought to be the obvious position of military victory to the leftists in El Salvador, flows from the understanding that Reagan is pursuing class war with ulterior motives in the region, and that nothing can be won or defended with a line that bases itself on a denial that the real targets are first Cuba, then Russia, ie there is no such thing as a 'negotiated settlement' with the US and its juntas. The US will stop at nothing to regain what it has lost in the Caribbean and to strengthen its position for conflict with Moscow.

Cold War split in Labour Party

Without this understanding, it becomes impossible to either understand the particular situation in any given country or to fight for an independent programme. With me this emerged very clearly in relation to the Labour Party. In my resignation letter I said that 'a struggle against coalitionism is central to the struggle against Labourism in the present period.' This position stands in implicit counterposition to the SL's correct position that the central issue in the Labour Party is the Russian question. Groups like Socialist Action and Socialist Organiser, whose declared aim is to rebuild the Labour Party, have adopted the 'struggle against coalitionism' as a weekly refrain. Far from wanting to pursue opportunities when they arise to deepen and exploit the cold split between NATO/CIA-loving Cold Warriors like Healey and the little-England 'left' these groups have raised the unity of the Labour Party to a premium. They want to save the old (ie loyal prop of NATO) Labour Party, in conditions where, whatever the conjunctural balance of forces, the BLP is still not a reliable prospect for bourgeois government in the period of Cold War.

I also advocated dropping the slogan of 'Drive out the CIA/NATO-loving right wing', which a) mirrors the Bennite retreat from confrontation with the right and b) indicates how I saw the division in the Labour Party as episodic, an inheritance from the record of the Callaghan government, rather than understanding its roots in the international political situation, and the role played by British imperialism in the NATO war drive, along with the long-term decline of Britain into a third or fourth rate power. This has very important general programmatic and methodological implications for my position on the Labour Party. Without firmly basing the perspective of deepening the Cold War split in the Labour Party on the analysis of a distorted and uneven class line being drawn, you end up with a WSL-type position of Make the Lefts Fight. If the events in the Labour Party are really about refurbishing credentials after 1979 then critical support to Benn against Healey in 1981, for example, is simply to lapse into the customary Labourite lesser-evil approach of the British left. The alternatives really are to 'rebuild the Labour Party' or to fight to split and destroy it.

The article in *Spartacist Britain* no 50 on the election confirmed the strength of the SL's position. When I first thought about the question of the Labour Party in the election I tended not very enthusiastically towards giving critical support to the LP, on the basis that with Thatcher on the rampage and with Labour running independently there was a 'normal' counterposition of the bourgeois party and the bourgeois workers party. This view was a continuation of the British-centred, lesser-evil method. The reality was very different. If this election was one thing it was not normal. The central feature was the disarray of the Labour Party, which was the product of the impossible task of supporting the war drive and offering reforms when nobody believes the LP can deliver on reforms and when the pro-NATO leaders were firmly identified with the austerity of the last Labour government. However weakly, the right was in the saddle for this election, and the Labour Party was therefore running on the basis of Cold War social contract austerity. This was the product of the state of play in the internal situation in the LP, with Benn well out of sight by his own choice. The SL's position was to address the question of the Cold War Labour Party and the fight to split it and win working class supporters to communism through standing against a vote for a British Bob Hawke whilst making the point that if there were LP candidates who broke ranks and counterposed themselves to the war drive leadership that this

might provide the basis for selective critical support. In counterposition to my initial position this gives the possibility of intervention into the base of the Labour Party to raise the central political questions facing the working class, and therefore to address the increasingly subterranean split in the LP in the concrete situation.

What a nationally-limited stance becomes in this period was glaringly revealed in the position I took on the Falklands war.... The position of 'Withdraw the Fleet' was a position of defending the imperialist armed forces from destruction by another anti-Soviet military. The Falklands war tested every tendency on the British left in the clearest way, because war is the period of the greatest nationalist pressures. This Bennite position was a clear capitulation to the 'socialist' chauvinism of the Labour Party, and shows how the acceptance of the Labour Party as the framework for all political activity ('looking at everything through the grimy spectacles of the Labour Party') is fatal to an independent revolutionary programme.

National chauvinism breeds racism, and the domestic concomitant of the war drive in every country has been the escalating racist attacks, often state-sponsored, on the rights, living conditions and lives of minorities. Equally this period is one of rising reactionary values which bear down hardest on women. Women are excluded from work, every day in the papers there is a fresh campaign against contraception rights and abortion, the 'liberal' *Guardian* bemoans the effects of divorce, everybody from Mary Whitehouse to the feminists campaigns against pornography. The insidious, ingrained 'planter' mentality of the British bourgeoisie, middle class and labour bureaucracy who treat immigrants and minorities like officers of the

Withdrawal' grouping including the Liberal Party and sections of the Labour Party, I thought that it would be principled to bloc for a demonstration on the basis of political status alone, which would have obliterated the class line represented by the call for Troops Out Now, which the whole left wanted to drop, so that a more palatable imperialist 'solution' could be imposed. Again last summer over the Lebanon I wanted to drop opposition to imperialist troops so as to get in on the demonstration being organised by local PLO supporters. And if acquiescence to imperialist intervention is one option if you abandon a proletarian perspective, so tailing the nationalist fighters is the other, irrespective that their 'armed struggle' is an integral part of an anti-proletarian perspective of extorting from imperialism the basis for an independent capitalist state, which in the case of interpenetrated communities will inevitably be accompanied by an orgy of communalism. That is what the INLA represent, just as much as the IRA, and when I tried to paint them up as less communalist, it amounted to a backhanded nullifying of my acceptance of the SL's position that the Droppin Well bombing was indefensible. There is another subordinate element to the Ireland/Lebanon demonstration incidents, which is a lightminded attitude towards the question of the united front and the mingling of banners. This in turn means softness on the party question, sliding back from the paramount importance of the party as an independent force with a uniquely correct programme as its reason for existence.

That kind of lightmindedness raises the question that goes beyond the narrowly programmatic issues: the question of overall commitment to the cause of working class rev-



SL/US leads thousands in struggle against Klu Klux Klan terror, Washington, 27 November 1982.

British Raj treated the Indian colonial slaves, and the allied spirit of male chauvinist superiority have to be vehemently combatted through the fight for working class power, led by a party reflecting in its ranks and its leadership the most oppressed parts of the working class and standing as the tribune of all oppressed groups in society.... The point is, however, not simply to be guilty, but to struggle as part of the party for the programme and activity of Bolshevik internationalism, in order to safeguard the party as the tribune of the oppressed; to participate in the patient, long-term task of recruiting and training minority and women cadres such that the organisation genuinely reflects the working class and not a group of declassed petty-bourgeois.

Given the systematic way in which I began to reflect the pressure of the bourgeoisie it is not surprising that I had wrong positions on Ireland (which the SL has repeatedly pointed out as with the Labour Party, an acid test for British revolutionaries), and on the Middle East. In each case what I advocated stemmed from the implicit standpoint that the only 'practical' solution to the national question in these areas would come through the bourgeoisie, ie not believing that the proletariat could actually break through the entangled national and communal antagonisms. I manifested the typical centrist impatience to 'do' something. In Sheffield during the hunger strike, when the Sinn Fein/IRSP and their admirers on the British left were trying to pressure the 'humanitarian' wing of imperialism, ie the 'Voices for

olution. As Cannon put it in *Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, 'We judge all people coming to us from another class by the extent of their real identification with our class, and the contributions which they can make which aid the proletariat in its struggle against the capitalist class.' Speaking of proletarian leaders like Lenin and Trotsky who had middle-class origins he said 'they had to desert their own class and join "the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands." They made this transfer of class allegiance unconditionally and without any reservations. Only so could they become genuine representatives of their adopted class, and merge themselves completely with it and eliminate every shadow of conflict between them and revolutionists of proletarian origin.'... The whole-hearted rejection of and fight against the values of the British petty-bourgeoisie is a particularly important break for me to make if I am going to be a genuinely committed member of the party....

I believe I do have basic programmatic agreement with the iSt, but obviously this has to be tested... When I was still in the organisation I said once that the worst punishment a communist could suffer was to be outside the party. I didn't really feel that then, and in my case the punishment is self-inflicted. But I do believe it now.

Comradely,
A Gilchrist
29 August 1983

Mandel: Europacifism in the service of Cold War

EDITOR'S NOTE: Particularly with the onset of Cold War II, the impressionist Mandelite wing of the United Secretariat has galloped rapidly to the right. Its British section, the ex-International Marxist Group, came out of the Labour Party over Vietnam and has since dived back in over Poland, reflecting the Mandelites' passage into the camp of the social democracy. As one of our comrades said at a recent Mandelite conference in London (from which the Groganite pro-American SWP wing was conspicuously absent), these days they're pushing the 'pope as chief shop steward in Poland'. True to form, featured speaker Ernest Mandel treated the dismal audience of less than 200 to a ringing defence of counterrevolutionary Solidarnosc 'fight for socialism', counterposing 'unilateralist' third-camp pacifism to Trotskyist Soviet-defencism -- questions taken up in the polemic reprinted below. And British Mandelite guru John Ross sharply expressed their dive into Labourism by proudly identifying himself as a 'democratic socialist', in the image of Karl Kautsky & Co.

'Thus, the fact that the Soviet Union has built and stockpiled nuclear weapons has saved humanity up till now from a nuclear holocaust. Without this "balance of terror" it is practically certain that imperialism would already have used nuclear weapons against the "Chinese volunteers" during the Korean war, against the Indochinese revolutions during the second Indochinese war and, indeed, against other revolutions. Of course the dictatorship of the bureaucracy is to a great extent responsible for the survival of world imperialism, and thus, indirectly, for the presence of the nuclear threat. But the existence of the Soviet workers' state as a state of a different social nature from the imperialist states, a state that is not propelled down the road to a nuclear holocaust by its own deadly logic, reveals again its contradictory significance in the world today. That Soviet nuclear strength affords a measure of protection to anti-imperialist revolutions confirms the correctness of our Marxist characterization, and displeases all those inconsistent and superficial detractors who consider that the USSR is of the same social nature as the United States or a like "superpower".'

These convincing arguments in favour of the Trotskyist position of military defence of the Soviet Union are not drawn from some international Spartacist tendency publication. It is by none other than Ernest Mandel in the September-October issue of *New Left Review*.

Look out, though. These fine words, the last gasp of Mandel's 'Trotskyism', are but Sunday 'socialism'. Today Pershing missiles have arrived in Europe and can hit Moscow in eight minutes. No longer can anyone claim that the imperialists' monstrous nuclear arsenal is aimed at the 'colonial revolution'. But far from rallying to the Trotskyist fight for defence of the USSR, the United Secretariat hurriedly discovered a 'third camp' in the 'peace movement' in the West and in the East which supposedly fights against both the Russian bureaucrats and (they say) imperialism.

But this 'third camp' is in fact anti-Soviet, as is demonstrated by an article by Christian

Picquet in *Rouge* and *International Viewpoint* on the South Korean Boeing. In the face of an utterly flagrant imperialist provocation, Picquet launched a particularly disgusting attack against the USSR, accusing it of committing an 'unjustifiable act' which 'even gave aid and comfort to the imperialists' in their war drive.

Picquet's disgusting article merely applied the real line set forth by Mandel's article: 'Everything that helps the biggest and most unified mobilisation for unilateral disarmament in imperialist Europe is a blow a thousand times harder against imperialism, and thus a thousand times more effective to the defence of the USSR and the workers' states, than a few more rockets, or a few less disciplinary conflicts in the army of this or that workers' state.'

Portugal'. The Mandelites offer the social democrats a programme for counterrevolution in Eastern Europe, an extension of their enthusiastic support to the clerical-nationalists of Solidarnosc, by focussing on the pacifist movements (once again, dominated by the Church).

Anti-Soviet 'democratic socialism'

Today hundreds of thousands of Europeans, particularly Germans, are mobilising, rightly terrified by the NATO decision to make Europe (and especially Germany) the 'theatre' of a 'limited nuclear war'. British and German social democrats are exploiting this sentiment to mobilise not against an anti-Soviet war as such, but on a nationalist basis against the war Reagan projects -- which would 'sacrifice' Europe. They cherish the 'nationalist' dream of



Victorious NLF entering Saigon, 1975. USec says 'No more Vietnams', Trotskyists say '2, 3 many defeats for imperialism!' Maurice Bishop (left) with Fidel Castro. USec hailed Bishop's New Jewel Movement as 'revolutionary leadership', refused to raise defence of Cuba over US invasion of Grenada.



So the USSR is supposed to disarm in the face of the imperialist revanchists in return for a promise that the bourgeoisie will be disarmed not by proletarian revolution, but by a 'Europacifist' movement based on bourgeois nationalism and led to a large extent by social democracy!

This is absurd, as Mandel well knows. Clearly, in practice Mandel rejects the defence of the Soviet degenerated workers state. His 'theoretical' cover lies in denying the dual nature of the bureaucracy -- and the fact that it is based on collectivised property and at the same time it undermines collectivisation with its policy of 'detente'. The Mandelites might well adopt the slogan of those who believe the USSR to be capitalist: 'Neither Washington nor Moscow!'

The Mandelites oppose the gurus of gut-level pacifism by fighting for a strategy of pressure on social democracy. When confronted with anti-communist attacks by E P Thompson, guru of the CND (and with the witchhunt against 'leftists' within the CND), Mandel, accused of being a 'neanderthal Trotskyist', is obliged to explain that imperialism is responsible for war, etc. But only in order to take up Thompson's slogan 'For a nuclear-free Europe from Poland to

a war between the two 'superpowers', exchanging bombs above the heads of the Europeans -- as absurd as a war 'limited' to Europe.

The Reagans and the Mitterrands accuse the pacifists of wanting 'another Munich' and of 'playing the Russians' game'. But just look, say the Mandelites, not only do we call for unilateral disarmament by the USSR, but in addition 'We support the struggle by independent pacifist groups [in the East] against the bureaucracy's military policies, against the secret choices in allocating resources for arms, against stationing Soviet troops in several Eastern European countries, against the threat of deploying SS-20s, against the militarisation of society' (*Rouge*, 21-27 October 1983).

That concretely is what Krivine & Co mean by 'the right of the USSR to arm itself'! They have launched a campaign for the withdrawal of 'foreign occupation' troops from East and West Germany as an integral component of their programme for 'the reunification of Germany in the perspective [!] of a Socialist United States of Europe' (*ibid*). This is a crime -- the perfect programme of 'left' revanchist nationalism spread by the German social democracy, which whines about 'our occupied Germany' and demands a 'neutral reunified Germany' under social democratic leadership. That is, capitalist! Even a simultaneous withdrawal of NATO and Warsaw Pact troops from both sides of Germany would leave the East German deformed workers state defenceless against West Germany, one of the main Western economic powers, which also has one of the most modern armies in the world. It would be an open door to the capitalist reconquest of the entire Soviet bloc.

Anti-Americanism from the mouths of the social democrats and Stalinists is just a means of whitewashing their own imperialism. The social democratic lackeys of German imperialism (which does not, today, have the means to defeat the USSR militarily) prefer -- as opposed to Reagan -- to undermine the Soviet bloc economically and further its disintegration from within by encouraging the nationalists in the deformed workers states. That is why they noisily support the East German 'pacifists',

continued on page 11



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Anti-union...

(Continued from page 1)

leadership, there could have been a much better relationship of forces and disciplined organised union defence squads. As Trotsky's Transitional Programme says: 'strike pickets are the basic nuclei of the proletarian army. This is our point of departure. In connection with every strike and street demonstration, it is imperative to propagate the necessity of creating workers' groups for self defense.' In their absence, when the cops moved in for a punch-up, supporters of the Socialist Workers Party leapt to the bait, substituting individual bravura for a revolutionary programme. Particularly since the onset of Cold War II, the third-campist SWP's constant refrain has been 'downturn! downturn!' They blame the workers for passivity, and substitute their bodies. Not surprisingly, with no programme to counterpose to the reformist bureaucracy, the SWP joined an impotent and dangerous sit-down which the NGA bureaucrats organised the next night to show that all the violence came from the cops. The task of workers' leaders is not to offer themselves up for martyrdom, but to provide a way forward. Our comrades on the picket argued hard for the necessity to defend the closed shop, particularly against a motley crew from the Revolutionary Communist Party, whose line against closed shops should have put them on the other side of the barricade alongside Eddie Shah. And at a Manchester support rally the following night, we led militants in chants of 'Fleet Street freed the Pentonville Five -- Return the favour now!' and 'Shut down Fleet Street!' Our leaflet (see box) was eagerly received by many picketers.

Defend the NGA — Bring down Thatcher!

Heath's laws were turned into scraps of paper by the near general strike spearheaded by the Fleet Street printworkers to free the Pentonville Five. The TUC's criminal capitulation before the Tebbit Act as 'fact', after a million empty vows to fight it, and the Labour leadership's vile denunciations of the NGA strikers as 'lawbreakers' is what props up this reactionary 'law'. Thatcher picked up the message loud and clear that the TUC beamed out of Blackpool: the 'new realism' consolidated in a Cold War witch-hunt against Arthur Scargill. She was given a green light to go after the NGA by the POEU leadership's decision to bow down to the court injunction against the blacking of Mercury a month earlier -- the first major use of the Tebbit Law. And now the NGA bureaucracy has agreed to call off the mass pickets at Warrington to allow the pro-employer ACAS (created by a Labour government) to broker a sellout deal.

The POEU is still faced with a union-busting, job-slashing privatisation threat. The NUJ's treasury is on the chopping block for its action against the Dimpleby newspaper firm. Shipyard workers have just voted for strike action in January. A majority of Ford workers voted to throw back the company's miserable wage offer. And Arthur Scargill's powerful NUM has been playing around for weeks with an overtime ban that loses NUM members pay and saves the NCB money. Miners' contingents from Sheffield, Barnsley and as far as Edinburgh trekked to Warrington to stand shoulder to shoulder with the printers. NGA members at mass meetings are demanding a national print strike, but their 'leaders' are reminiscent of the German Social Democracy, whose well-organised, seemingly solid and powerful edifice of bureaucratic routine collapsed without a fight before Hitler's onslaught.

The NGA can provide a lead, as it has in the past, by reversing the capitulationist course of its leadership and spearheading an explicitly

—Spartacist leaflet, 30 November 1983

Defend the NGA! Defeat the Tory union-bashers!

Tuesday night Maggie Thatcher's helmeted and visored boot boys rampaged against union picketers in Warrington, injuring and arresting dozens and destroying the NGA van and sound system. The fist of Tory hatred for the working class is coming down. The whole union movement must respond in kind. Remember Saltley Gates -- flying pickets from every union should be pouring in to Warrington right now to build the mass pickets! Attempts to smash the picket lines must be met with determination -- for disciplined trade-union-organised defence squads! The lockouts and provocations against the NGA's Fleet Street bastion show the bosses want to smash the NGA, one of Britain's strongest unions, built on the closed shop and the union hiring list. Its Fleet Street chapels were in the forefront of the Pentonville Five strike that forced Heath to free the dockers' leaders in 1972. Answer lockouts and the juridical theft of NGA assets with mass occupations. What is posed is not simply the defence of the NGA but of the entire trade union movement. If they beat the NGA, who will be next? Not a penny of union money to the capitalist courts -- no reliance on the dead-end of arbitration. *Reinstate all sacked workers! Drop all charges against arrested picketers! Smash all the Tory anti-union laws -- Picket lines mean don't cross! Take on the bosses' union bashing-provocation -- All out on Fleet Street! For a national all-union print strike!*

The government attacks on the unions are part of a political drive to smash the gains of the working class everywhere. The Iron Lady and her NATO allies are driving for nuclear war against the Soviet workers state. At home she sends the police out to crack the heads of workers and minorities, while she lauds Solidarnosc, the CIA company union for counterrevolution in Poland. *Thatcher hates the NGA, Thatcher hates the USSR -- Defend the workers unions, defend the workers states!*

Miners are already on overtime ban. Ford workers are voting to strike in meetings up and

down the country. The POEU still has a fight to win after the craven capitulation to the courts of their 'leadership'. The powerful TGWU has promised full support -- but the only real support is to join the NGA in strike action right now! The ruling class freed the Pentonville Five eleven years ago when faced with the threat of a general strike. A general strike is what's on the agenda now. No TUC sellout -- *The TUC must back the NGA all the way, up to and including a general strike!*

All the important battles of the working class have been won outside the bosses' courts -- and outside the bosses' Parliament. But the Labour Party leadership is telling you to crawl before the decisions of the bosses' courts and their laws. No way! The Labour Party wants constitutional windbagery in Westminster. We want to win on the picket lines!

The Fleet Street vultures carry on about 'union privileges'. What a filthy joke! The British working class -- privileged? The only privileges workers in this country have are to live in the shadow of the dole in crumbling cities in the most decaying economy in Europe. Every gain of union organisation, every small protection has been fought for over and over. It's vital to defend the workers' fighting organisations. Victory now can give a lead to all workers and oppressed and, with the construction of a revolutionary leadership, open the road to workers power.

**Build the Warrington mass pickets! Flying pickets from every union to shut Messenger down!*

**All out on Fleet Street! For a national all-union print strike!*

**TUC must back the NGA all the way, up to and including a general strike!*

**Give Thatcher the Heath treatment -- mass action to bring down the Tories! Jobs for all, worksharing on full pay! Take the economy out of the bosses' hands -- for socialist planning and a workers soviet government!*

political strike offensive against the Tory union-bashing. The question of a general strike is on the agenda this winter. It's time to make Arthur Scargill put some money where his mouth is; it wasn't mailbags full of letters asking 'can we help?' that stopped Saltley coke depot, but a mass picket of organised contingents of tens of thousands of miners and engineers. The T&G has promised 'full support' -- let them begin by blacking all transport of scab print work. This could be the opportunity to give Thatcher the Heath treatment! Defend the closed shop! Extend the union hiring system to all industries! Forge industrial unionism through class struggle unity! Strike for jobs for all through worksharing on full pay!

Defend the workers unions, defend the workers states!

This year's TUC Congress at Blackpool saw the ultra-anti-communist Cold Warriors of the right, personified by Frank Chapple, calling the shots. The likes of AUEW leader Terry Duffy have flaunted their respect for the 'law of the land' at every turn in the NGA struggle, making no pretence of defending the NGA. The TUC 'left' has given its customary loquacious verbal support, with no action. Arthur Scargill, all the while pushing his real programme of racist import controls, announced at a Birmingham Triple Alliance rally on 1 December 'Now is the time to stop talking and start fighting'. Just as in the 1980 steel strike he had no proposals for concrete action by the miners in defence of the NGA.

A similar spectrum exists in the Parliamentary Labour Party. The Labour Party today is confronted with a fundamental contradiction: to rule as the government party for capitalism it must prosecute the Cold War at home and abroad, lockstep with the US in NATO, ruthless attacks on the unions in Britain. But in attacking the unions it would be destroying its own base as a bourgeois workers party. The *Guardian* summed it up after 'left' Heffer's statement of support for the NGA, an attitude 'in marked contrast to most of his colleagues on the Labour front bench... Mr Neil Kinnock, the party leader, was silent and Mr Roy Hattersley, the deputy leader, emphasised ... that he believed the NGA should obey the law.'

The Atlanticists of the right spit in the

face of the NGA: denunciations of illegality, and violence and calls for inquiries and conciliation. The NGA events underline the correctness of the SL's call to exacerbate Labour's Cold War split: Drive out the SDP fifth column -- the better to expose the empty rhetoric of the left-talkers, who have moved only the muscles in their mouths as far as support for the NGA goes. They complain about Tory law and order but remember how these 'lefts' loyally supported the last Labour government through the social contract, the Grunwick struggle and the use of troops against the firemen's strike.

And the Communist Party's *Morning Star*, under the byline of Mick Costello no less, says black is white: as the TUC denounces printers for violating Tory law, the *Morning Star* proclaims, 'TUC throws weight behind printworkers!' With a line like this, is it any wonder that CP supporters, who exercise strong decisive influence in the Fleet Street chapels, had no lead to give at a London Regional NGA conference two days after the cop riot at Warrington? They together with *Militant* supporters backed an 'emergency' motion which did nothing more than rubber-stamp the leadership's role -- and this after the Warrington pickets had been called off in favour of arbitration.

This is what the CP's 'left unity' and the 'Broad Left' tailed by every fake-revolutionary outfit from the SWP down to the small centrist Workers Power are all about: covering up treachery with a veneer of 'left' rhetoric. The Broad Left brings together the Labour Party and the Communist Party (and the 'rank-and-file militant' SWP!) in a coalition designed to channel the working class away from militant class struggle.

The plea raised by *Militant*, *Socialist Action* and *Socialist Organiser* is that the TUC call a one-day general strike. Certainly were even a one-day general strike to take place it would pose an explosive confrontation between the organised working class and the bourgeoisie. But their seemingly militant call is counterposed to concrete proposals to build and extend the strike. These groups want to turn the actual and potential struggles of the working class into the dead-end of Labour electoralism, as happened with the 1974 miners strike.

Class society in this country has been in a state of Cold War for many years: an intact,



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well-organised and potentially powerful and combative proletariat; a capitalist class whose decline was marked by the outcome of World War II and which has no more imperial fat to eke out its semi-retirement. The Tories' dream is to have a computer-based, hi-tech, no-union rentier economy, parasitically funnelling the super-profits of world imperialism into the gin-and-tonic belts, while pauperised workers and minorities subsist in squalid inner cities. Should this grotesque 'utopia' be realised, it will not be simply as a result of Tory parliamentary majority. Indeed the question of victory or defeat for the NGA foreshadows the broader question which confronts the British body politic: socialism or barbarism.

The old question that Stanley Baldwin posed to the TUC in the 1926 General Strike -- 'Well gentlemen, you have the power, are you prepared to take it?' -- still awaits an answer. All that has changed is the degree of urgency. As imperialist war preparations proceed apace at home and abroad, the Spartacist League says: Thatcher hates the British workers, Thatcher hates the Russian workers -- Defend the workers unions, defend the workers states! A party must be built which is prepared to lead the workers to take the power. That is the party which we are fighting to build! Defend the NGA! Smash the Tory anti-union offensive! Give Thatcher the Heath treatment! Forward to a workers government to expropriate the capitalist class as part of a Socialist United States of Europe! ■

Mandel...

(Continued from page 9)

just as they aided and financed the nationalists of Solidarnosc.

The Mandelites' support to Solidarnosc represented their definitive passage to the camp of social democracy. And today the model they offer the 'pacifists' in the East is clearly those pro-capitalist counterrevolutionaries who deride Western pacifists 'manipulated by Moscow' as much as do Reagan and Mitterrand. Mandel et al have generalised their support to Polish nationalists against the Stalinist bureaucracy into a conception of so-called 'political revolution' under the banner of nationalism -- the vehicle for capitalist restoration in the East. Including, as did their Australian comrades of the SWP, going so far as to support the HDP, the pro-Ustasha Croatian nationalist movement in its fight against the Yugoslav bureaucracy. The HDP reveres the 'Independent Croatia state', a Nazi satellite from 1941 to 1945 led by Ante Pavelic, a fascist guilty of particularly atrocious genocide in Yugoslavia!

Proletarian internationalists obviously must not ignore the German masses' national sentiments and legitimate fears of a holocaust. But the question is of mobilising them on a communist programme against nationalism and anti-sovietism. This is what our German comrades of The Trotskyist League of Germany do by calling for revolutionary reunification of Germany through socialist revolution in the West to overthrow capitalism and workers political revolution in the East to throw out the usurping and conservative bureaucracy, putting forward the preservation and extension of the proletariat's social gains. The revolutionary reunification of Germany is not just a perspective for German workers. A reunified German workers state which instituted the rule of the soviets in the industrial powerhouse of Europe would be a spark to ignite a revolutionary workers uprising on the entire European continent, and will be key for the Socialist United States of Europe.

It is not by accident that Krivine and Mandel draw on the capitulationist arguments by renegades like Shachtman and Burnham against whom Trotsky fought at the beginning of World War II. Like the Shachtmanites of the time, they swear by all that is holy that they still favour defence of the USSR, but that they will call for it only when the USSR is the victim of concrete aggression by the imperialists, and that the current deployment of the entire imperialist arsenal of death 'does not mean that Ronald Reagan has decided to prepare in detail a forthcoming nuclear war ...' (*Inprecor* no 152, 6 June). Indeed, it may be a bit late to mobilise the proletariat to defend the USSR if you wait until the Pershings, which will be eight minutes from the Soviet Union, have reduced Moscow and Leningrad to a pile of radioactive ruins!

Mandel also takes an 'orthodox' sounding argument from Shachtman: we can't support the military policy of the USSR because the bureaucracy has a conservative policy of preserving the status quo with imperialism. Trotsky answered:

'In its present foreign as well as domestic policy, the bureaucracy places first and foremost for defense of its own parasitic

Defend the Trafalgar Nine!

The Trafalgar Nine were arrested for participating in a united-front protest, which included a sizeable Spartacist League contingent, outside South Africa House in London the evening before the apartheid regime's 'legal' murder of three ANC militants last June 9. Their trial is scheduled to begin on December 5. The labour movement must demand that all charges against these nine victims of Thatcher's cops be dropped immediately. After their arrest the nine were held overnight to prevent them returning to the demonstration while subjected to typical racist police treatment, including the strip searching of three of the women. We reprint below a solidarity statement made by a Spartacist League spokesman at a 23 November defence rally organised by the Trafalgar 9 Defence Campaign. We urge all our readers to support their defence. Donations can be sent to Trafalgar 9 DC, BM City AA, London WC1N 3XX. Defend the Trafalgar Nine! Drop the charges now!

* * *

The Spartacist League stands shoulder to shoulder with the Trafalgar Nine. These comrades face victimisation by the Thatcher government for daring to protest against the brutal murder

of the three heroic ANC militants last June. With this action racist British imperialism again demonstrates how it stands behind the apartheid butchers of South Africa, which is today part and parcel of an anti-Soviet war axis stretching from Washington to London to Pretoria. We know what that means here: the Trafalgar Nine, racist deportations and attacks on the trade unions. And at this very moment in the US, the government of California is trying to mete out its own South Africa-style justice to two trade union militants -- Lauren Mozee, a black woman and former member of the Black Panther Party, and her companion, Ray Palmiero -- for daring to defend their picket lines and their union against a racist scab in the recent telephone strike there. For this Lauren and Ray are threatened with eight years in jail.

An injury to one is an injury to all! The labour movement must mobilise in defence of the Trafalgar Nine. We must mobilise in solidarity with all the heroic fighters against the vicious apartheid regime in South Africa. We must fight for the day when a revolutionary victory of the powerful black working class of South Africa will bring the torturers and hangmen of apartheid to justice.

interests. To that extent we wage mortal struggle against it, but in the final analysis, through the interests of the bureaucracy, in a very distorted form the interests of the workers' state are reflected. These interests we defend -- with our own methods. Thus we do not at all wage a struggle against the fact that the bureaucracy safeguards (in its own way!) state property, the monopoly of foreign trade...' (*In Defense of Marxism*, p127).

And Trotsky adds:

'... in a war between the USSR and the capitalist world -- independently of the incidents leading up to that war or the "aims" of this or that government -- what is involved is the fate of precisely those historical conquests which we defend unconditionally, ie, despite the reactionary policy of the bureaucracy. The question consequently boils down -- in the last and decisive instance -- to the class nature of the USSR' (*ibid*). A 'third camp' policy leads precisely to abandoning the Trotskyist analysis of the USSR. We see the apprentice Shachtmanites of the LCR explain that of course, 'imperialism... is indeed the main one responsible for the arms race', but that 'the crime of the bureaucrats is to follow in its steps... The accumulation of nuclear stocks which goes far beyond the necessary capacity for dissuasion against imperialism even reinforces the propaganda of Atlanticist circles' (*Supplement to Rouge*, 14 October). Taking up the traditional stupid pacifist argument about 'excess arms' is particularly disgusting today, since it aims at furthering the anti-communist argument that the USSR, by arming itself, shares responsibility for the coming war, whereas in fact it is merely defending itself against imperialist aggressors and has accumulated nuclear stocks because it has, fortunately, found a way to counter each technological innovation the imperialists have come up with to acquire military superiority.

We condemn Stalinism not because it does not disarm, but for its utopian policy of 'peaceful coexistence' with imperialism which undermines the military defence of the USSR and endangers working class gains. That is why we are for the proletarian political revolution to sweep away the conservative Stalinist bureaucracy and re-establish the power of the workers councils carrying out a policy of proletarian internationalism.

Mandel's last argument: the 'anti-capitalist dynamic' of the peace movement is derived by linking austerity and military expenditures. But the rhetoric of 'Jobs not Bombs' is low-level reformism. It amounts either to calling for an illusory 'reconversion' of capitalism or to 'getting the fat out' of the imperialist war machine to make it more efficient!

It is not surprising to see the LCR criticise the French nuclear force with social chauvinist arguments: 'a ruinous and useless arsenal' (*Rouge*, 7-13 October). Of course, French imperialism cannot claim to conquer the USSR by itself, but the French nuclear arsenal is not a toy! The LCR calls for the withdrawal of French troops from Lebanon with the same scandalous arguments: '... it is very expensive. Every month, the equivalent of dozens of school-rooms, hundreds of hospital beds, goes up in smoke. All for the profits of a few French arms merchants. And at the cost of useless deaths'

(*Rouge*, 28 October-3 November).

The proponents of the 'third camp' are as incapable of drawing a class line in the developing class confrontation on an international scale as they are in their own country. The refusal to defend the USSR is ultimately only the expression of the refusal to fight one's own imperialism. In short, 'jobs not bombs' is a plea for imperialism with a human face! At a time when the imperialists in their anti-Soviet rage are preparing to blow up the world, such reformist utopias are merely a way to sidetrack the masses' natural feelings for peace away from the only way to disarm the imperialist warmongers: to arm the proletariat and for a socialist revolution to take power away from the capitalists! In order to do that, the social chauvinist leaders of the proletariat and their 'far left' lackeys have to be unmasked and swept away in the fight to reforge the Fourth International the world party of socialist revolution, uniting workers of all countries in a fight for the defence and extension of workers gains, in a fight against imperialism.

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Down with Reagan/Thatcher anti-Soviet war drive!

Don't mess with the Russians!

First came the Americans' KAL 007 anti-Soviet war provocation, sending a civilian airliner directly over the Russians' most sensitive military installations. Now on a 'Grenada high' after their 'big win' in the Caribbean, the US imperialists who head NATO's war drive have escalated from one anti-Soviet war provocation to another. Meanwhile a giant US battle fleet is arrayed against supposed 'Soviet surrogates' in the Near East. And they have begun deployment of new first-strike Euromissiles which will put them only eight minutes from Moscow ... and World War III. 'Will the world survive until 1984?' is suddenly a question on everyone's lips.

In the Atlantic, some 500 miles off the coast of South Carolina, an American sub-hunting destroyer hit and disabled a Soviet nuclear submarine. In the Caribbean the US is staging a 'no-notice' naval war manoeuvre off Guantanamo to threaten the Cubans. And in the eastern Mediterranean Reagan's admirals have concentrated an armada of more than 40 ships, including three carrier battle groups and the battleship *New Jersey*, plus 300 attack planes. Their guns are trained on Soviet-backed Syria. Less noticed by the press is another carrier group in the Arabian Sea along with an entire invasion flotilla of the Rapid Deployment Force -- totalling some 35 vessels -- poised to strike at Iran and 'secure' the Persian Gulf. From Grenada to the Strait of Hormuz, Washington's brinkmanship of the nuclear apocalypse are doing their best to provoke a showdown with the Soviets. So far, Moscow has been laid back, but someone in the Kremlin is certainly adding it all up.

The Americans' high-seas attack on the Soviet submarine couldn't have been more provocative. First they cripple the boat, evidently ripping its props off by dragging the cable of a sonar sled across them, then they laugh about it being disabled. A Navy spokesman blandly announced that the US destroyer was conducting 'anti-submarine warfare' (in peacetime). Thank your lucky stars for the cool temperament of that Soviet commander. World War I was started over less than this.

In the Near East, Lebanon is but a beachhead for US imperialism. The real strategic prize is



Thatcher's cops drag away Greenham Common anti-Cruise protesters.



Reagan on Cold War frontline in Korea.

control of the Strait of Hormuz, through which passes much of the capitalist world's oil, in transit from the Persian Gulf to West Europe. Washington is now using the Beirut bombing to whip up war frenzy against Khomeini's Iran as well as Syria. 'Dizzy with success' over tiny Grenada, the Reagan gang are set to plunge into the Near East quagmire on a broad front.

Reagan invaded Grenada in pursuit of Thatcher's dearest cause of anti-Communism. Just one month before in September Thatcher was standing on the White House lawn basking in Reagan's praise as the staunchest and most reliable ally. The British bourgeoisie might like to pretend otherwise, but the so-called 'special relationship' is not some glorious partnership but testimony to the decline of British imperialism and its subordination to US imperialism. It is Suez not the Falklands that defines Britain's role. And Grenada was not the first time that the Queen's governor-general turned out to be more interested in the advice of the CIA than the English monarch -- witness Sir John Kerr and the overthrow of the Whitlam government in Australia.

But more importantly, Thatcher's tiff with Reagan indicates the British bourgeoisie's concern, which they share with the other European NATO powers, at Reagan's high risk strategy, in particular in the face of widespread popular opposition to the installation of Cruise and Pershing missiles. The *Sun's* (11 November) farfetched story (immediately denied by the ministry of defence) that contingency plans existed to shoot American troops in a 'worst case scenario' -- if the US decided to fire Cruise missiles unilaterally -- is an indication of the atmosphere, though the paper saw this as an explanation for Mrs Thatcher's opposition to dual key control. This concern not

to destroy the unity of the NATO alliance with 'adventures' is expressed more fully by the SDP and the Healey wing of the Labour Party. The SDP's David Owen called for a 'firm European identity with NATO' because 'the postwar absolute European confidence in the United States has gone'. In Parliament, Labour's 'MP for NATO' Denis Healey railed against Reagan's 'quite unpardonable humiliation of an ally'. And in Washington, he warned 'The Alliance will survive on one condition. Those in charge of its affairs must be more sensitive to public opinion.' Meanwhile the little-England 'left' social democrats and their fake-Trotskyist camp followers demanded Britain keep its hands clean. *Socialist Action* proclaimed 'No British Complicity' in the US invasion, epitomising the left-Labour nationalist utopia of a democratic British imperialism. The Tories' dignity may be offended, but they ploughed ahead with installation of Cruise. Neither Labour's huffing and puffing nor the Greenham Common women's efforts stopped the arrival of the first missiles, nor are they capable of stopping nuclear war.

The acute danger of World War III is not caused, as American liberal 'freezers' and European anti-missile protesters believe, by an 'insane arms race' of the 'two superpowers'. The drive toward nuclear war is the drive of capitalist imperialism to destroy the land of the October Revolution, the greatest victory for the world working class in history. Six decades of Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration have certainly dimmed the glow of October; the USSR today is a far cry from the international revolutionary beacon it was under Lenin and Trotsky. But the historic conquests of the Bolshevik Revolution still remain -- the socialised property and planned economy -- and these must be defended! It is the Soviet nuclear arsenal which up to now has kept US imperialism at bay, which kept it from invading Cuba and overthrowing Castro, from using nuclear weapons in Vietnam. Soviet military strength, even in the hands of a nationalistic bureaucratic caste, has bought the world proletariat precious time to resolve the question of socialism or nuclear annihilation.

Stop first-strike missiles in Germany!

The 1979 NATO decision to place a new generation of medium-range missiles had two purposes: 1) the Pershing 2s are intended to increase the imperialists' first-strike capability against Russia; and 2) they are part of the Pentagon's strategy for an anti-Soviet war to be fought out in the European 'theatre'.

The fear of being sacrificed as pawns in a war between the 'superpowers' has fed into resurgent German nationalism, this time clothed in 'left' colours. Naturally, the German masses don't want to be annihilated. But behind the nationalism of the 'peace movement' stands the revanchist appetites of German imperialism to reconquer East Europe. Thus Rudolf Bahro, former East German Stalinist turned anti-Communist Green, actually welcomes Reagan's unrestrained warmongering because 'it can only advance our aims -- to withdraw both parts of Germany and Europe from the two military blocs and to neutralise Europe' (*New York* 6

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