



## 2000 protest racist murder in Wolverhampton

# Jail the killer cops!

The racist cops have killed again. Two thousand protesters marched through the streets of Wolverhampton on 7 March, outraged by the brutal police killing of Clinton McCurbin, a young black man. He was strangled by Wolverhampton cops on 20 February in the city-centre "Next" clothes shop. Shocked bystanders cried out to the cops: "Stop it! You're killing him!" And kill him they did.

Despite a driving snowstorm, and a flow of intimidating and provocative police warnings about "agitators" coming to "cause trouble", hundreds of local black residents came out to march alongside members of McCurbin's family. The demonstration, called by the Black Community Action Group, also drew Asian and

white workers from Birmingham. The Spartacist League marched with placards calling for "Union/minority mass mobilisations to crush racist terror!" and "Jail killer cops! Avenge Clinton McCurbin!"

Clinton McCurbin's death at the hands of the cops - who alleged he was using a stolen credit card at the shop - was a grisly, violent act of blatant racist terror. Eyewitness Raymond Coulter described the killing to a reporter from the *Wolverhampton Express and Star* (21 February):

"I saw a policeman run up and grab him around the neck. The man was swinging himself round, trying to get away. Then he fell against the window. The next thing was

*continued on page 2*



John Harris (IFL)

## Anti-gay bigot Kinnock fuels

# Thatcher's AIDS hysteria

Ever since the defeat of the miners strike, the Thatcher government has aimed at tightening the noose around the "enemy within" - as she has labeled the miners and all those who rallied behind them. Thatcher's ever-widening "enemy within" has grown to target everyone who isn't "true blue and Tory too". This has meant police rampages against workers demonstrations, black and Asian communities, the BBC in Glasgow, Tamil refugees. And it has meant the vicious, calculated manipulation of anti-homosexual bigotry along with fear and ignorance about AIDS to target homosexuals.

The AIDS hysteria is part of a general campaign to reinstate "Victorian values" and reinforce the stranglehold of the nuclear family on the working class. In this Thatcher has been even more than usually aided and abetted by the Labour Party's Neil Kinnock who described himself bluntly: "I am a father and no matter how much I try to convince myself towards the course of enlightenment I know damn well that, put to the test, I am what people call a reactionary" (*Times*, 29 August 1986).

Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) is terrifying enough to those who have contracted it. Caused by a virus that destroys the body's immune system, almost all victims are dead within two years of diagnosis. Taking a cue from the US Reagan right, the Tory government has seized upon this tragic and presently incurable disease to scapegoat homosexuals for the crisis of capitalism in its death agony. Just as the reactionary Moral Majorityites in the US rubbed their hands in glee over the



New York Times

**Thatcher and friend: gargoyles of reaction target everyone. We say: billions for AIDS research!**

terrible epidemic because it was a disease that affected gays and drug addicts, the Iron Bitch sees a way to cash in on misery.

Billions of pounds are urgently necessary for research to find a cure or preventive vaccine for AIDS. Instead, the country has been subjected to a government propaganda blitz ultimately designed to scare

people to death about sex. At one point, both ITV and BBC had to warn viewers not to go and kill their cats when it was discovered that a cat in San Francisco had contracted a form of the virus. (During the 14th century Black Death it was believed that the plague was a punishment by god for sin and people flagellated themselves - they also killed cats, thus

eliminating one of the only means they had to control the rat population which spread the plague. Superstition kills.)

In a rational society, which decrepit British capitalism is certainly not, an all-out campaign would be launched to use all the scientific resources possible to cure the sick and prevent the spread of the virus. No such luck in Thatcher's Britain. The victims of AIDS have been made to suffer horrible abuses ranging from doctors who refuse to treat them to terrorist firebombings of their homes. A glimpse of the reactionary climate is provided in the following item about the AIDS charity Terrence Higgins Trust's catalogue of horror stories:

"The trust said a drug addict with Aids cut her wrists after a GP in Dundee told her: 'We don't want you in here. You had better go off and cut your wrists because I am not going to help!...'

"Richard Haigh, the chairman of the trust's steering committee, said: 'I have met a man with Aids whose house was firebombed by hostile neighbours.' He had also seen an incontinent Aids patient in hospital whose bed linen in the isolation room had not been changed for two weeks." (*Independent*, 6 March)

There are a plethora of such incidents: "...neighbours learned that a man had Aids after police arrived in 'space suits' to arrest him. The same night his house was burned down and his family was left homeless", the *Independent* reported on 16 December 1986. In another case, "a fright-

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# Jail the killer cops...

(continued from page 1)

that they were kneeling on him. The force they were using was far too excessive. One black woman in the shop burst out crying. He never swung a punch against them. He

did not get a chance." Another witness reported that "McCurbin was being held around the neck and was having difficulty breathing". The cops took their victim into a back room in the shop and it was a full two hours before his body was taken away in an ambulance.

As news spread of the police attack, hundreds of local youth – mainly but not exclusively black – gathered outside the "Next" shop demanding to know what had happened to McCurbin.

The cops responded by calling in a virtual army of their fellow thugs in blue, brutalising and arresting on-lookers. They started up a short-lived "disinformation" campaign, claiming officially that Clinton McCurbin died from a drug-induced heart attack. A post mortem revealed "asphyxia" as the real cause. West Midlands Chief Constable Geoffrey Dear alibied the lies, arrogantly stating "I make no apology for putting out that information". Dear has placed the two cops who killed McCurbin on sick leave in preparation for a new assignment. No to this racist outrage – lock them up and throw away the keys!

Clinton's mother Mrs Esther McCurbin flew from New York City where she now resides to visit the site of her son's killing and to "make sure there is no cover-up by police". When she brought a wreath of flowers to lay in the "Next" shop she was prevented by a security guard from going in. She threw the wreath instead into the foyer and walked off. "I want to know why he had to die over an alleged stolen credit card", Mrs McCurbin stated, adding that "I'm going to defend him until my dying day" (*Express and Star*, 23 February).

While there have been calls for a full public hearing into Clinton McCurbin's death at the hands of the cops, Labour traitor Neil Kinnock won't back even that. There's not much to "inquire" about here – the cops who killed Clinton McCurbin are guilty as hell. But Kinnock won't countenance even this mild attempt at some civilian scrutiny over the rampaging boot boys. Indeed he appealed for "calm and patience" while police investigations into the tragedy continued" (*Express and Star*, 2 March). For Kinnock "the first step to take is an internal inquiry". As we said in the last issue of *Workers Hammer*, Kinnock is a racist, cop-loving enemy of the people. The more black people are victims of police execution, the more the Special Branch thugs are unleashed against the press, the more workers demonstrations are charged by mounted cossaks – the more Kinnock embraces the boot boys.

Clinton McCurbin is dead, Cynthia Jarrett is dead, Colin Roach is dead, Cherry Groce is crippled for life: all at police hands. The cop who shot dead 5-year old John Shorthouse in 1985 today again walks the street, promoted, rewarded by the same Chief Constable Dear. The fight against racist terror must also mean a fight by the trade union movement in alliance with minority communities. Some trade unionists did turn out to



CLINTON McCURBIN

Voice

march in Wolverhampton against the latest racist outrage. What is necessary is a mobilisation of the West Midlands' strongly unionised workforce, many of whom are black, Indian, Pakistani and Irish. Militant mass demonstrations and strike action in the foundries and factories, on the trains and buses, and in the Midlands pits can give warning to the uniformed racists, their capitalist and Labour Party backers that this terror against minorities will not be tolerated.

The Spartacist League also calls for the right of armed self-defence. The police monopoly on firearms emboldens the cops and leaves working people defenceless in the face of "extra-legal" terror by the fascists as well. Such a class-struggle perspective to smash racist and fascist attacks is wholly at variance with the perspective of Labour-loyal "socialists" like Workers Power. It's March issue raises the demand for a "workers and black community inquiry into the death of Clinton McCurbin" – full stop! Its call "Labour movement must support black self-defence" amounts to the passing of platitudinous motions in Labour Party wards and trade union branches, ie, "we're with you all the way – good luck". The labour movement must build *integrated* defence guards of responsible union and community men and women.

True justice for Clinton McCurbin and all the other victims of racist cop violence will only come when this vicious racist system has been destroyed and replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat. Workers revolution will avenge McCurbin, Roach, Jarrett, Shorthouse, Groce!



Spartacist League on demonstration to protest brutal cop killing of Clinton McCurbin.

Workers Hammer



TROTSKY

## Celebrating International Women's Day

The excerpts printed below from V I Lenin's "International Working Women's Day" appeared in the supplement to *Pravda*, 8 March 1921. It was on International Women's Day, 8 March 1917, that women textile workers in Petrograd led a demonstration that signaled the end of tsarist autocracy and the beginning of the Russian Revolution. In the first years of the Revolution, under conditions of civil

war and imperialist attack, the Bolsheviks accomplished more for women's liberation than any capitalist country then or since.



LENIN

But you cannot draw the masses into politics without drawing the women into politics as well. For the female half of the human race is doubly oppressed under capitalism. The working woman and the peasant woman are oppressed by capital, but over and above that, even in the most democratic of the bourgeois republics, they remain, firstly, deprived of some rights because the law does not give them equality with men; and secondly – and this is the main thing – they remain in "household bondage", they continue to be "household slaves", for they are overburdened with the drudgery of the most squalid and backbreaking and stultifying toil in the kitchen and the individual family household.

No party or revolution in the world has ever dreamed of striking so deep at the roots of the oppression and inequality of women as the Soviet, Bolshevik revolution is doing. Over here, in Soviet Russia, no trace is left of any inequality between men and women under the law. The Soviet power has eliminated all there was of the especially disgusting, base and hypocritical inequality in the laws on marriage and the family and inequality in respect of children.

This is only the first step in the liberation of woman. But none of the bourgeois republics, including the most democratic of them, has dared to take even this first step. The reason is awe of "sacrosanct private property".

– Lenin, "International Working Women's Day", March 1921

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# Thatcher's Gestapo raid on BBC

The following article first appeared in and is now adapted from *Workers Vanguard* (no 422, 20 February). Since its publication, the government's injunction gagging Duncan Campbell from talking or writing about the anti-Soviet Zircon spy satellite project has been lifted by the High Court. In defiance of the government's harassment campaign, Campbell has now published a follow up article in the 26 February 1987 issue of *New Statesman* outlining why he thinks the Tory government deceived parliament over the Zircon affair.

To each imperialist bourgeoisie its own crisis. Reagan's Contragate has the US ruling class worried that he's lost his grip altogether. Meanwhile Margaret Thatcher has gone berserk over the revelations made by liberal journalist Duncan Campbell of a super-secret government "spy-in-the-sky" satellite, dubbed the Zircon project, which had been kept hidden even from the all-too-pliable MPs. Enraged by the exposure, the Tory prime minister unleashed the Special Branch to launch Gestapo-like raids on the BBC, that august voice of the British ruling class, and the Labourite *New Statesman* magazine. A spokesman for the National Council for Civil Liberties described the raid on *New Statesman* offices as "the first of its kind on a national paper since the first world war" (*Guardian*, 9 February), while police occupation of BBC offices and seizure of tapes was virtually without precedent.

Thatcher's tantrum was precipitated by a scheduled BBC series on the "Secret Society", in one segment of which Campbell was to reveal the existence of the Zircon spy satellite, which is being built at a cost of £500 million. Research was begun on the BBC series last June; in July Campbell even interviewed former Defence Permanent Under-Secretary Frank Cooper about the Zircon project. The government must have known all about the filming but made no attempt to stop it until the last minute. On 15 January BBC Director-General Alasdair Milne (since forced out) banned the broadcast after meeting with the head of the GCHQ communications spy agency. But Campbell had also planned to publish an article on the affair in the *New Statesman* (23 January) and as the government fumbled through legal thickets to issue the necessary injunctions the magazine managed to publish the article.

## THE SECRET THAT NEVER WAS

Thatcher took revenge by unleashing the Special Branch to spend over three days ransacking the *New Statesman* offices and raiding the home of Duncan Campbell (and his co-authors Patrick Forbes and Jolyon Jenkins). During the raid, Campbell's phone was cut. Thatcher even went so far as to ban MPs from viewing the film in the House of Commons. Then on 31 January, Special Branch officers bolted into BBC offices in Glasgow, armed with a warrant giving them the power "if necessary to use force for making such entry whether by breaking open doors or otherwise, and to search the said premises, and if necessary every person found therein". In the end, they carted off three van-

loads of material relating to the BBC "Secret Society" series—including the banned segment.

From the beginning, it was ludicrous to believe there was any secret here. As Campbell noted in his *Statesman* expose, what little cover the Zircon project had—the satellite was to be disguised as another one of those Sky-net NATO "communications" satellites—was blown by one of the manufacturers, British Aerospace,



Stephen Gibson

## "Security" scare: Special Branch siezes BBC papers and tapes.

who bragged in a 1985 press release that "The new satellite is due to be launched in 1988 and be positioned 53°E." Campbell noted with emphasis: "But 53 degrees east is the longitude of the central Soviet Union, not Britain, the other European NATO member countries or the United States." The Ministry of Defence tried to recover from the blunder by applying Tipp-Ex to the "53° E" part in a subsequent release, but even the most thickheaded KGB agent would have figured it out by then: the British were planning to launch a spy satellite over the Soviet Union, to listen in on all kinds of electronic communications.

Pirated videos of the banned BBC programme on Zircon have been playing to packed audiences throughout Scotland, Wales and England. Perhaps the last people to be able to see it were the MPs, barred by a goon squad from the Sergeant at Arms' staff at Westminster on 22 January. (Even some of those MPs went off to a private viewing at nearby Transport House.) By now everybody interested has read Duncan Campbell's article, so the cat's well out of the bag. Besides, you've got to be pretty gullible as well to think that once the satellite was launched and positioned over Soviet territory there'd be any "secret" to hide from Moscow. But then, maybe that's not who they were trying to hide it from.

## THE AMERICAN CONNECTION

The idea that this decrepit ruling class which has sent Britain spiralling downward towards Third World poverty could develop serious high-tech "secrets", let alone keep them, is cause for rolling on the floor in laughter. They just gave up trying to develop a workable AWACS surveillance

plane (the Nimrod) and decided to purchase the already deployed American plane. Indeed the whole Zircon project is a product of nationalist pique at having become a junior partner of US imperialism. The dependency rankled British imperial pride during the Falklands/Malvinas war, when Thatcher's armed forces needed US satellite intelligence data and the Reagan administration was trying not to come down completely on Britain's

US spy satellites is shared with Britain, the Americans have reportedly become more selective with their information. This was particularly so after the 1982 discovery of a spy within GCHQ who had been leaking secrets to Moscow for more than a decade. So British intelligence decided that they needed their very own spy satellite, to be one of the big boys.

As for keeping secrets, nobody has taken the British seriously on this score ever since the top British counter-espionage elite led by Kim Philby turned out to be Soviet moles going back to before World War II. In 1979, long after Philby and his colleagues had taken up residence in Moscow, a "fourth man" in the Philby network was discovered, and even today British intelligence circles are arguing over the possibility of a "fifth man". Thatcher's arrogant edict banning unions at GCHQ was a feeble attempt, probably at the behest of her American masters to restore long-lost imperial discipline. There's more than a whiff of bonapartism in this game. Thatcher & Co aren't concerned about who knows of Zircon, but about enforcing their "right" to secrecy...and to spend millions spying on Russia while social misery is on the increase according to every leaked statistic.

## LABOUR TRAITORS

The bourgeois press has re-raised the hoary debate about the Official Secrets Act and "responsible" politicians of all sorts call for more effective secrecy, for limited and necessary secrecy. The inevitable hunt for "moles" and dark hints about the "enemy within" come from Thatcher. But the most putrid backstabbing response came from Neil Kinnock,



Brian Harris



Journalist Duncan Campbell, bane of secrecy—mad British rulers, and the *New Statesman* (23 January) they couldn't disappear.

1982 in which Parliament was to be informed of major defence projects—currently those costing £250 million or more. But, from NATO commitments of troops and weapons to Zircon, the British rulers jealously guard their monopoly of secrecy on military matters, and the American connection strikes a raw nerve. While under the 1947 UK-USA agreement the vast majority of information gathered by

leader of the "opposition" Labour Party. When Thatcher sought an emergency motion in Parliament to ban the showing of the BBC tape to MPs, she needed approval from Labour, and Kinnock gave it! His office issued a disgusting statement which read in part: "if the government says that this is a serious matter of national security I must take their

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# Break with Stalinist treachery—return to Lenin!

## Crisis in the French CP

The French Communist Party (PCF) is today embroiled in one of the most spectacular and deep-going internal splits seen in a mass Communist party since the Second World War. The Stalinist PCF is the historic party of the French working class, regrouping the bulk of the most class-conscious workers in that country. But it has been in dramatic decline, reflected in an electoral collapse from 21.4 per cent of all votes at the peak in 1973 to only 9.8 per cent at the last general election in 1986.

For a period in the early 1980s PCF ministers held cabinet posts in the Cold War, anti-working class government headed by Francois Mitterrand. But today the PCF is out in the cold, and France is governed by a "cohabitation" regime combining "Socialist" president Mitterrand with Gaullist prime minister Jacques Chirac. In the present confrontation an opposition (the "renovateurs") has crystallised around Juquin, a member of the Central Committee, seeking to carry the party's social democratisation to the logical conclusion. Those nostalgic for the popular frontist "Union of the Left" are following in the steps of the Euro-communists of the late 1970s, prominent PCF members Ellenstein (a prospective MP) and Fiszbin, secretary of the powerful Parisian region.

The following article is adapted from *Le Bolchevik* (no 71, March 1987), paper of the Ligue Trotskyste, French section of the international Spartacist tendency.

precedented proportions. Two of the most prominent figures, Poperen (from Renault-Billancourt) and Rigout (a former "Union of the Left" government minister), have resigned from the Central Committee. Following Juquin, a whole series of local councillors mutinied, worried that the "sectarian course" threatened to cost them their elected positions. Whole federations are publicly challenging PCF headquarters. Opponents are organising factions and issuing manifestos and declarations to the press.

Unlike the situation with Fiszbin or Ellenstein, the leadership cannot even claim any more that it's just a question of a few isolated "petty-bourgeois intellectuals". Even some factory branches like Renault-Douai and Peugeot-Sochaux have gone into revolt. And that's only the tip of the iceberg. At the base, militants are being refused renewal of their party cards, or are quitting their cells. In the CGT union federation, militants active during the railway strike are thrown out as if they were lepers. The PCF is decidedly not the party of struggles ... it is the party of internal struggles! And the leadership seems totally incapable of halting the massacre. Marchais could even lose his place as general secretary.

The scope of this crisis recalls that of autumn 1939, in the wake of the German-Soviet pact. At that time the PCF had been expelled from the popular front which it had built with the social democrats and bourgeois Radical Party and helped put into government. A third of its MPs quit, opting



Guena-CFP

### PCF adversaries Juquin (left) and Marchais.

lies, the PCF leadership is again struggling with those nostalgic for the popular front "Union of the Left": those who, like Juquin or Rigout, are prepared to break any link with Moscow to make themselves totally acceptable in the eyes of imperialism. But worn out by their participation in the Mitterrand government where they swallowed so many anti-Soviet indignities, Marchais & Co can't even try to close ranks around the "fortress under siege" in the name of a cynical version of "defence of the USSR". And there is nothing else to offer militants disgusted by five years of the "left" in government than a nebulous search for a reincarnation of the "Union of the Left", renamed the "nouveau rassemblement populaire majoritaire" ("new coming together of a popular majority!")

Marchais recognises that "the French people" have made the party pay on the electoral level. Militants in the PCF who want to be real communists, struggling firmly against their own bourgeoisie and for the revolutionary defence of the USSR, should make their leadership pay very dearly—not for 25 years, but for half a century of betrayals. What is on the agenda is the construction, through splitting the PCF's working-class base from its rotten reformist apparatus, of a revolutionary party fighting intransigently on a programme of proletarian internationalism.

### THE PCF: NO PLACE FOR A COMMUNIST

Where do the "renovateurs", "Euro-communists" and other social-democratic excrescences come from? They are the direct product of Stalinism and the policy of the popular front. Fifty years of popular-frontist cycles! In 1935 the PCF leadership rallied noisily for national defence at the time of the Laval-Stalin pact. Shortly afterwards the popular front was constituted. The PCF's forging of this class-collaborationist alliance—the obstacle on which the 1936 general strike was broken—only confirmed the fact that the PCF and the entire Communist International were finished for the revolution. This had been manifest with its approval in 1933 of the criminal sectarian policy

of the Comintern under Stalin's leadership which allowed Hitler to take power in Germany—an appalling catastrophe for the world proletariat.

From 1933 Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the October Revolution and founder of the Red Army, explained:

"The growth of the Communist parties in recent years, their infiltration into the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie, their installation in the state machinery, the trade unions, parliaments, municipalities, etc, have strengthened in the extreme their dependence on national imperialism at the expense of their traditional dependence on the Kremlin....

"The growth of imperialist antagonisms, the obvious proximity of the war danger, and the equally obvious isolation of the USSR must unavoidably strengthen the centrifugal nationalist tendencies within the Comintern. Each one of its sections will begin to evolve a patriotic policy on its own account. Stalin has reconciled the Communist parties of imperialist democracies with their national bourgeoisies.... Henceforth the Communo-chauvinists will have to worry about their own hides, whose interests by no means always coincide with the 'defence of the USSR'." ("A fresh lesson", *Writings 1938-39*)

The likes of Juquin and Rigout resolve the contradiction of the CPs by striding towards the social democracy.

The leadership waves the scarecrow of Juquin to silence PCF militants who could otherwise be a left opposition. Others perhaps believed that Juquin's calls for inner-party democracy opened a breach into which they could leap. They must break immediately with the "renovateurs". But the PCF cannot be straightened out. The PCF needs a new Tours Congress (like in 1920), a clean break between those who wish to defend the bourgeois order and those who wish to defend the Red Army in Afghanistan, who do not hesitate to say that Solidarnosc is a counterrevolutionary danger and who want the defeat of their "own" bourgeoisie—from the Gare du Nord to Chad to Noumea. All those who want to be communists must break with the leadership of the PCF and its policy of class collaboration—a policy of defeats for the proletariat.

### RETURN TO LENIN

The balance-sheet of the "left" in government is clear. Without a revolutionary programme of class independence—for the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the installation of a workers government, for defence of the USSR against all the imperialists and notably against the French nuclear "force de frappe", for defence of immigrant workers—there is not even the slightest perspective for leading workers struggles to victory against the crisis of capitalism. Militants of the PCF will not find this programme in Lutte Ouvriere or the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire, both of whom helped to put Mitterrand in government and who surrendered to the sirens of the anti-Soviet Cold War. Today, while LO has nothing to propose to PCF members other than



Independent

### Militant French railway workers take "industrial action" during strike against government.

Speaking on television on 25 February Georges Marchais, general secretary of the French Communist Party (PCF) declared with shameless cynicism that the PCF leadership had been mistaken ... for the last 25 years. Said Marchais: "We have been mistaken and we have unwittingly deceived the French people. They are making us pay for it" (*L'Humanite*, 26 February). This "explanation" is hardly likely to give new heart to those militants in disarray, or to restore confidence in a leadership which is revealing its deep cynicism and admitting its total failure.

Two months after the largest social struggles for twenty years, the crisis of the PCF is taking on un-

for national defence of French imperialism and the bosom of their own bourgeoisie and breaking with the Kremlin under the pressure of a worldwide wave of anti-Soviet hysteria. This hysteria originated with the same petty-bourgeois layers who had previously supported Stalin during the infamous Moscow trials.

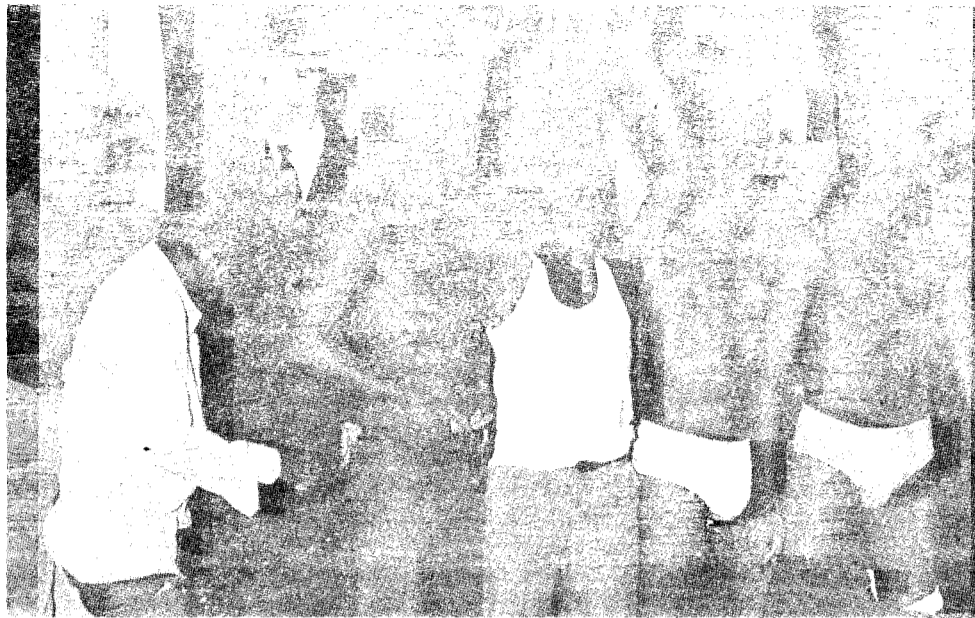
Today, although Marchais would be the last person to voluntarily raise the Russian question, the same disintegrative factors are at play. With the second Cold War unleashed by the imperialists against the Soviet bloc, the PCF is torn between its allegiance to its own bourgeoisie and its links, however slim, with Moscow. Once more abandoned by its erstwhile al-

# Full asylum for Tamil refugees!

On 17 February the Immigration authorities attempted to deport 58 Tamil refugees after they arrived at London's Heathrow airport. Desperate, the men among the Tamil group stripped to their underclothes on the runway – an action to call attention to Immigration's move to send them back to Bangladesh, the transit country from where they had arrived. From Bangladesh they would have been flown back to Sri Lanka. A high court injunction against the government's deportation was obtained and the case continues to be under review.

These Tamils are fleeing the communalist terror of the Jayawardene regime in Sri Lanka. They should be granted immediate full asylum! The Spartacist League of Britain joined pickets protesting against this draconian, racist action by the government and sent a telegram to the Home Office demanding that asylum be granted to these victims of brutal repression. In Sri Lanka, the army and police – assisted by "former" SAS personnel – rampage against the Tamil people, looting their property, torturing, killing and "disappearing" hundreds.

The Tory regime not only tried to



Independent

**Heathrow, 17 February: terrorised Tamil refugees protest threatened deportation.**

prevent the Tamils from using normal processes of appeal and the advisory service, but also painted them as somehow trying to "trick" their way around British immigration. As the *Guardian* (19 February) wrote of the government line:

"They assume, preposterously, that

the Tamils are desperate to come to Britain. They aren't at all. What makes the Home Office so confident that people positively want to come to a cold, run-down racist place like this? They don't. They want to get out of Sri Lanka, where they are in danger, and they will go

the alternative of "struggles", the LCR calls on them to follow Juquin....

You can't win if at your head you have officers from the other side. All popular-frontist alliances with the bourgeoisie serve only to tie the hands of the workers, enrage the petty bourgeoisie and finally pave the way for reaction. The bloody catastrophes of Spain in 1939, Indonesia in 1965, Chile in 1973, or the return of reaction in France after each popular-frontist experience, in 1940, 1958 or 1986, were the inevitable consequences of this policy of class collaboration. Aside from the commitment not to touch private property in the means of production, the bourgeoisie exacts another key condition from its labour lieutenants in sealing such popular front alliances: the acceptance of national defence as sacrosanct.

The PCF paid its entry fee into the anti-Soviet government of Mitterrand by capitulating on Afghanistan, Poland and Pershing missiles. PCF MPs voted for the war budgets of the "left". Every communist militant should know that French nuclear submarines and rockets on the Plateau d'Albion are aimed at Moscow and Leningrad. And every communist militant should know that the USSR, despite its Stalinist degeneration, remains the land of the October Revolution. So long as the economy there remains collectivised and planned, the imperialists will not cease trying to regain the one-sixth of the globe ripped from them, even at the cost of nuclear holocaust. Unconditional defence of the Soviet bloc against all the imperialists is the elementary duty of every class-conscious worker. And it is also the granite foundation on which rests the possibility for the proletariat in the deformed and degenerated workers states to oust the bureaucratic Stalinist caste through political revolution.

Some in the PCF see in Gorbachev a socialist regeneration in the USSR. While it is true that Gorbachev is the first leader of the Kremlin not directly tainted with the crimes of Stalin,

his policy is no less the traditional, illusory and dangerous search for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. The concessions he made to Reagan at the Reykjavik summit would have militarily weakened the USSR. And one can fear that he is ready to abandon the Afghan peoples to the reactionary gangs backed by the imperialists in the name of national reconciliation with the medieval mullahs. Smash the mullahs! Extend the gains of October to Afghanistan!

The chauvinism of the PCF leadership also led it to commit the vile racist act against an immigrants' residence in Vitry in December 1980 – one more guarantee given to the bourgeoisie for its future entry into the Mitterrand government. The partisans of "produce French" can never fight for full citizenship rights for foreign workers, nor be a Leninist party, tribune of the people for the oppressed.

Marchais once again speaks of "errors", this time for "25 years". But already in 1979-80, in order to explain why it had been thrown back into the ghetto of the second Cold War after Afghanistan, the PCF leadership went around repeating "Three times is enough", referring to the three class-collaborationist alliances in 1936, 1944 and 1972. This breath of class-struggle fresh air revived militants of the PCF who were sickened by the anti-communist propagandist Mitterrand.

As for us, the Ligue Trotskyste, we wanted to give critical support to Marchais in the presidential elections (but at no time to Mitterrand, whether on the first or second round). This was an opportunity to underline the decisive class line drawn by the anti-Soviet campaign and to give a sincere two fingers to Mitterrand. The PCF in formally standing independent of the bourgeoisie and running an anti-Giscard and anti-Mitterrand campaign, gave Trotskyists the opportunity to propagate the revolutionary programme to its militants with a ten-

fold impact.

The bulldozers of Vitry reclosed the gap and prevented revolutionaries from calling for a vote to Marchais. But there is a small element which has changed in France since the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. A whole layer of PCF members, deeply attached to the land of the first proletarian revolution and sickened by the anti-

to any country which they think may have them.... Britain is low down on the list, as other European nations can confirm."

This case is a focus for Thatcher's drive to tighten the immigration laws and, with an eye to the election, appeal to racist reaction against "refugee floods". In December when a fire-bombing left three Tamil students dead in Newham the cops used it as a pretext to mount a well-planned witchhunt throughout the Tamil community. Viraj Mendis, a Sri Lankan Sinhalese supporter of the Revolutionary Communist Group known for his defence of democratic rights for Tamils has lived in Britain for 13 years. In July of this year, the Home Office turned down his final appeal against deportation. Mendis has taken refuge in a church – now racist gangs have launched attacks on the church; one woman supporter of his case had a swastika slashed on her wrist. This "home-grown" anti-Tamil terror is the direct result of the government's racist anti-immigrant demagoguery and must be smashed! Full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers! Full asylum for Tamils fleeing JR Jayawardene's communalist terror! No deportations! ■

Sovietism of the "far left", has been able to learn by reading *Le Bolchevik* that real Trotskyism – the programme advanced today by the international Spartacist tendency and its French section – is expressed around two central axes: "Unconditional military defence of the USSR against the imperialists and any attempts to restore capitalism from within!" and "The main enemy is at home!" ■

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# South Africa "sanctions" and Mr Judas Kinnock

## Letter from Hatfield Main NUM

NUM Office  
Hatfield Colliery  
Stainforth  
Doncaster  
S. Yorks  
Hatfield Main  
15 Jan 1987

Dear Comrades,

The members of this branch are deeply hurt & shocked by the unprovoked attack upon them made by your paper Dec 86/Jan 87.

You have enjoyed a close relationship with this branch over the last 3 years & you know full well that it is one of the most progressive & class conscious sections of the NUM nationally. You know also the political nature of the branch leadership & its non sectarian defence of revolutionary organisations & its stand on revolutionary issues.

You also know that our branch is against the call for import controls, & has said so on umpteen occasions & at various levels of the unions decision making process.

Dave Douglass discussed our demonstration with you & you were in no doubt that this was indeed a solidarity (with the South African NUM) demonstration, responding to our South African fellow miners call for workers sanctions.

You have called us liars, racials & fascist when the Labour movement in Britain & in many parts of the world know us to be a principled & advanced section of the miners union. You have publicly betrayed our comradeship & fraternal relationship.

We demand you retract this piece of gutter journalism, & restore the question & debate on workers sanctions back onto a political basis & away from the level of back stabbing & treachery.

Faithfully

/s/B Robson Branch President  
/s/J Moones Branch Secretary  
/s/D Douglass Branch Delegate  
/s/H Harie Branch Treasurer

## Workers Hammer replies

Dear Comrades,

We are writing in response to the 15 January letter signed by four Hatfield Main branch officials, B Robson, J Moones, D Douglass and H Harie. The letter objects to our article "Sanctions' mean racist protectionism" (*Workers Hammer* no 84, December 1986/January 1987) which reported on the 8 November demonstration at Guinness Wharf. Our article strongly opposed the main slogan of that demonstration calling for a ban on the import of South African coal.

Workers and the oppressed everywhere have been inspired by the heroic anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa. The debate on "sanctions" against the apartheid butchers is closely linked to the question of revolutionary strategy within South Af-

rica, as well as to the road of struggle for workers in this country. But first let us be very clear: at no point did our article call you "liars, racials and fascist" as claimed in the 15 January letter. Under this false pretext, comrade Douglass demanded that our comrades be excluded from the public meeting held to discuss the upcoming NUM elections on 20 February. This is not the act of someone seeking to "restore the question and debate on workers sanctions onto a political basis", a proclaimed aim of the letter.

The demonstration at Guinness Wharf was in response "to our South African fellow miners call for workers sanctions". True enough. But this begs several questions. Why do sections of the South African union movement call for sanctions? What is the link between this and the international campaign for imperialist sanctions and disinvestment? And could such sanctions aid in any way the fight against apartheid?

The bosses, in the first place the British and American imperialists, are afraid that a country vital for their "free world" could go the way of Russia in 1917. In addition to gold, South Africa is a key supplier of strategic minerals such as chromium, manganese, platinum and, in South Africa-occupied Namibia, uranium. These minerals are crucial for the defence industry, especially the production of airplanes, and South Africa is their main and in some cases only source outside the Soviet Union. Moreover, the apartheid state is key



Turnley/Detroit Free Press

## Genuine internationalism: 3M workers in Johannesburg demonstrate in support of 3M workers in Freehold, New Jersey fighting a factory closure.

to the southern axis of the anti-Soviet war drive, acting as a gendarme for the whole region. Only the presence of Soviet-armed Cuban troops in Angola has prevented the apartheid army from turning that country into a huge bantustan.

The imperialist rulers all want to keep South Africa "safe for capitalism". When the American Congress, English queen, Tory "wets", Neil Kinnock (and that conservative mouth-piece, the *Economist*) talk about "sanctions" they seek to push the butchers of Pretoria to make some

Guinness Wharf  
march on 8  
November 1986  
raised  
protectionist  
call to "Ban  
South African  
Coal".

Workers Hammer



concessions to the enraged masses in order to prevent the revolutionary overthrow of apartheid. Some companies "disinvest" because they feel it is safer and more profitable to put their money elsewhere. The US Congress recently banned the import of South African coal and steel - but such imports were never very significant anyway. The imperialists are not, of course, proposing a ban on minerals that they really need. That would be something quite different!

Ruling-class talk of "sanctions" against South Africa is moreover grotesque hypocrisy. British imperialism against apartheid?! The British rulers

within the mines and factories. Look at the recent General Motors "disinvestment", reported in the same issue of *Workers Hammer* that took up the Guinness Wharf demonstration. This led to a lockout of thousands of South African car workers and the sacking of more than 500, when workers sought guarantees of union recognition and job security. NCB or Anglo-American: a boss is a boss. And you know very well, from your own experience of pit and plant closures and resulting social devastation, how mass redundancies are weapons of the bosses against the working class.

It is notable that some South African trade unionists do see dangers in "sanctions" and disinvestment. A former organiser for FOSATU (now merged into COSATU, the black trade union federation), Alec Erwin, explained his opposition to the withdrawal of assets from South Africa: "... because we view them not as the simple property of foreign companies but as assets which have been built up through the sweat and labour of South African workers".

Nevertheless, the South African NUM and many other black workers advocate sanctions and actions like the demonstration to "ban South African coal". Why? Because most South African union leaders remain under the sway of nationalism. They support the African National Congress and its so-called "policy of chaos", which aims to "make the country ungovernable". This goes together with illusions that "enlightened" imperialists can force reforms in apartheid which would lead to some sort of "power sharing" between the oppressed masses and the white-supremacist bosses.

With the white racist rulers armed to the teeth and millions of impoverished blacks cordoned off in townships and bantustans surrounded by effective "free fire" zones, this is literally a suicidal strategy. For victory in South Africa, as much as in Britain, the class principle must prevail over the national principle. It is the black proletariat, organised indus-

# "Sanctions" crowd targets black South African music

The following exchange is reprinted from the *Young Spartacus* section of *Workers Vanguard* (no 422, 20 February), newspaper of the Spartacist League/US.

8 February 1987

To the Editor:

About a year ago, an American musician, Paul Simon, put together a collection of songs he recorded with direct assistance of some of the popular artists in South Africa. And early in January 1987, the *Washington Post* reported that during his tour on campuses for opinions on his album, *Graceland*, Simon met with open criticism from Howard University students for defying the UN ban on performing in South Africa by recording the album "using" South African musicians and singers.

Simon may be guilty of not making a strong political statement against the system of apartheid ("apart-hate") that exists in his colleagues' country in any of his recordings. But he certainly is not at fault in exposing America and the rest of the world to a part of South Africa that many have not seen or heard of. As a black South African, I surely hope that in the midst of this, Paul Simon will continue his work with artists all over the world, especially South Africans.

The making of *Graceland* made possible the remarkable reunion of world-renowned South African musicians Miriam Makeba and Hugh Masekela. These two exiled South Africans have teamed up with Simon and the co-creators of his album. During their final preparations to embark on what is to be one of the most memorable tours of Europe and the US which was scheduled to start on February 1, Simon, Makeba, Masekela, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Stimela and others faced threats of "boycott action against the tour" from the Anti-Apartheid Movement (European version), and the same can be expected from their counterparts in this country.

It is absolutely thoughtless of this "anti-apartheid" movement to target as an object for criticism the coming together of these talented individuals and groups. I find it greatly ironic for these people to have ill feelings es-



Mark Peters for Newsweek

Paul Simon (right) with South African and fellow musician. Cultural boycottists would censor their music.

pecially toward Makeba and Masekela, who for greater parts of their lives have worked for the cause of liberation in their country. Who are these people to tell us what is worthy of boycott?

Since the imposition of the UN cultural boycott of South Africa, the oppressed South African masses have not moved an inch toward their liberation. Instead they are locked out of the world (or is it that they are locked in their own isolated, tiny world?). The UN is not determined to assist the downtrodden to gain their liberation. This is proved by their policies toward South Africa which are contrary to their stated intention. Cultural boycotts are not a strategy to bring down apartheid. The government must be faced and toppled.

At present, South Africa is in the grip of a massive political upheaval. To break free from the exploitive forces, we need a socialist revolution led by our potentially powerful workers.

Power to all workers of the world! There's a battle to be won!

*Basebetsi Tsohang, Matla ke a Rona!* (Workers Rise, All Power Is Ours!) Danny

*Young Spartacus* thanks Danny for his letter and joins him in condemning this most absurd action of the liberal- and nationalist-led anti-apartheid "movement". Pushing the no-win divestment "strategy" to new heights of ridiculousness, these fake-leftists echo and reinforce the segregation imposed on black South Africans by the apartheid butchers.

Paul Simon finally got the United Nations (a gang of imperialist robbers and their victims) off his back by sending them a letter in which he explained that he never "performed" in South Africa, just recorded". We preferred the spirit of his retort to heckling students at Howard University, in which he decried the oppression of black artists by what he termed "double apartheid" — "the first being that imposed by the state, and the second imposed by the world that shuns everything South African, including black music" (*The Hilltop*, 23 January). To liberal moralists screaming "exploitation!" it's immaterial that Simon paid the recording artists \$600 per session, triple the American wage scale, and incomparable with the South African rate of about \$12.

On 5 February, Spartacist spokesman Marjorie Stamberg took the "bull" by the horns at a Spartacist forum at Howard University when she castigated "cultural boycotts":

"Last night somebody brought to my attention an article in the *London Guardian*. It says that Hugh Masekela and Miriam Makeba, two black South African musicians who have spent their entire lives in exile working for the cause of black freedom in South Africa — this article says that their concert with Paul Simon may now be picketed by the anti-apartheid groups in London. Hugh Masekela is really enraged about this also. He said Nelson Mandela used to go to his concerts in Johannesburg when he was raising money for the ANC, and now he has the spectre of being picketed for the 'crime' of generating and supporting the South African black cause throughout Europe and throughout America. His song, by the way, which may likely be picketed, is an anthem to Nelson Mandela. This just shows the insane, and at the same time logical, conclusion of the politics of nationalism, as opposed to internationalism, and of the liberal divestment and sanctions movement. We say: not divestment, but expropriation by a revolutionary workers government. To the toilers belong the fruits of their labour.

"To take it from the other side, why is it not okay for Paul Simon to make an album in South Africa, but it is okay to play and make albums in the United States? The American imperialists are the ones who are responsible for the My Lai massacre. The American imperialists are the ones who turned South Vietnam into a moonscape; that dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The American ruling class exterminated the people who were here before they came. It was the American imperialists who killed millions of people during the period of slavery and the slave trade. And yet these are the people — Reagan and Koch — that the divestment movement calls on to pressure the South African apartheid rulers into cleaning up their act. So when we say, 'the main enemy is at home,' that is the bitter truth." ■

trially and led by a Bolshevik party, which can and will be the gravedigger of apartheid capitalism.

You may object that Hatfield Main NUM stands for workers sanctions. But is there any real difference between this call and the clamour for imperialist sanctions?

The fact that your branch has a general position against import controls indicates an understanding of the danger of protectionist poison which pits worker against worker, leading first to trade wars and then to shooting wars. But "workers sanctions" are very often used to provide a left-sounding cover for reactionary protectionist schemes and to gain support among class-conscious workers who would otherwise reject them.

To put the label "workers" in front of sanctions, or any other action, does not make them such. Any parti-

cular call for labour action must be judged in the concrete. During the miners strike the Spartacist League supported the blacking of all coal shipments to Britain. In December 1981, the Polish government spiked a counterrevolutionary attempted coup by Solidarnosc; miners in this country and large sections of the working class in France and Italy correctly did not buy the call for sanctions against Poland, even when many people clamoured that Solidarnosc was a "workers" organisation.

In the case of South Africa, it is the obvious duty of every worker to stop the shipment of any military goods to the apartheid regime. Selective strike actions can aid the struggle for union recognition at South African plants of international companies. And in order to enforce specific demands such as the release of jailed anti-

apartheid fighters or the withdrawal of the army from the townships, time-limited blackings of South African cargo can be a useful tactic.

But what was the character of the Guinness Wharf demonstration? Branch delegate Dave Douglass mobilised members behind the call to ban South African coal imports. Coal is not a vital export for the apartheid state. Nor is it a vital import for the British capitalists, unlike the rare minerals upon which the British aerospace industry depends. A call for a ban only of South African coal is obviously protectionist. The national NUM and the Labour Party stand for import controls against all foreign coal, including from South Africa. And such protectionism is a crucial element of schemes for an "alternative economic strategy" cooked up by the "left" Labourites to save decrepit British

capitalism.

Miners who fought courageously during the 1984-85 strike and want to express their solidarity with the anti-apartheid struggle cannot do so with the methods of the Labourites. One of the lessons of that great strike was the way class struggle against the main enemy here at home broke down barriers erected by the bosses to "divide and conquer". Blacks, Asians, Irish, women, gays and workers throughout the world rallied to the NUM. Soviet trade unions and the French CGT came heavily to the support of beleaguered mining communities. The Partisan Defence Committee in the US raised more than \$23,000 in the face of sabotage by the AFL-CIO bureaucracy.

The strike shattered many illusions as to who the real friends of the min-

*continued on page 9*

# AIDS...

(continued from page 1)

ened and ill-informed health visitor made a home visit to an AIDS victim dressed in full operating theatre kit together with goggles and rubber gloves." In the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham alone, six individuals have committed suicide after learning that they had contracted the disease and several men have had their homes burned down. In January, a gay pub in Vauxhall was

Conservative leader of South Staffs District Council Bill Brownhill - a statement on TV 16 December 1986: "As for a cure [for AIDS] I would put 90% of queers in the ruddy gay chamber... We must find a way of stopping these gays going around." When 14 supporters of Lesbian and Gay Youth Movement protested by sitting down in Brownhill's garden and chanting, the cops moved in arresting 12 and charging them with threatening behaviour.

For the simple act of protesting Brownhill's genocidal ravings, the government came down on the demonstrators like a ton of bricks. The Wombourne 12 leaflet points out: "As usual police responded to a complaint of assault by a charge of assault" when one young woman tried to pursue the brutality she had suffered at the hands of the cops when arrested. They were held initially for 24 hours and then a week: "In effect the police got us a seven day prison sentence without even a trial - far worse than we might have expected if convicted."

The cops particularly targetted a black youth: "At the second court hearing, the police tried to remand the only black defendant for another week, claiming they could still not check his address, but were thwarted when solicitors produced his mother in court." When the case eventually came up in court, the twelve arrived to discover that the charges had been dropped. The twelve are pursuing complaints against the cops, prosecution and prisons - certainly they should sue for every pound they can! Their case was meant as a warning to defenders of homosexual rights in Thatcher's Britain. To stop the attacks on gays requires the mobilisation of the working class in an all-out battle against the whole reactionary social agenda.

Fascistic filth spewed by the likes of Brownhill evokes an eerie echo of Nazi Germany. Writing about combatting syphilis as "the task of the nation" in *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler whipped up the AIDS hysteria of his day proclaiming: "This cleansing of our culture must be extended to nearly all fields. Theatre, art, literature, cinema, press, posters and window displays must be cleansed.... Public life must be freed from the stifling perfume of our modern eroticism." All in order to "preserve the race". He then went on to murder six million Jews, a million leftists, hundreds of thousands of homosexuals and Gypsies, and launched a war on the "Bolshevik Anti-Christ" (read: Soviet Union) that left 20 million Soviet dead. The Russian peoples' ultimately victorious struggle to drive the Nazis from the Eastern Front resulted in the destruction of Hitler's Third Reich.

## KINNOCK'S ANTI-GAY WITCHHUNTING

Just as the propaganda campaign on AIDS was reaching saturation point, Neil Kinnock provided a new angle: his very own Labour witchhunt against homosexuals. A made-to-order "leak" of a note passed by Kinnock's press secretary Pat Hewitt to Labour MP Frank Dobson has made headlines. In the aftermath of Labour's spectacular defeat in the Greenwich by-election which was swept by the Alliance, Hewitt wrote:

"It's obvious from our own polling, as well as from the doorstep, that the London Effect is now very noticeable. The 'loony Labour Left' is taking its toll; the gays and lesbians issue is costing us dear amongst the pensioners...." (*Independent*, 6 March)

Kinnock has also come out for the spurious defence of "parent's rights

against Labour-controlled authorities that want to promote equality of homosexual and heterosexual relationships" (*Independent*, 6 March). What an understated way of saying "I'm a reactionary". In an interview with the Catholic weekly, *The Universe*, Kinnock pontificated that nobody "has the right by any act in this country to teach children that which their parents morally and spiritually disagree with". Creationists don't like evolution, either. Kinnock's timing on this one is transparent.

Labour "left" Ken Livingstone was compelled to denounce this latest low in Labour's "out-Thatcher Thatcher" posture:

"Mr Kinnock is hunting scapegoats. It is morally wrong to blame gays and lesbians for our failure to surge ahead at the polls. He should make a speech spelling out where we stand on lesbian and gay rights - pointing out that we oppose discrimination." But Kinnock has made it perfectly clear where he stands.

Even the liberal *Guardian* (7 March) noted the timing of the attack on the Labour "lefts" and that it occurred

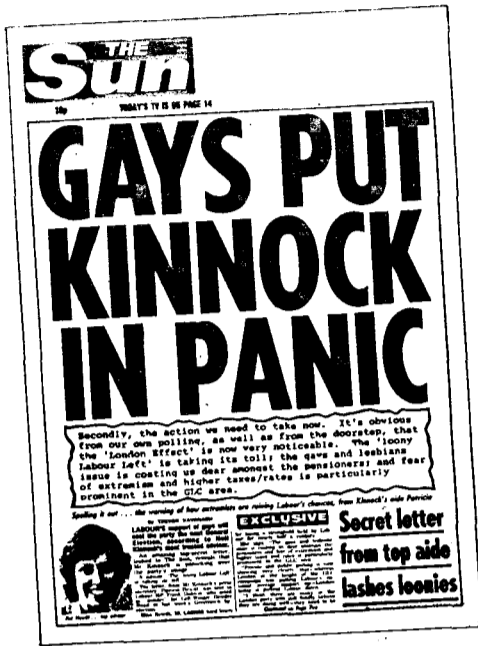
"...against a background of growing violence against the gay community which is believed to be fed by fears of Aids. In the past week there have been three cases of suspected arson against homes of gays in Hammersmith and Fulham, a gay coffee shop was gutted by fire in suspicious circumstances, and two gay men were picked on and beaten up in the centre of Brixton during the

utionary" left might be hard put to defend their candidate Kneel on this one. But if the centrist Workers Power group is any indication, they'll try. The recent issue of *Workers Power* (March 1987) contains an article on AIDS entitled "Tories' Moral Reaction." Fine, comrades - but what about your mate Kinnock? Labour is not mentioned once in the article which concludes with the call for "free condoms on demand".

To find out the WP's real political concern, read the editorial in the same issue. There the reformist left is taken to task not only for their "super" loyalty to Labour (unlike the WP's just plain loyalty) but also for their failure to win the support of "ordinary working class Labour voters". WP worries that this makes the "lefts" look like "behind the scenes conspirators concerned at best only with the interests of minorities". Maybe WP has some advice for Kinnock on how to duck the gay and lesbians issue which has supposedly "cost" him so dearly. At least no one will accuse Workers Power of over-concern for special oppression.

## AIDS HYSTERIA TARGETS EVERYBODY

Designed to create an overall climate of fear and loathing, the AIDS hysteria goes hand in hand with the government's "green paper" proposal to end the closed union shop, its terrorising black and Asian communities through cop invasions, freezing to



## Scabby Sun pegs bigot Kinnock.

raided by cops wearing rubber gloves. And when Thatcher's bootboys had finished "their" job, several of the regulars were left injured or arrested or both.

Virtually everything the government does escalates the AIDS hysteria. The *Times* (17 February) reported that the government is considering legislation to allow immigration officials to refuse entry to anyone "if they are known or suspected to be infected with Aids". They are only legitimising a policy already in force, particularly against airline stewards. In this deeply racist society, AIDS hysteria has also been used to fan the flames of anti-immigrant and anti-minority reaction. And, indeed warnings about the dangers of catching AIDS are repeatedly issued to travellers headed for Africa. Meanwhile, the "august" British Medical Association has already put people's lives on the line when they suggested a couple of months ago that no one should give blood if they engaged in casual sex - defined as having sex with more than one partner over the last four years! They had to back down when officials realised that the blood banks would dry up in no time if this policy ever took force.

Prominent British scientist Jullian Peto of the Institute of Cancer Research has argued that people should carry cards proving they don't have AIDS. Peto wrote that, "While compulsory blood-testing and segregation of the infected would certainly be effective, it is thought to be unacceptable in a civilised society" (emphasis ours). Since he can't get away with calling for concentration camps just yet, Peto's modest proposal is that "all couples who have not been monogamous for several years...demand evidence of a recent negative Aids test from their sexual partners" (*Sunday Times*, 15 February).

Such "respectable" statements have opened the way for pronouncements of a viler, more ominous nature. Gay rights activists in the Wombourne Twelve Defence Campaign cited the following Hitlerite statement by



Dean Paul/NFI

## Spartacist League/US-initiated united front protest, Chicago, June 1982: thousands turn out to stop Nazi provocation against Gay Pride Day.

evening rush hour." No matter how reactionary Kinnock is, Livingstone and the rest of the Labour "lefts" will continue tying the oppressed to his election victory. After all, that's their job.

The loyal opposition to the loyal opposition among the fake "revol-

death the elderly and starving the poor and unemployed. Ideologically, the "safe sex" campaign - having nothing to do with stopping AIDS which is caused by a virus, not by sex - is a British version of the American right-wing campaign to "return to the old (white, Christian fundamentalist) val-

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ues".

Trendy Channel 4's "First Aids" programme is a case in point: pop stars, actors and so-called experts were paraded in front of the audience in a discussion straight out of the 1950s. Good girls say no, are naturally romantic and equipped with the moral virtue to rein in the passions of virile young men. And if by some freak of "nature" a young woman finds herself caught up by the "heat of the moment", she better have a condom ready in her handbag. Give us a break. Pop stars are in the crosshairs of this reactionary anti-drug, anti-sex campaign themselves: first Boy George was victimised by the "drug war", then the Housemartins group were targetted because they are open homosexuals and now Elton John is being raked over the coals in the pages of Murdoch's scabby *Sun* tabloid for supposedly having a sexual affair with a young man.

Where there's moralising claptrap, invariably there's the church. With just about the lowest attendance in all of Western Europe, the Church of England has seized on AIDS to try to stage a comeback. The *Guardian* (14 December 1986) quoted a study by the Church which said "if Britain returned to biblical restraints on sexual behaviour 'the moral danger' of Aids would disappear". This is particularly grating coming from a church which would never have been established if Henry VIII had kept to biblical restraints. On the truly lunatic fringe, there's one James Anderton who hit the headlines when he accused homosexuals of "swirling around in a cesspit of their own making". But Anderton is no ordinary bigot - he's the chief constable of Greater Manchester and claims to have a direct pipeline to god, no less. He also thinks that criminals should be "flogged until they beg for mercy" (*Observer*, 25 January).

From the Tories and their clergy, religious nut cops and Brownhill-type brownshirts to the dullard Labour reactionary Kinnock, the spirit of Mrs Grundy lives on. This Victorian lady's beliefs were summed up in Parliament by Lord Sandon: "The recreations of the rich affect themselves only, whilst the recreations of the poor affect society in general." Indeed, we can be sure that the "safe sex" campaign is in the tradition of the vile hypocrisy for which the British rulers are renowned: it is strictly for the masses.

Thatcher's attacks on everyone take place in the service of the anti-Soviet war drive. So did Kinnock's scabberding during the miners strike, so do his NATO-loving defence policy and reactionary social positions. The imperialists are even manipulating the tragedy of AIDS as part of their Cold War drive by refusing to share their diagnostic drugs with the USSR. While homosexuality remains a criminal offence in the Soviet Union (one of the Stalinists' anti-Bolshevik measures was to reinstate prohibitions on homosexuality that had been wiped out by the October Revolution), there are now some 40 different institutes researching a cure and vaccine for AIDS in the Soviet workers state. Georgy Khlyabich, the deputy Health Minister has warned that it will take about five years to develop an effective vaccine and is increasing the budget for research. Bitterly attacking the capitalists' refusal to cooperate in combatting AIDS, Khlyabich commented: "In the world of business, there is talk of profit, but none of humanity" (*Independent*, 26 February 1987).

We communists believe that people ought to be able to live their lives decently, in peace. In 1917 the Bolsheviks led the Russian workers to victory under the slogan "Peace,

Bread, Land!" in the midst of the bloody carnage of World War I. Among the first acts of the new proletarian state was the abolition of all the old laws meant to reinforce the family and clerical "morality" - ie, the enslavement of women, the persecution of homosexuals. It is an indictment of imperialism in its death agony that the tragic AIDS disease is used to frighten the population back into the Dark Ages, to relegate women to home and hearth, to terrorise homosexuals and other vulnerable minorities. Only socialist revolution will lay the basis for mankind to go forward and produce for social need rather than for the profit of the vicious, rapacious few. ■

## NUM reply...

(continued from page 7)

ers are. And what was the Labour Party's leader, the Rt Hon Mr Neil Kinnock, doing? He *stabbed* the NUM. He advocated scab ballots, violence-baited militants and vowed to let jailed miners rot in prison. This was not an aberration, but the normal role for the head of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, a party dedicated to betray the workers and oppressed, channelling their hatred for the Tories into propping up the capitalist system.

Sundry Labour Party gentlemen explicitly state in parliament that they are enemies of revolution in South Africa. And their record is clear on class struggle, let alone revolution, here. Kinnock spits on blacks and Asians just as he knifed the miners. His laying a wreath for the cop felled during the murderous police rampage in Tottenham is but one obvious example. Labour Party policies from import controls to virginity tests for Asian women to sending the imperialist troops into Northern Ireland in 1969 and keeping them there are reactionary and divisive, reinforcing the very barriers broken down during the miners strike. Scab Kinnock would love to be in Number Ten and CIA-lover Denis Healey could "rule OK" on foreign policy.

As part of his attempt to bury the impact of the miners strike, and to cover for his scabbing on the class struggle and defence of the oppressed, Kinnock wants to put himself at the head of a class-collaborationist sanctions "movement". Now, on the basis of your experience during the strike, do you think that Kinnock the scabherder could possibly be fighting for the liberation of black miners in South Africa?

Our *Workers Hammer* article emphasised the link between "sanctions" and Labourism. The 15 January letter does not even mention the Labour Party. Nor does it address another issue we raised in our article: the

gypsy bans in the clubs and pubs of Yorkshire. Isn't this a little bit of apartheid on your own doorstep, one which miners could surely do something about? As recent punch-ups in the area over these bans can attest to, the question is pretty volatile. Do you think a ban on Yorkshire coal would be a good way to fight this blight? From a class standpoint that would, of course, be the wrong way to deal with the problem. This bigotry must be fought tooth and nail by class-conscious miners; to quote Marx on the Irish question: "A people who enslaves another people forges its own chains."

Our present differences over South Africa sanctions at bottom revolve on the question of the Labour Party. Today we are waging the same principled fight we carried out, on different terrain, during the strike when we argued against paralysing illusions in Labour. We value deeply the comradeship and fraternity between ourselves and miners, including at Hatfield Main, that developed during the strike. This was based on our mutual desire to see a miners victory and to pursue that goal through class struggle. But then as now, we didn't always agree. We have throughout emphasised that workers and the oppressed need a revolutionary working-class party to defeat the bosses' attacks and lead the overthrow of capitalism.

Breaking the working class from the Labour traitors - including their "left" apologists, who are trying to "mend fences", bury the lessons of your struggle and channel the great discontent and anger into harmless parliamentary games - is a necessary task in order to build the urgently needed Bolshevik party in this country. Yes, there are illusions in the Labour Party. But our recent special *Workers Hammer* supplement, headlined "Class traitor, race-hater, anti-Soviet scab - Down with Judas Kinnock!", widely distributed among miners, black and Asian communities and students, was received with keen interest and often enthusiasm. We look forward to the day when miners and all workers stand shoulder to shoulder not only in great economic struggles but also in political mobilisations against the racist imperialist *British* ruling class.

Yours fraternally,  
*Workers Hammer* Editorial Board

## BBC...

(continued from page 3)

word for it until such time as that claim is substantiated or otherwise" (*New Statesman*, 30 January). In the House of Commons Kinnock attacked Thatcher for failing to stop the leaks!

Taken together with Kinnock's sabotage of the valiant miners strike in

1984-85, this latest episode once again shows that the Labour misleader is no less an enemy of the working class than the hated Iron Lady. Thatcher and her "opposition" are united that Britain will play a role in the imperialist anti-Soviet war drive, and that this means more official secrecy, more censorship and more naked use of force. The BBC raids came on the heels of the massive police riot against a 20,000-strong protest on the anniversary of the defeated printworkers strike at Wapping where nearly 200, including press and onlookers, were injured. And racist "justice" declared that the cop who paralysed Mrs Cherry Groce, a black woman, for life, gets off while the youth who were rounded up at Tottenham's Broadwater Farm during a racist cop invasion there get the full brunt of prosecution.

If Thatcher has her way, enterprising journalists like Duncan Campbell will be made to pay for the sorry state of British imperialism in its decline. Ironically, the *New Statesman* itself is Labourite to the core, but as the revelations of M15 operations against Wilson's Labour government show, that's no guarantee of anything. (Indeed, Campbell was prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act in 1977, under Labour prime minister Callaghan.) One columnist lectured the loathsome Kinnock to never forget that in Thatcher he is dealing with the party of the Zinoviev letter (a Tory fabrication of the 1920s designed to smear the Labour Party as Soviet agents). Ask the GCHQ employees whose unions were smashed what happens when you get in the way of the government's self-serving definitions of "national security".

All the talk of "reform" of this decrepit system - with its vast intelligence operations laid on top of its monarchy, House of Lords, established church, hideous state terror in Northern Ireland, Labour traitors waiting in the wings to shove it to the people more "effectively" - is so much rubbish. The Official Secrets Act is used to cover up Thatcher's order to sink the *Belgrano*, the cold-blooded mass murder of hundreds of Argentine troops, and the SAS "anti-terrorist" assassination squads who gun down "IRA suspects" in Northern Ireland. It will take a workers revolution to open the files of the spy and secret police agencies. An authentic Bolshevik vanguard party must fight the imperialist war drive, taking as its starting point the unconditional defence of the Soviet workers state against imperialism. It will win the proletariat to the need for socialist revolution by breaking the stranglehold of the the Labour traitors - both of the right and "left". Hands off the *New Statesman*, the BBC and Duncan Campbell! Down with the Official Secrets Act! ■

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# Reangate...

(continued from page 12)

president's "place in history". Baker was to be the great conciliator, who would orchestrate the cameo appearances of the Great Communicator. But the first day on the job he put his foot in his mouth, referring to Nancy Reagan as a "dragon".

Regan follows former CIA chief Casey, former National Security Adviser Poindexter and Lieutenant Colonel North. Already, Navy secretary John Lehman, deputy defence secretary Nestor Sanchez and White House propaganda boss Pat Buchanan headed for the door while they could still walk out. Assistant Secretary of

into junk bonds as takeovers drive out productive investment. Added to the mammoth US budget deficit and Latin American bank debt, this spells a disaster waiting to happen. Any financial shock could bring it all tumbling down. *Time* (9 March) warned that because of the mountain of debt, "in the event of recession ...the resulting bankruptcies and attendant hardships would probably be more severe than during any downturn in recent memory".

## DEMISE OF THE "REAGAN DOCTRINE"

"If this report had been written by Robert Ludlum, it would make the fiction best seller list overnight. It's a report about a President out of



Fitzpatrick-White House

McFarlane, Casey, Regan - the gang that couldn't lie straight.

State Elliot Abrams will be "gone by summer", it's reported, and dozens of other high and middle-level administration officials are emptying their desk drawers. And in order to avoid a "Gatesgate" set-to with Congress, the White House nominee to head the CIA withdrew. As you can imagine, it's no easy job to find replacements: the only man they could find for Buchanan's job turns out to have been a member of a Nazi youth group. Meanwhile, North's secretary Fawn Hall is decidedly no Rosemary Woods; after vowing not to shred-and-tell, she's now talking to the special prosecutor in exchange for immunity from prosecution.

As the US administration unravels the turbulence in Washington is sending shock waves through the US' "Free World" allies and surrogates. The split in the Nicaraguan contras reflects divisions between the State Department and the CIA...and the fact that the Sandinistas have won. "After this [Tower] report it's all over", says a US official. "We need to start thinking about evacuating the contras" (*Time*, 9 March). In Britain, arch-Reaganite Maggie Thatcher, herself increasingly unpopular, is on the verge of calling elections. The French government is paralysed in uneasy "cohabitation", with a rightist premier and "socialist" president, battered by mass student protests and then a month-long rail strike that threatened to turn into a general walkout of labour. And Washington's chief NATO ally West Germany is torn between wanting an arms deal with Soviet leader Gorbachev and fears that an agreement to eliminate medium-range missiles could lead to a US pull-out from Europe.

As the American political superstructure totters, the falling debris can't help but shake the economic house of cards on Wall Street. This administration, after all, is more closely identified with Big Money than any other in decades. And while the stock market has been soaring, it could quickly plummet - looking curiously like Reagan's ratings in the opinion polls. Swindling is rampant: the Boesky and "Yuppie Five" insider trading scams have been tracked to the top levels of the most prestigious brokerage houses. Billions are going

touch and a President out of control." That was one Congressman's reaction to the Tower Commission's report. When Iran/Contragate first broke, Reagan had called up to thank his "American hero" Oliver North, remarking that the story would make a great film. But in 300-plus pages the Tower report lays out the script for a Laurel and Hardy comedy of errors. Cakes, bibles, pistols, plane-loads of missiles listed as oil drilling equipment: the latest revelation was a scheme to ransom a hostage with \$300,000 in chemically treated bills that would disintegrate after a couple of days! That one flopped, too. And while McFarlane/Poindexter/North are quoted disparaging the ayatollahs, the net result is that Khomeini has managed to bring down the Great Satan.

On whether he had authorised the first Israeli delivery of antitank missiles to Iran, Reagan first told the Commission he agreed with former NSC head McFarlane that he had approved it; then (on chief of staff Regan's orders) he denied he had okayed the shipment, and finally he sent a letter saying: "I don't remember - period." Reagan's one attempt to defend himself in public was to ask an audience, who could remember what they were doing on August 8, 1985. This has spawned a new adult trivial pursuit. When the *Los Angeles Times* (1 March) asked musician Frank Zappa what he was doing, he replied facetiously: "I was head of the National Security Council arranging to have arms shipped to Pakistan and Angola and diverting funds through a Swiss bank account in order to shamelessly spend it on the campaigns of my favorite Republicans."

But that whole controversy is beside the point. On 17 January 1986 Reagan signed a secret finding approving arms sales to Iran and ordering the affair kept secret from Congress. And on the contra aid diversion, North writes in a 16 May 1986 memo: "the President obviously knows why he has been meeting with several select people to thank them for their support for Project Democracy in [Central America]". As the PROF computer messages and scores

of memoranda show, North reported everything to his chiefs McFarlane and then Poindexter, Regan sat in on virtually every NSC meeting, Shultz and Weinberger knew what they wanted to know, and Reagan knew all (whether or not he forgot it). Who's surprised? Reagan was pushing covert action and vowing to overthrow radical-nationalist Sandinista Nicaragua from the start. It was all blatantly illegal, but worse than that in the eyes of the Tower Commission and the American bourgeoisie, it was "clumsily and amateurishly" carried out, and it failed.

"Project Democracy", or PRODEM, was the code name for the covert programme funnelling arms and guns to CIA-backed anti-Communist forces around the world, from Nicaragua to Angola to Afghanistan and Cambodia. Tens of millions of dollars were raised from rake-offs on Iran arms sales, contributions from kings and sultans, tax-deductible donations from Texas right-wingers, profits from drugrunning, etc. With some creative accounting these funds were not only used to finance the CIA's Nicaraguan mercenaries, despite the Boland Amendment which for a time banned "direct and indirect" US military aid to the contras; but also to lobby Congress and defeat anti-contra Congressmen in the '84 elections. In the course of it, a lowly colonel put the arm on King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, threatened President Arias of Costa Rica to cut off US aid, ordered the US ambassador to Costa Rica to organise a united contra "Southern Front", and much, much more.

As the White House ran its private wars, lying to Congress and hiding much of the facts from the Cabinet as well, the *New York Times* (2 March) concluded: "Frustrations with democracy, it seems, led President Reagan to turn his National Security Council into a secret government." Former NSC head McFarlane said at one point to North: "if the world only knew how many times you have kept a semblance of integrity and gumption to US policy they would make you Secretary of State. But they can't know and would complain if they did - such is the state of democracy in the late 20th century." The Reaganauts set out to slam the Soviet "Evil Empire" up against the wall, roll back the Nicaraguan Revolution, restore the "American Century" and "avenge Vietnam". They were going to "save democracy" from the State Department, the Pentagon, Congress and the American people.

But the "Reagan Doctrine" didn't work, because the contra scum are losers - they have been smashed on the battlefield in Nicaragua. US imperialism got its ass kicked in Indochina, and most Americans don't want to see the body bags coming home in another mad Third World military adventure to put a gang of rapists and murderers in power. So six years into the abortive "Reagan revolution" the Sandinistas are still there, and Gorbachev has a lot more credibility than the liar in the White House. In fact, over Iran/Contragate the American Congress would like a little *glasnost* (openness) itself. The Tower Commission talked to every living past president and virtually every living former vice president, secretary of state, war secretary, CIA head and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Its modulated but devastating conclusions, therefore, represent the consensus of the US bourgeoisie.

"The President is the ultimate decision maker in national security....

We could not long endure exercise of Executive power by committee. A strong Executive with the flexibility to conduct foreign and diplomatic affairs is an essential feature of our form of government", intoned Senator John Tower in presenting the Commission's report. Make the NSC responsible to Congress? No way, they say. A ban on NSC "operational roles"? The trouble with Iran/Contragate in their eyes is that it gave covert action a bad name. The US ruling class wants a strong executive. Their problem is that "effective" presidents have been hard to come by in recent years. Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan were all elected with overwhelming majorities, and all were disgraced or driven from office. So once again, as at the time of Watergate, US rulers are talking of a crisis of the imperial presidency.

## BONAPARTISM AND DEMOCRACY

The presidency has always reprinted institutional bonapartism, a power rising above the elected lawmakers. The American Revolution was, after all, a *bourgeois* revolution, and not the most radical at that. The "founding fathers" took care to construct a government that would enable the executive branch or the courts, as bastions of property, to nullify laws enacted by a popularly elected legislature. A second, upper house of Congress, the Senate, was originally non-elected and intended to give veto power to the much less populous Southern states - ie to the slaveowners. The American constitutional historian Charles Beard describes these so-called "checks and balances" as "a government endowed with certain positive powers, but so constructed as to break the force of majority rule and prevent invasions of the property rights of minorities" (Charles A Beard, *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States* [1913]).

The executive branch has been the principal arm of US imperialism in the continual exercise of every kind of mass rapine, butchery and war. Woodrow Wilson engineered America's entry into World War I by concealing that the passenger ship *Lusitania*, sunk by German submarines, was carrying munitions to the British. Franklin



New York Post

## Was Ollie's Fawn Sandinista pawn?

Roosevelt prepared the way for World War II with his secret "destroyer deal" to arm England and by pushing Japan to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Truman A-bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, not to defeat Japan but to send a warning to the Soviet Union, whose Red Army had won the war against Nazi Germany. World War II was the last war Congress ever formally declared. Truman sent troops to Korea as a "police action" and Johnson fabricated a bogus attack on US ships to

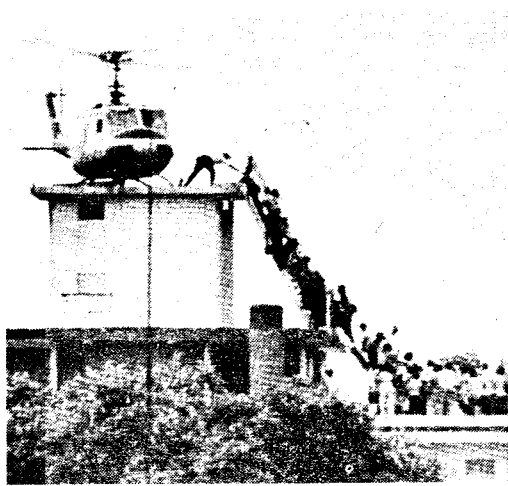
get the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. Along the way, the CIA has overthrown a dozen or more elected governments, from Iran to Central America.

The schemes cooked up by Ollie North are no more bizarre than the CIA attempts to kill Fidel Castro, including poisoned cigars and biological agents to make his beard fall out. But the CIA's *gusanos* were smashed at the Bay of Pigs. Above all, the heroic peasants and workers of Vietnam decisively defeated US imperialism, triumphing over superior military force and putting an end to the "American Century". Johnson was driven from office by the Tet Offensive of 1968, which exposed the lie that victory was "around the corner". And it was the bombing of Cambodia, in the course of an increasingly unpopular, losing war, that led to the wiretaps on Washington officials and the Watergate plumbers job that brought down Nixon. He was never charged for his hideous crimes against the Indochinese masses, of course. The sole article of impeachment concerned the Watergate cover-up—ie, Nixon's crimes against the bourgeoisie. And then a dirty deal was patched up with Ford, the unelected vice president, to let the criminal butcher off with a pardon.

Democrat Jimmy Carter began the "moral rearmament" of US imperialism, through his "human rights" crusade directed at the Soviet Union. And then came the "Reagan revolution" which was supposed to "roll back Communism" for real, not merely by beefing up the Pentagon arsenal, but by mobilising the American masses in a popular crusade against the "Evil Empire". Yet Reagan barely got to first base. A passing enthusiasm for the racist rape of tiny black Grenada (where the 82nd Airborne had its hands full with a few hundred middle-aged Cuban construction workers) could barely divert attention from the fiasco of 241 Marines blown up in Beirut. The increasingly frenzied covert operations orchestrated from the White House were a futile attempt to cover up the administration's failure. And now they have brought Reagan's demise.

#### IMPEACHMENT IS NOT ENOUGH! FOR WORKERS REVOLUTION!

With the ruling class in disarray, the possibility is posed for the working people and oppressed of this country to break politically from the Democrats and Republicans, to forge a



Hubert Van Es - UPI

decades of donkey work for the Democrats, declared that the Iran/ contra affair was "grounds for impeachment", and urged the "new Democratic majority" in Congress to take this course (*People's Daily World*, 13 November 1986). So what would that bring? George Bush, former head of the CIA, representative of Texas oil interests and one of the more sinister elements in Washington.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, a toxic waste dump of pseudo-Trotskyist grouplets, the ex-Maoist MLP and assorted New Leftovers held a demonstration at Oakland Airport, 20 February around the slogan "Oust Reagan-Bush!" Well, if the Republican president and vice president go, that puts the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Democrat Jim Wright of Texas, next in line! Not surprisingly, the ten slogans of the demonstration included no criticism of the Democrats, and it was endorsed by Democratic Congressman Ron Dellums. The main organisers were a clot of anti-Spartacist renegades around one Bob Mandel and the extended Mandel family; his former buddies of the "External Tendency" (now "Bolshevik Tendency") tailed along with this mini popular front. In contrast, 12 years ago, at the height of the Watergate crisis, the Spartacist League said:

*"Socialists should support a congressional move to impeach Nixon. But impeachment is not enough!... The fight to remove Nixon must become a fight not to replace Nixon with Gerald Ford, but a fight to replace the rule of capital with a workers government!"* ("What labour should do about Watergate," *WV* no 34, 7 December 1973, emphasis in original)

And what is one to make of the absurd demand raised by the Workers

the beginning, the "AFL-CIA" chiefs have maintained a conspicuous silence about this affair that has shaken the anti-labour Reagan government to its roots. The reason is not hard to find: the anti-communist labour fakers are getting more than moral encouragement from the network spawned by Oliver North.

When Ronald Reagan proclaimed "Project Democracy" in 1982, it included a publicly funded arm, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Prominent on the NED board of directors are AFL-CIO chief Kirkland, American Federation of Teachers head Albert Shanker, Democrat Walter Mondale and right-wing union-buster Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah. Of the \$18.5 million disbursed by the NED in 1985, some \$11.5 million went to the AFL-CIO and its Free Trade Union Institute (FTUI), notorious for its role in CIA schemes to wreck militant labour unions around the world. Closely intertwined with the AFL-CIO's "free trade union" outfit is PRODEMCA, a "private" fundraising outfit heavily involved in Oliver North's scams. PRODEMCA has channelled NED dollars to the internal contra organ *La Prensa* in Nicaragua, paid for tours by journalists to contra bases in Honduras, and toured contra leaders in the US. It is now reported that PRODEMCA has received an undisclosed amount from Carl Channell, the Contragate PR man who received millions in rake-offs from Oliver North's Iranscam money.

A few short months after Reagan came to power, he busted the PATCO air controllers union. This top-paid, overwhelmingly white union was one of the very few labour groups to endorse Reagan, yet they saw their leaders led away in shackles like slaves in the antebellum South. This strikebreaking gave the green light to

bosses around the country who went on a rampage of takeback union-busting, including the deliberate murder of strikers on the picket lines. But now the Reagan gang is on the run, and the workers and oppressed of America face a weak and isolated regime. Though *no one* in the bourgeoisie is talking impeachment, according to the polls fully a third of the US population think Reagan should "consider" resigning! Now is the time to hit back, while they're down. But that requires, first and foremost, a fight to dump the labour lieutenants of Reagan's counterrevolution and to forge a Trotskyist party that can link the seething anger of the ghetto with the social power of the factory.

And there's not a lot of time. The warships are still off Lebanon. The new National Security Adviser Frank Carlucci is reportedly considering plans for a naval quarantine of Nicaragua, and Reagan (who has predicted Armageddon in our time) still has his finger on the nuclear button. At home, Attorney General Meese demonstrates his appetites for a police state, trying to decree a federal death penalty while effectively abolishing the Miranda (suspects' rights) ruling. And COINTELPRO "dirty tricks" are not just a Watergate memory, as more than 50 break-ins have been recorded in offices of groups opposing US war moves in Central America. The basis is being laid for a bipartisan Reagan regency, with Congress brought into the show. But such a regime would be united on a platform for a rationally orchestrated anti-Soviet war drive, which spells union-busting, mass homelessness, hunger and racist terror at home.

A few days before the Tower Commission report was released, the lead article in *Time* magazine (2 March) began: "On the Day of Judgment, according to ancient religious tradition, all secrets will be revealed and all hidden sins bared.... Some aides went so far as to speculate that, depending on how Ronald Reagan and his lieutenants react, Feb. 26 could turn out to be a secular analogue of Judgment Day." Far from it. For the imperialists—who turned Vietnam into a moonscape, ordered the slaughter of tens of thousands of Central American peasants and wage war on labour and blacks at home—Judgment Day will come when a victorious socialist revolution sweeps away all the Watergaters and Contragaters, the My Lai mass murderers and their rapacious capitalist masters. That's when we will finally open the books to find out the murderous secrets the Tower Commission *didn't* reveal. ■



Workers Vanguard photos



Spartacist League/US at PATCO rally (left). November 27, 1982: SL-initiated Labor/Black Mobilization stops Ku Klux Klan in Washington, DC.

class-struggle workers party that can sweep away the lying, murdering, incompetent criminals who are driving America to ruin while oppressing the peoples of the world. But as the spectre of a new Watergate loomed, various reformists raised the call for *impeaching* the president. Communist Party leader Gus Hall, trained in

League (WL) of the dubious David North (no known relation to Oliver), for an AFL-CIO inquiry into the Iran/ contra affair? Lane Kirkland & Co are loyal lieutenants of American capitalism, who have proved their loyalty to the class enemy by fronting for CIA union-busting operations abroad and sabotaging strikes at home. From

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# WORKERS HAMMER

**American labour, minorities need a fighting workers party!**

# Watergate-Reagangate

The following article is adapted from Workers Vanguard (no 423, 6 March), newspaper of the Spartacist League/US.

The American ruling class has concluded that Ronald Reagan may continue to reign as president, but he can no longer rule. The Tower Commission, originally appointed to "investigate" the operations of a runaway National Security Council, came back with a damning report that in diplomatic language indicted the entire administration. "Chaos" had descended on the White House, the president "didn't understand" what was going on in the Iran/contra affair, the "legal underpinning" for the arms shipments to Teheran via Israel was "at best highly questionable", and the whole "private" contra supply operation run out of the NSC was an elaborate attempt to get around a Congressional prohibition. Above all, the Reagan-aunts' schemes, each more bizarre than the next, failed miserably. The Commission ludicrously called the whole business an "aberration". But all wings of the bourgeoisie agree that drastic measures have to be taken to clean up the mess.

The United States, which proclaims itself leader of the "Free World", has been made a laughing stock, and ever since the scandal broke, paralysis has set in. European imperialist allies refer to the "black hole in Washington". Under the headline "Wanted: a Leader", the *Los Angeles Times* (13 February) editorialised on behalf of

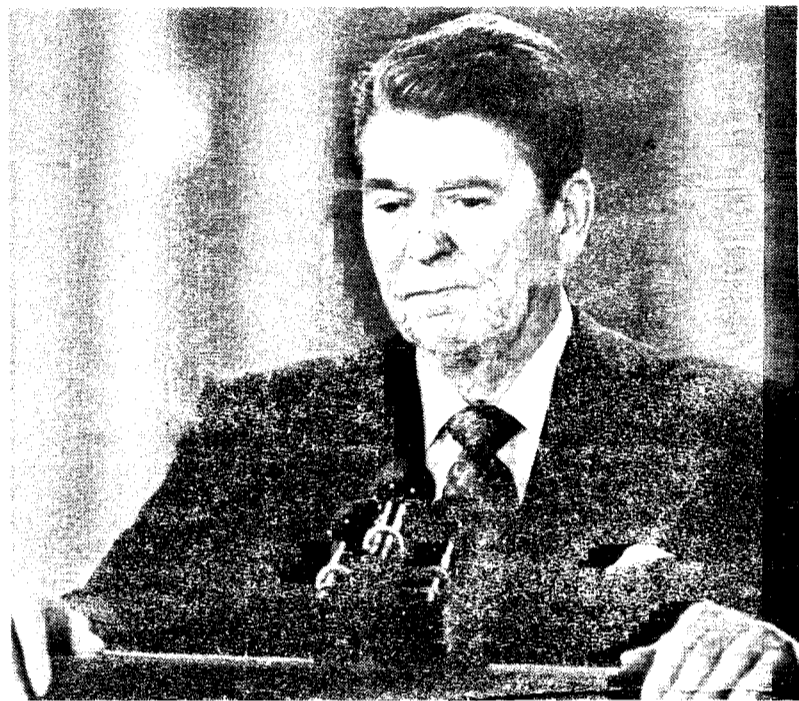


Actualidad Espanola

**Tricky Dick Nixon run out of Washington, DC. Now it's bedtime for Bonzo.**

and that puts US rulers in a dilemma. On CBS' *Face the Nation* news programme, former Democratic Senator Edmund Muskie spoke for all three panel members, saying they were "appalled by the absence of the kind of alertness and vigilance to his job and to these policies that one expects of a president". Muskie's devastating conclusion: "We do not regard him as a mental case, but we regard him as a person who didn't do his job."

There is an acute political crisis at the pinnacle of US capitalism, which



Diana Walker

dacy for president, saying if he is elected "nobody, but nobody, will ever ask you who is in charge" in the White House (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1 March)! And while Reagan's contras are still spreading death and destruction around the globe, the racist terrorists carry out their bloody terror at home - from lynch mobs in Howard Beach, New York and Forsyth County, Georgia to nightriding firebombers in Marquette Park, Chicago. But there have also been substantial counter-mobilisations to KKK terror, includ-

down Reagan through sharp class struggle!

## CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The day after the Tower report was issued, Don Regan was unceremoniously sacked as White House chief of staff, informed of the event by a TV announcement of his successor. Regan, who had imperiously insisted on "micromanaging" everything in the White House, was variously referred to as "prime minister" and "the real president". But in trying to get Ronald Reagan out there reading his lines, Regan committed the cardinal sin of running afoul of Nancy Reagan. The First Lady who would be empress had insisted on keeping the president sealed off from the press, even trying to cancel the annual State of the Union speech. She cited medical reasons, and with a 76-year-old Reagan who's obviously not in touch she may have a point. But that doesn't help the imperialist bourgeoisie, which needs a functioning government. And one thing nobody proposes to do is to turn the store over to George Bush.

The appointment of "moderate" Republican former Senator Howard Baker as Regan's replacement was widely greeted with a sigh of relief by mainstream politicians. For a while it had looked like no one would take the job. But the *Wall Street Journal* (2 March), reflecting the forebodings of conservatives generally, was distraught over the "Baker regency", fearing that it could "effectively end the Reagan Doctrine", the 28 per cent maximum tax rate and Star Wars, thus endangering their

continued on page 10



Patrick Robert-Sipa Special Features

the American bourgeois establishment: "Someone needs to seize control of the White House, and there is just one person who can do it: Ronald Reagan." But Reagan evidently can't,

could quickly spread through the imperialist alliance. Yet capitalism will not fall by itself, and there are other programmes to "solve" the crisis. General Haig has declared his candi-



Roddy E. Mims

**Devastation in Tripoli after Reagan's terror bombing. Thatcher stood by her man.**

ing in such unlikely places as Louisville, Kentucky and Maryland's Eastern Shore. With the government in turmoil, now is the time for the working class and oppressed to bring