



Dump the Labour sellouts! No coalition!

For workers action committees to stop the pit closures and to run the country!

Hundreds of thousands of workers took to the streets in two massive demonstrations in London late last month. Coming in the context of two years of an ever-deepening depression, the announced pit closures unleashed massive popular outrage. But the marches "for the miners" were undertaken as a pressure tactic, a diversion from the necessary class-struggle actions that would pose concretely the possibility of a proletarian solution to the crisis of decrepit British capitalism.

NUM leader Arthur Scargill has become a key player in a cross-class coalition aimed at defusing workers' anger and pressuring the Major government. At the 25 October rally initiated by the TUC, Scargill shared a platform not only with the Labour Party and TUC tops who knifed the heroic miners strike eight years ago, but with the *open class enemy*: Liberal Democrat Paddy Ashdown and a representative of the bosses' Confederation of British Industry (CBI). Dropping any serious talk of strike action, Scargill and the NUM tops today compete with the scab UDM in futile appeals to the union-busting capitalist courts to keep the mines open. Meanwhile coal-faces at the threatened pits are already being sealed up, while miners are being driven into taking redundancy.

Echoing Scargill's no-strike line is "left" Yorkshire NUM gadfly Dave Douglass, who pontificates against those who call for industrial action in the pages of the "Leninist" organisation's *Daily Worker*. Meanwhile, in a pathetic apology for class collaboration, the "Leninists", now calling themselves the Communist Party of Great Britain (Provisional Central Committee), defend the refusal of the NUM's special delegate conference to ballot for all-out strike action, and chime in that "miners and their supporters should reject those calling for an *instant* pit strike, even an *instant* general strike" (*Daily Worker*, 24 October). The bulk of the Labourite fake left has of course been howling as one "Kick the Tories while they're down!" "Bring down the Tory Government!" "Get them Out!" in order to install John Smith & Co in No 10.

As we note below, Scargill was viciously red-baited on the eve of the 1984-85 strike because he refused to toe the line for the bosses' Cold War drive. The witch hunting was instigated by Gerry Healy's WRP—one of whose putrid decomposition products is the International Communist Party (ICP)—and eagerly picked up by Fleet Street and the TUC brass.



Der Spiegel

Miners, rail, transport, power workers: strike now!

But at the recent TUC rally Scargill embraced the anti-communism of his new bloc partners, comparing opposition to the Major government to the counter-revolutionary overthrow of Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union: "If people power can bring down governments in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the former Soviet Union, it can turn back a government who's lost all credibility here in Britain."

The massive industrial devastation here is not the result of a "mistaken policy" but reflects the iron logic of decaying capitalism. Economic depressions and the consequent immiseration of the working people are inevitable under the system of production for private profit, as Karl Marx emphasised. While the government fiddles unemployment figures, the real level of joblessness already exceeds four million. Ford has announced compulsory redundancies and 40 per cent pay cuts! Medical and ambulance services continue to crumble. And Major's "new look" economic policy means substantial cuts in real wages and jobs for five million public sector workers. London transport and rail workers must answer the government's union-busting attacks with militant, mass

strike action (see article p9).

Meanwhile Major continues to hang on to the doomed, reactionary Maastricht Treaty (which is also supported by the Labour Party tops). The shattering of the European Monetary System signifies a sharpening of inter-imperialist rivalries within Europe and at the same time the breakdown of the GATT talks now threatens trade war. Overextended by the costs of its counter-revolutionary swallowing up of the DDR and its imperialist appetites to the East, the dominant German bourgeoisie pulled the plug on its capitalist "allies" in the West. Now the capitalist thieves are falling out with each other, while simultaneously tightening the screws on the working masses. The European workers are in a race against time. Economic conditions and official government policy are pushing towards class battles in which the labour movement must mobilise its strength or face sharp cuts in its living standards. But the biggest obstacle to workers struggles are the reformist leaderships of the mass workers parties and unions. *A genuinely communist leadership must be forged on a revolutionary programme.*

We reprint below a Spartacist League

leaflet dated 21 October, which was distributed in thousands to miners, other workers, women and youth protesting the pit closures.

Fight or starve: that is the message from the one-sided class war being waged by the British ruling class now. With the announcement of the closure of 31 pits and the throwing of over 30,000 miners onto the scrap heap, the bosses have hurled down the gauntlet to all of the working people. This is a political onslaught which must be fought down the line by the trade unions and their allies. What is urgently called for is the mobilisation of the power of the organised working class—the miners along with workers in strategic industries such as rail, transport and power—to throw the gauntlet back in the face of the profit-gouging bosses, their politicians and Labourite trade union lackeys. For all-out strike action now!

And now the ruling class is running scared of genuine class struggle. Every effort is being made by Labour and its hangers-on to turn the popular outrage

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The defence of the DDR was no crime, its sellout was

Trotskyists say: Freedom for Erich Honecker!

We print below the text of the press release produced by our comrades of the Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands (SpAD) calling for a demonstration in Berlin on 12 November at the criminal court where Erich Honecker's trial is taking place. The demonstration demanded: Freedom for Honecker! Freedom for all representatives of the former DDR! That protest received widespread international coverage from Japanese, American and Italian television, the BBC, and Stockholm Press and some ten interviews were given to German and other TV journalists. Earlier, on 7 November our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF) participated in a demonstration in Honecker's defence initiated by "Comité Erich Honecker" in Paris. These actions follow earlier united-front protests called by the Spartacist League in London and the

SpAD in Berlin at the time of Honecker's seizure and deportation to Germany.

On 12 November the vengeful anti-communist trial of the Fourth Reich against the former DDR head of state Erich Honecker will begin. Nazi pogroms in Rostock, the planned mass deportation of the Roma and anti-communist show trials in Berlin are the dirty face of capitalist counterrevolution, which Kohl and Engholm want to whitewash with their big rally on 8 November. The Honecker Trial is the high point of the SPD-led witch hunt, which is directed against everything recalling the victory of the Red Army over Nazi Germany and the deformed workers state DDR which arose from it. For the "crime" of having defended the DDR, Honecker has now been thrown into Moabit prison by the



SpAD demonstrate for Honecker's freedom at Moabit prison in Berlin, August 1992.

SPD justice senator Jutta Limbach, the prison where the anti-fascist resistance fighter had already been locked up by the Gestapo. The decision of the Berlin-Tiergarten criminal court to begin the trial against Honecker is already a death sentence for the seriously ill 80-year-old man. The Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands (SpAD) together with the Komitee für soziale Verteidigung (KfSV) is calling a protest rally on 12 November at 8.30am before the criminal court in Tiergarten, Turmstrasse 91. We demand: Freedom for Honecker! Freedom for all representatives of the former DDR!

We, who have fought on every front against the capitalist reunification, also demand: Freedom for Erich Mielke! As if to prove its continuity once more, the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz is dragging into court the former DDR security chief on the basis of charges stemming from the Third Reich. Hands off Markus Wolf! He is charged with "treason" because as head spy of the DDR he successfully fought against NATO/West German imperialism. Stop the legal proceedings against the border troops! They are being persecuted because they defended their workers state on the front lines. The decision of the German high court that the DDR border law was "unconstitutional" is paving the way for mass trials. Freedom for the anti-fascist hero Gerhard Bögelein! He was sentenced to life imprisonment in the SPD stronghold of Hamburg several months ago because he

deserted to the Red Army, fought the fascists and is supposed to have killed a Nazi war judge who had the blood of over 100 Soviet partisans and Wehrmacht soldiers on his hands.

The purpose of the witch hunt is to intimidate the workers and to strangle their resistance to the consequences of capitalist reunification—to mass unemployment and racist terror. To this end, thousands of teachers, scientists and doctors were fired, throughout the civil service a witch hunt was set in motion and the PDS is being systematically persecuted through expropriation of its property and through anti-Stasi hysteria, even though the PDS leadership at all levels is going along. The revolutionary working class in power would have its own score to settle with the Stalinists for their crimes against the working class, including the sell-out of the DDR. But this is not the business of the bourgeoisie and its social-democratic henchmen. Honecker's extradition by Boris Yeltsin was a blood sacrifice from the side of those who have landed the former USSR in mass misery, anti-Semitic pogroms and bloody nationalist civil wars, in order to open up the remains of the USSR to being pillaged by the Deutsche Bank. We Trotskyists called for proletarian political revolution in order to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy and struggled against the capitalist counterrevolution from Rostock to Moscow. We demand: Stop the anti-communist witch hunt! ■



TROTSKY

Leon Trotsky on the Popular Front

In July 1936, as the Civil War raged in Spain, Leon Trotsky polemicised against the treachery of the Spanish Communist and Socialist Parties as well as the centrist POUM who had entered the popular-front government of Azaña & Co. Tying the revolutionary Spanish proletariat to the "shadow of the bourgeoisie", the popular front dismissed the workers and peasants, paving the way for Franco's victory. The

lessons of Spain are especially relevant today as the reformists and centrists, not least those who falsely claim the mantle of Trotskyism, in Ireland, Britain and throughout Europe are set to repeat again the betrayal of the class struggle in the service of "unity" with the "democratic" bourgeoisie.

The workers' party that enters into a political alliance with the radical bourgeoisie by that fact alone renounces the struggle against capitalist militarism.... The political alliance of the working class leaders with the bourgeoisie is disguised as the defense of the "republic." The experience of Spain shows what this defense is in actuality. The word "republican," like the word "democrat," is a deliberate charlatanism that serves to cover up class contradictions. The bourgeois is a republican so long as the republic protects private property.... The articles appearing in *Le Populaire* and *L'Humanité* on the events in Spain fill one with rage and disgust. These people learn nothing. They do not want to learn. They consciously shut their eyes to the facts. The principal lesson for them is that it is necessary at all costs to maintain the "unity" of the Popular Front, that is to say, unity with the bourgeoisie and friendship with Daladier.... A genuine alliance of workers and peasants must be created against the bourgeoisie, including the Radicals. One must have confidence in the strength, initiative, and courage of the proletariat, and the proletariat will know how to bring the soldier over to its side. This will be a genuine and not a fake alliance of workers, peasants, and soldiers. This very alliance is being created and tempered right now in the fire of civil war in Spain. The victory of the people means the end of the Popular Front and the beginning of Soviet Spain.

—Leon Trotsky, "The Lesson of Spain", *The Spanish Revolution* (1931-39)



LENIN

WORKERS HAMMER



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

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

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Spartacist League  Public forum

Drive for capitalist restoration in the
ex-USSR and Eastern Europe fuels racist terror!

For trade union/minority mobilisations
to smash racist terror!

London
7:30pm, Wednesday, 2 December
Conway Hall, Small Hall
Red Lion Square
Nearest tube: Holborn

Glasgow
1pm, Thursday, 26 November
Queen Margaret Union
University Gardens

For more information phone: London 071-485 1396 Glasgow 041-332 0788

Vienna: Workers Power rallies with Serbian monarchists, Chetnik fascists

"For the following political horror trip there is no precedent in the history of the Austrian left. At least I cannot remember having seen such a bizarre 'bloc constellation' during the last thirty years."

—Die Linke, 4 September 1992

Not "just another scandal" from the right-centrist Workers Power and its misnamed League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) but a mind-boggling lulu has emerged from Austria. In late July the LRCI's Austrian group ArbeiterInnen-standpunkt (ASt) carried out a "united front" action with Great Serbian monarchists and fascists — an event so disgusting that even the Austrian supporters of Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat were repelled. Recall that the USec saluted the Estonian Nazi "Forest Brothers" as well as the sinister Croatian HDP in the service of Cold War "anti-Stalinism" and that French USec honcho Alain Krivine recently signed an appeal to the imperialist Common Market "Europe of Twelve" to "act collectively" in Yugoslavia. It takes a lot to disgust the USec.

The story: according to ArbeiterInnen-standpunkt's own account, it had participated at "a public forum on the imperialist aggression in the Balkans" with the leader of the monarchist Serb National Rebirth, as did the SOAL (Pabloites), CP and the Austrian pseudo-Trotskyists of the RKL. The Austrian Workers Power group, in their own words, were "warned by all possible sides not to go into a united front with 'such reactionary Serb nationalists'" (*ArbeiterInnen-standpunkt*, September 1992). The ASt goes on to recount that: "it should not in any case be prettified that Milatovic proved to be at this forum a Great Serbian Chauvinist, an anticommunist and a proponent of the free market economy, as well as an admirer of the interwar Serbian monarchy. Without any doubt a reactionary Serbian nationalist."

The ASt's conclusion was... to organise a joint rally with Milatovic & Co! We print below excerpts from the report of the Austrian USec's *Die Linke*:

"For July 18th the Gruppe 'ArbeiterInnenstandpunkt' together with Serbische Nationale Wiedergeburt [Serb National Rebirth], the Vienna local of the Serbian Monarchist Vuk Draskovic had called for a rally in front of parliament and then a march to the US embassy....

"...a kind of nationalist masquerade developed, that was frightening. In front of the parliament some 250 Serbs had gathered, the ten representatives of the 'ArbeiterInnenstandpunkt' therefore already quantitatively had to play the role of extras. The rally therefore bore the stamp of the portraits of the former Serbian royal house and of the pretender to the crown, Alexander, Chetnik symbols and cheers to the Serbian army. A speaker of the 'Serbische Nationale Wiedergeburt' in his speech lambasted his listeners with a barrage of chauvinism....

"Grotesque indeed was the speech of the representative of the AST that followed. He carefully tried to avoid confronting his 'bloc partner' in the fight against military



Der Spiegel



World Jewish Congress

Tito's (left) partisans defeated Nazi, Ustashi and Chetniks in World War II. Waldheim (centre) with Waffen SS, Yugoslavia, 1945; partisans hanged by Nazis, 1942 (right). Unifying with monarchists, Chetniks, WP spits on partisan struggle.



Tanjug

intervention and hardly addressed a single concrete question of the war in former Yugoslavia. There was not even any mention of Croats, Albanians and the Kosovo. The very general sounding slogans against nationalism were interrupted from the audience with chants of 'Long live Serbia'.

"There can be no justification for this running amok of the AST. Already at a forum called by the AST that was held prior to the rally this same speaker of the 'Serbian National Rebirth' had appeared and had demanded 'God may not forgive the Croats, because they know what they do.'

"Attempts at the beginning of the rally when it was already clear that the comrades would only be the fifth wheel to the cart of the Chetnik supporters to convince the AST that it was necessary to leave the rally were brusquely dismissed."

At least as hair-raising is the account provided by the Austrian RKL's *Klassenkampf*:

"On a truck as the speaking platform, the leader of the 'Serbian Rebirth' and then that of the 'Trotskyist' AST blared out their speeches in front of pictures of Serbian kings and the great Serbian emblem on the rostrum. The former more than half an hour on god, King and Serbian fatherland, the AST speaker finally against Austria and imperialism and against imperialism and Austria. Applause of the roughly 1000 mainly Serbian people was assured, namely when the Serbian leader on the platform ordered applause from the masses with a hand signal....

"Then they marched and at the final rally the AST's 'united front politics' definitively came to an end: when, there in the vicinity of the US Embassy an AST cadre finally tried to criticise Chetnik nationalism... he was dragged down from the truck by Chetnik fascists. Soon the AST found themselves on the run away from the place, chased by a group of Chetniks, whom they could escape from in the end only by hiding in a pastry shop...."

Saved by the strudel.

This "political horror trip" is not denied by Workers Power, it is not repudiated — quite the opposite! In its amusingly titled article "Yugoslavia: bringing the war to Austria" (*Trotskyist International*, September/December 1992) Workers Power complains that "the whole left" refused to participate in this circus of reaction! "Why? The wretched pretext they offered was that the demonstration was supported by Draskovic-ite 'Serb National Rebirth', a nationalist grouping... Without their participation, of course, few or no Serbs would have marched with us." And a damn sight fewer Chetniks might have been out on the streets chasing unprincipled and criminally idiotic leftists into pastry shops as well. Workers Power's article admits that "a group of Chetnik fascists physically attacked a Serbian ASt comrade" and goes on:

"In that situation the 'moderate' nationalists of the Serbian Rebirth, failed to actively join in our defence or kick the Chetnik scum off the demonstration. Indeed, they even gave the microphone to a Chetnik speaker to placate them, thus turning the demonstration into a reactionary nationalist event." (emphasis ours)

A "reactionary nationalist event" indeed — an event initiated by the AST jointly with monarchists and pursued until the monarchists' fascist Chetnik buddies dragged them off! And Workers Power is quite clear that it is not interested in what it calls "nonsense about 'principle'": "Unfortunately, there are no Serbian workers' organisations or leaders in Vienna, independent of one or another type of nationalist. If there were, we would happily organise a demonstration with them." As for Draskovic's "anti-imperialism", he has come out as a more extreme anti-communist than Milosovic and offered his links with the Chetniks to promote "peace", ie to secure the Balkans for imperialist exploitation.

Fresh from organising its "reactionary nationalist event", WP has made a *positive programme* out of the complete absence of principle which led to the Vienna scandal. The *Trotskyist International* article concludes with a grotesque parody of Leon Trotsky, who urged the crushing of the fascist scum: "For our part, we take those lessons into the struggles and organisations of the working class as they now exist, learning from them how to advance the cause of communism. We do this not simply despite having to make temporary alliances with 'the Devil and his grandmother' but, indeed, through such alliances" (emphasis ours). WP's third-campist methodology has in fact placed them squarely in the camp of capitalist counterrevolution, on the barricades with the Yeltsinite spivs and racketeers in Moscow in August 1991. It was a decisive act of its rightist degeneration and from sponsoring the infamous tour in Britain of fascist NTS/scab UDM-supported Yuri Butchenko to pimping for the "rights" of Ustashi-loving Croat nationalists against the then-Yugoslav deformed workers state to its Viennese waltz with Chetnik fascists — whatever cause Workers Power is advancing with its "temporary alliances" it certainly isn't communism.

Nationalism has been the spearhead of capitalist counterrevolution which has perforce plunged the former multi-national Yugoslavian workers state into a fratricidal bloodbath. That state, bureaucratically deformed as it was from its inception, was built after Tito's partisans defeated not only the Nazis and their Croatian Ustashi allies but also the Serbian monarchists, the Chetniks. Tito shot Chetniks and Ustashi. In the genocidal slaughter of World War II, workers and peasants came to know that they were safe when the partisans with the red stars in their caps arrived in town. Even given our fundamental differences with the

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Collapse of Stalinism shakes pseudo-Trotskyists

The new anti-Spartacists

The following is adapted from an ICL leaflet distributed at a 23 October meeting in London featuring USec leader Ernest Mandel.

On 23 October Ernest Mandel, leader of the so-called "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec), is scheduled to speak at a national rally of the Socialist Outlook group in Britain. The talk was initially titled, "75 Years of the Russian Revolution: In Defence of October". Those who know the track record of the USec would find that pretty rich. In every key event in which defence of the gains of the 1917 October Revolution has been posed, from Afghanistan and Poland at the beginning of the '80s to Yeltsin's August 1991 pro-capitalist counter-coup in Moscow, Mandel's outfit has been on the anti-Soviet side of the barricades. Now that imperialism and counter-revolution are reigning triumphant in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, it's cheap to come out "in defence of October". But maybe not cheap enough: days before the event, the title was abruptly switched to the innocuous "Tories in Crisis — European Capitalism in Crisis".

When the USec joined the imperialist hue and cry over Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, we warned that these inveterate tailists, after years of chasing after every manner of popular front, were well on the way to becoming full-blown Cold War social democrats. In the spirit of the Reaganite '80s they not only declared "Solidarity with Solidarity" in Poland, but began running articles saluting Nazi collaborators like the Estonian "Forest Brothers" as "freedom fighters" in the "struggle against Stalinism". A whole faction of the USec openly hailed the imperialist *Anschluss* (annexation) of the East German deformed workers state. And now they are falling into lockstep with the German-orchestrated break-up of the Yugoslav deformed workers state. Erstwhile "red '68er" Alain Krivine, star of the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), recently signed an appeal calling on the imperialist Common Market "Europe of Twelve" to "act collectively" in Yugoslavia (*Le Monde*, 26 August).

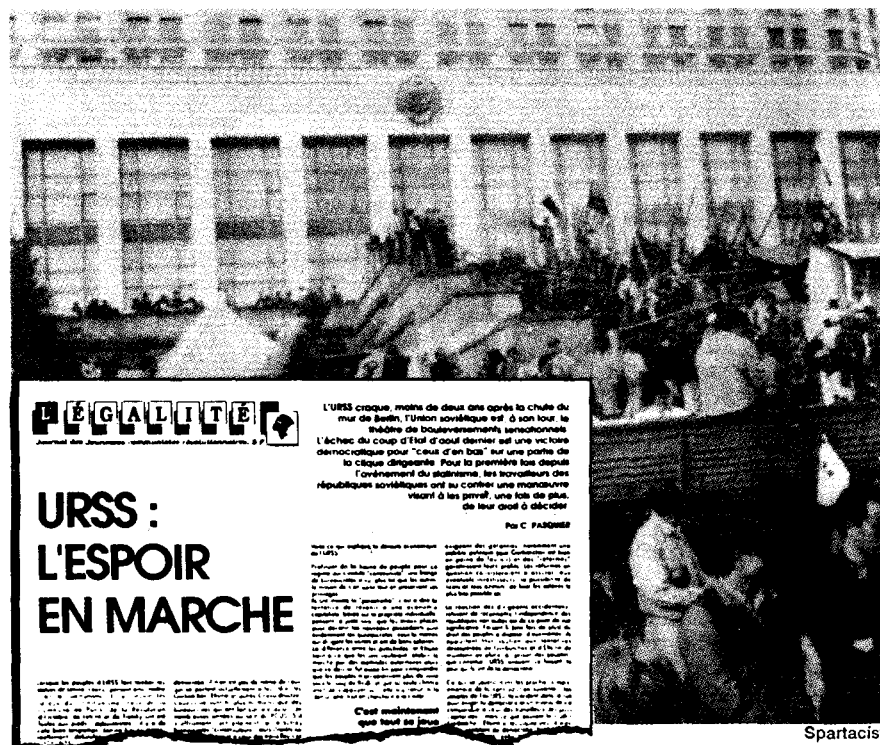
Politically the USec has nothing in common with Trotsky's Fourth International, and it's hardly united in any case. Wherever it has supporters they are divided into publicly competing groups, submerged in reformist parties, and/or riven with multiple permanent factions. For a whole layer of USec cadres and ranks, the mask of social democracy has become the face. This is epitomised by Matti, leader of the faction which celebrated the Fourth Reich's annexation of East Germany. For some years Matti attempted to give an "orthodox" veneer to his rightist politics by calling for building the "International", in opposition to Mandel's liquidationism. But the "International" he was referring to was the "Second", not the "Fourth". Now Matti has taken this to its logical conclusion and is a de facto dual member of the LCR and Mitterrand's Socialist Party.

At the same time, the manifest bankruptcy of the USec in the face of the collapse of Stalinism has also produced leftward-moving oppositions for the first time since the mid-1970s. Among these is the Jeunesses Communistes Révolutionnaires, JCR-*l'Égalité*, the heterogeneous

and increasingly dissident youth group of the French LCR. Originally, an influential part of the JCR leadership threw in their lot with Matti. But in the face of the counterrevolutionary tide sweeping Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, together with the imperialist slaughter in the Persian Gulf, many of these youth have been propelled into leftist opposition. Their leadership, notably the JCR's principal spokesman Damien Elliott, seeks to keep them chained to Mandel's USec as a loyal (kept) opposition. But the collapse of Stalinism and the evident crisis of the USec and the rest of the fake lefts has compelled them to address and confront the authentic Trotskyism of the

instances, of a 'united front' with the Thermidorian section of the bureaucracy against open attack by capitalist counter-revolution".

But for all his alleged opposition to the popular front, Elliott has recently found it expedient to join with the "Faction for the Trotskyist International", headed by the consummate political swindler Franco Grisolia, a small-time union bureaucrat whose USec career has been defined by capitulation to the popular front in Italy. As for militarily blocking with a wing of the Stalinist bureaucracy against the forces of counterrevolution, for Elliott this is purely hypothetical. As the LTF noted in a 27 July "Open Letter to the



JCR newspaper *L'Égalité* headlines "USSR: Hope on the March", joining with Mandel and the rest of USec in cheering counterrevolutionaries on Yeltsin's barricades, August 1991.

International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

The spectre of Spartacism

The ICL is well known for our intransigent opposition to the forces of capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Many members of the JCR-*l'Égalité* come from CP backgrounds; among these a number have long been repelled by the USec's capitulation to imperialist anti-Sovietism from Afghanistan to Poland. During the Persian Gulf War, some members of the JCR-*l'Égalité* were wearing badges reading "Sink Mitterrand and Bush in the Gulf!"—which was the headline in *Le Bolchévique*, the newspaper of our French section, the Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF).

Last July at a JCR-*l'Égalité* day school, Elliott lauded the ICL for our principled opposition to voting for any of the parties of a popular front, in contrast to the capitulations of the USec. Elliott was also the author of a pamphlet entitled "From the Fall of Stalinism to the Formation of the CIS" (the stillborn "Confederation of Independent States" proclaimed by Yeltsin in December 1991). Here he claimed to support the position that Trotsky outlined in the Transitional Programme of "the possibility, in strictly defined

JCR-*l'Égalité*" about Elliott's position on the August 1991 Moscow coup: "In a soft way, he wants to be with the 'masses' who were on the Yeltsin barricades. He thinks that Yeltsin is a counterrevolutionary, but he wants to 'fraternise' with his shock troops instead of smashing them!" And Elliott continues to defend the USec's support to Polish Solidarność—the counterrevolutionary, CIA-bankrolled "union"—against Jaruzelski's crackdown in 1981.

As Trotsky wrote in his article "Centrism and the Fourth International" (February 1934), centrism's "main arguments against the right it borrows from the Marxists, that is, first of all from the Bolshevik-Leninists, dulling, however, the sharp edge of criticism and avoiding practical conclusions, thereby rendering their criticism meaningless". Against the bankrupt leaders of the USec, Elliott has readily borrowed from—and blunted—our politics. But as Trotsky also noted, centrists direct their main fire not against the right, but against the Bolshevik-Leninists.

What really haunts Elliott, Grisolia & Co is not the grotesque betrayals of the USec but the "spectre of Spartacism". Seeking to establish themselves as "leaders" of a centrist opposition within the confines of the USec, they are desperately trying to inculcate any leftward-moving elements against our politics. To this end,

Elliott recently authored a document, entitled "Real Trotskyist Platform or Spartacist Platform", attacking a left opposition in the USec's Algerian section, the Parti Socialiste des Travailleurs. (Elliott's document and the LTF Open Letter are available in English in Number 7 of our bulletin series, *Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacist League*, which reprints attacks on us by our opponents.)

Acknowledging that the USec "is undergoing a deep crisis marked by the political and organisational liquidation of numerous sections, with disarray among thousands of militants", Elliott warns that this could "benefit sects with a clearly more coherent programme than that of the USec". Again Trotsky's description of centrism fits Elliott like a glove: "The centrist frequently covers up his dawdling by referring to the danger of 'sectarianism,' by which he understands not abstract propagandist passivity (of the Bordigist type) but an active concern for purity of principles, clarity of position, political consistency and organisational completeness."

Elliott obviously spent some time ransacking the publications of various renegades and deserters from the ICL for the fabrications he writes about our organisation. Although he doesn't acknowledge it, he is particularly indebted to the "Bolshevik Tendency"—a collection of embittered ex-members who quit our tendency under the early pressures of Cold War II and who have since made a "political" career out of trying to smear and set up the organisation they deserted. Elliott borrows from this "reputable" source to depict our organisation as a cult of senile and cynical Tukhachevskites who worship before portraits of General Jaruzelski. Certainly, no member of ours would recognise Elliott's portrayal of the ICL as the organisation to which they belong.

Feeling the heat from the ICL's consistent Trotskyist politics, the JCR participated in a public "meeting-debate" with the LTF on 25 September on "The Russian Question and the Continuity of the Fourth International". At the debate, an Algerian woman supporter of the PST spoke powerfully from the floor: "I was expelled from the USec camp [in Portugal this summer] which I was legitimately attending, for defending my tendency and my document... I also want to demonstrate the really outrageous manner in which comrade Damien Elliott responded to us, the faction, in Algeria. He is acting as a fingerman by refusing to debate with us and sticking a label on us that is very prejudicial."

Alibis for USec support to Yeltsin counterrevolution

In trying to exorcise the Spartacist spectre, Elliott's opposition to Mandel & Co vanishes as he seeks to alibi their egregious anti-Sovietism. In his document to the PST, he argues: "It is a lie and a scandalous slander to claim that the USec 'clearly supported counterrevolution in the USSR'". Well, as Marx was fond of saying, "facts are stubborn things". Following the Yeltsinite counter-coup in the Soviet Union, the USec's *Inprecor* echoed the imperialist celebration over "the Second Russian Revolution", while an authoritative article by Catherine Verla stated baldly: "It was necessary to unhesitatingly oppose the coup, and on these grounds, to fight at Yeltsin's side" (*Inprecor*, 29 August 1991). Elliott himself declares that "it was completely to the credit of the LCR that they published a press release delighting in the failure of the putsch" (while, for the record, "warning the workers against Yeltsin")!

As the old saying goes, the acorn never falls too far from the tree. Like his former tutor Matti, Elliott reduces his criticisms to chiding the USec for refusing

"to construct the Russian section of the Fourth International". But on what programme? While he admits that the Trotskyist programme of unconditional defence of the USSR "meant the defence of workers' gains and frontal opposition to the maneuverers of Gorbachev and then Yeltsin", Elliott condemns the "Spartacist position making Yeltsin the main enemy in August"! If Yeltsin, who spearheaded the forces of capitalist counterrevolution, was not the "main enemy", then who was? Obviously, for Elliott the answer is... the pathetic coup plotters! While the coup committee wanted to pursue Gorbachev's policy for controlled, gradual capitalist restoration, they were eclipsed by the forces pushing to smash the Soviet workers state — both the imperialists and domestic counterrevolutionaries — who rallied to Yeltsin.

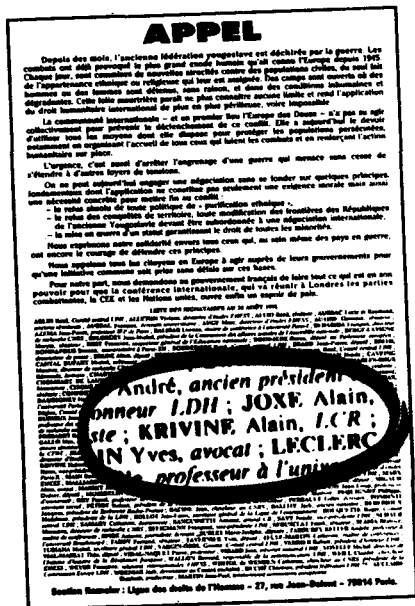
While he continues to offer backhanded support to Yeltsin, at the 25 September debate with the LTF Elliott charged that our position was one of "hypocritical support to the putschists". Certainly any serious opponent of capitalist counterrevolution would have looked hard, as we did, to determine if there was a basis for giving military support to the coup against Yeltsin's open counter-revolutionaries. But there was nothing to support: the coup committee refused to go after Yeltsin and told the workers to stay off the streets. We called on Moscow workers to clean out the rabble on the barricades in front of the Yeltsin "White House". But the coup plotters feared unleashing the forces that could have defeated the Yeltsinites, because that would have raised the possibility of civil war and the immediate prospect of proletarian political revolution.

As for "hypocritical support to the putschists", months after the victory of the Yeltsinite counter-coup we find Elliott's centrist bloc partner Grisolia writing: "If sectors of the working class had rallied in support of the coup, wanting to struggle against austerity and other moves toward capitalist restoration, Trotskyists should have allied with them" ("For a Workers' Emergency Plan to Combat the Crisis of the Soviet Union", *Bulletin of the Faction for the Trotskyist International* no 1, March 1992). One could hardly find a more chemically pure expression of opportunism. If only the workers had moved against the counter-revolutionaries, then Grisolia would have moved with them. But the workers didn't... so Grisolia sided up to the Yeltsinites instead!

While in his pamphlet on the Russian question Elliott talks abstractly of the possibility of making a military bloc with a wing of the Stalinist bureaucracy against open attack by capitalist counterrevolution, not only is there no concrete instance in which he would apply this "hypothesis", in his document to the PST he in effect dismisses Trotsky's position on this as null and void. Thus Elliott outlandishly claims that:

"all of Spartacist's politics concerning the workers states are an extrapolation of the hypothesis of a bloc with one Stalinist tendency against the others as envisaged in the Transitional Program. A hypothesis that was based on the existence of the 'Reiss faction,' that is, a *revolutionary tendency* in the bureaucracy. A tendency which was massacred the very year said program was written."

Trotsky understood that the Kremlin bureaucracy was the product of and reflected the contradictions of the degeneration of a workers revolution in a backward country surrounded by imperialism. This understanding of the dual nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy was fundamental to the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defence and the call for political revolution to oust the bureaucracy. Elliott's position is a perfect expression of the social-democratic Stalinophobia he



LCR leader Alain Krivine signed August appeal to Common Market imperialists to "act collectively" in Yugoslavia.

was taught by Matti—that the Stalinist bureaucracies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were "counterrevolutionary through and through". This he dates from the 1938 extermination of the Reiss faction. He would be hard put to explain how, close to 20 years later, in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, the bulk of the ruling Communist Party went over to the side of the working-class insurgents. But in the debate with the LTF, Elliott tried to elude such thorny problems by declaring that the JCR-*l'Egalité* has no position on any event preceding 1979!

"Solidarity" with counterrevolutionary Solidarność

Of course, when decades of Stalinist betrayals and economic mismanagement drove millions of Polish workers into the arms of Solidarność counterrevolution, Grisolia & Co readily "allied" themselves on the side of the Vatican, the CIA and the Western banks. In the debate, Elliott declared that Walesa's company union "posed a new theoretical problem" because it wasn't clear to the "masses" what Solidarność was. In his document to the Algerian PST he writes, "It was only in 1984-85 that the underground leadership of Solidarność definitively dropped its mask", when they came out with an open programme for Wall Street domination. So in line with the Grisolia school of "leadership", revolutionaries should have refrained from telling the truth to the Polish masses until it was obvious to all!

Already in the autumn of 1981, with its first national conference, Solidarność consolidated around an openly counter-revolutionary programme of "free elections", "free trade unions" and opposition to a planned economy. This programme didn't come from nowhere, for the imperialists, as the whole world now knows, were massively bankrolling and brain-trusting Solidarność counterrevolution. Now Elliott writes that "With the advent of the Walesa government and the measures taken, the awakening is rather painful." We might point out that this "awakening" is rather more painful for the Polish working class, which is being ground down by unemployment, poverty and hunger under the Solidarność-led government, than for those "Trotskyists" who spent a decade cheering on Solidarność. Elliott cynically asks, "Should we conclude from this that the Spartacists were right and it was correct to support Jaruzelski?"

In the debate with the LTF, Elliott incredibly claimed that the imperialists didn't want Solidarność in power, but rather supported the maintenance of the

Polish Stalinist regime! If that were the case, then how does one explain the millions the imperialists sank into financing Walesa's outfit? Even *Time* magazine, that mouthpiece for the American imperialist rulers, ran a front cover this year entitled "Holy Alliance — How Reagan and the Pope Conspired to Assist Poland's Solidarity Movement and Hasten the Demise of Communism"! In 1981, we recognised that the Solidarność leaders were traitors to the working class on behalf of NATO imperialism, and we urgently called to "Stop Solidarity's Counterrevolution!" When the attempted power grab by Walesa & Co was spiked by Jaruzelski's counter-coup, we supported this crackdown. As we wrote then:

"What do revolutionaries do when the Marxist programme stands counterposed to the overwhelming bulk of the working class, a situation we of course urgently seek to avoid? There can be no doubt. The task of communists must be to defend at all costs the programme and gains of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

— *Spartacist Britain* no 36, October 1981

Chafing under the Fourth Reich

In the debate with the LTF, Elliott conceded that "self-criticism" was called for on the question of the capitalist reunification of Germany. This is putting it mildly, since at the time he was allied with Matti, who called for breaking out "champagne" to celebrate the Fourth Reich's annexation of the DDR. Retrospectively, Elliott claims agreement with our call for a "Red Germany of Workers Councils". But this is simply the jumping-off point for an anti-Spartacist diatribe echoing the arguments made in his document to the PST, where he argues:

"The Spartacist policy [was] entirely oriented toward the attempt to split off a wing of the East German SED bureaucracy which they could use as a lever. Their attempt culminated in the anti-fascist demonstration at Treptow Park in Berlin, a 'united front' where they were manipulated by an SED which was looking for a smokescreen to conceal the central problem at the time: the demand by the masses that it leave."

Only a complete Stalinophobe could argue that the already fractured and disintegrating SED was "the central problem" in the DDR in January 1990. What about the forces of imperialist *Anschluss* — like Kohl's Fourth Reich and its social-democratic front men? In a remarkable feat, Elliott never once mentions the West German Social Democrats, who served as the spearhead for capitalist counterrevolution!

Elliott is all too happy to tail after Solidarność or even the Yeltsinite "masses", but he wants nothing to do with the 250,000 people who came out to the Treptow demonstration to protest the Nazi desecration of a memorial to Soviet soldiers. The German Spartacists initiated the call for this anti-fascist demonstration under slogans calling for "Workers and soldiers councils to power! For a Leninist-egalitarian party!" The speeches given by representatives of our organisation, from the podium in front of the demonstration, were an explicit frontal assault on the Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country" and "peaceful coexistence", and warned of the Social Democratic SPD "Trojan horse". The Stalinist hecklers who tried to drown out our calls for independent workers mobilisation certainly saw this as a threat to them.

For Elliott the question of anti-Soviet fascism was simply a "smokescreen". This was precisely the line of the social democrats and the West German imperialists, who hated and feared the Treptow mobilisation. Seeing in this anti-fascist and pro-Soviet demonstration, a quarter of a million strong, the forces that could prevail against the drive to capitalist reunification, the bourgeois press attempted to smear the SED with responsibility for the fascist provocation, calling it a "Stasi trick". After Treptow, the campaign to stampede the DDR into reunification was massively geared up. The "demand" that the SED leave was realised, as the Stalinists completely capitulated. Now, as the resurgent German nationalism that accompanied the annexation of the DDR is being brought home in racist pogroms and utter social devastation, perhaps Elliott will discover a "painful awakening" in Germany too.

Today the German imperialists drag former Stasi chief Erich Mielke into court on charges *stemming from the Nazi period*. Erich Honecker, the cancer-stricken former head of the DDR, is to be tried for defending his country's borders. Yet Elliott charges that the Spartacists are "making a cult of symbols of the former DDR" because we intransigently defend Mielke, Honecker and the other targets of a massive witch hunt aimed at seeking revenge for the Red Army's victory over Hitler's Third Reich. Of course Elliott hastens to add that, unlike Matti who obscenely demands a "Nuremberg for the Stalinists", he would "deny the capitalist Kohl regime any right to judge Erich Honecker". Instead he calls for a labour auxiliary to the Fourth Reich's witch hunt, demanding that Honecker "be judged by the German

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NUMBER 7

Introduction

"Real Trotskyist Platform or Spartacist Platform" Contribution to the Debate with Algerian PST Militants by Damien Elliott, editor of *l'Egalité*, newspaper of the JCR, youth group of French section of the United Secretariat, August 1992

"Open Letter to the JCR-*l'Egalité*" by the Ligue Trotskyiste de France, 27 July 1992

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THE "QUIT INDIA" MOVEMENT 50 YEARS ON

STALINIST ALLIANCE WITH

CHURCHILL BETRAYED

INDIAN REVOLUTION



Peasant rally under red flag in Punjab. During WWII CPI held back agrarian struggle and pandered to communalist Muslim League, helping to lay basis for Partition blood-bath.

In their efforts to crush the Indian independence struggle and radical social struggle, imperialist Britain, Churchill's wartime coalition and Attlee's Labour government alike, and the bourgeois-landlord lackeys in the Congress and Muslim League were fully aided and abetted by the treacherous Stalinist trinity of the Kremlin, the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Communist Party of India. The first part of this article (see *Workers Hammer* no 131, September/October) concluded:

"During this period of subordination to Churchill and in line with the British divide-and-rule stratagems, the CPI flirted with the feudalist, British-backed Muslim League. It even decided there was a Muslim 'nation' and adopted for some time the project of Pakistan. Later, they would shift back to fawning blandishments to Gandhi's Congress. We will take up in greater detail these and other concrete examples of their perfidy and how Stalinist betrayal helped pave the way for the 'solution' of the Churchills, Mountbattens and Cripps in the second and concluding part of this article."

Before turning to the CPI's own contribution to the horrors of the Partition, it is worth reviewing the line of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) on India during World War II, not least because the CPGB were the agency for enforcing the subordination of the struggle for independence to Churchill's war in

its "mentor" role to the Indian Communists.

Having enlisted enthusiastically in the "People's War" the Communist Parties not only insisted on "sacrifices" (ie, no strike pledges, cessation of social struggle) from the working classes within the "democratic" imperialist countries but also from the colonial slaves of those imperialisms. Thus, when resistance to British rule broke out in India, the British Stalinists (as well as the CPI) denounced the struggle as playing "into the hands of the Axis powers" (Black, *Stalinism in Britain*). CPGB leader Harry Pollitt wrote to Churchill with the following advice: "our [!] paramount aim must be to win the willing co-operation of the Indian nation in the common struggle against Fascism". At its Congress in 1944 the CPGB emphatically rejected independence before the war ended, instructing the Indian masses that: "Establishment of a representative Indian National Government as an ally of the United Nations during the war, and freedom for the Indian people to choose their own form of Government after the war" was the order of the day. Black's description of these Stalinists as the "Empire builders of the British 'Communist' Party" is apt.

The Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, revolutionary Trotskyists, described the situation in India during the war:

"British imperialism has instituted a sys-

tem of repressive legislation, progressively inaugurating a *gendarme* regime not less systematic and ruthless than that of Russian czarism or German fascism. Since the commencement of the imperialist war, repression has been many times intensified. Even those nominal rights previously possessed by the masses have been openly withdrawn, and a naked rule of terror substituted through the Defense of India Act.... The press has been gagged by a series of iniquitous Press Acts and a systematic police censorship of all publications. Rights of free speech and assembly have been so curtailed that they are practically non-existent. Radical and revolutionary political parties are compelled to lead an underground existence.

"The right to strike no longer exists in all 'essential war industries'.... Thousands of militant mass leaders have been imprisoned on flimsy pretexts or detained without trial. The restriction of individual movement by means of externment and internment orders has become a commonplace..." (quoted in Henry Judd, *India in Revolt*).

By contrast the ban on the CPI was lifted by a grateful British Raj in 1942 and a government circular of 20 September 1943 praised the CPI as "almost the only Party which fought for victory". A CPI self-criticism produced years later is damning enough about what this meant:

"It adopted an antistuggle antistrike line. A line of avoiding mass struggles was

worked out on the plea that they would damage the war effort or help profascist elements to sabotage it, eg. CC plenum reports, articles in weekly *People's War*. Quit India movement was opposed, on the same basis the Forward Bloc and socialists who attacked communists as 'British agents' were denounced in retaliation as fifth column and fascist agents. In B. T. Ranadive's report to the first congress on 'Working Class and National Defence' it was stated that production is 'a sacred trust' and 'conditional support of production was a left-nationalist deviation' therefore 'strikes should be firmly prevented'."

In addition to its self-confessed "anti-struggle" line during the war, the CPI as well played straight into the hands of British imperialism's schemes to consciously promote communalist divisions.

CPI and Britain's "Divide-and-Rule"

From the outset, all Indian nationalism was "a theme scored with religious, class, caste, and regional variations" (Wolpert, *A New History of India*), which given its social origins, was dominantly Hindu and upper-caste-based and frequently openly reactionary. A prime example was the early Congress "Extremist" leader BG Tilak, who first made his mark when he opposed the token reformist 1891 "Age of consent" Bill (raising the age of statutory rape of child brides from ten to twelve) under the war cry "Religion in danger!" Gandhi alienated vast numbers of Muslims with his explicitly Hindu-myth and scripture-based rhetoric, describing his utopia as *Ram Rajya* ("the kingdom of Ram"—the Hindu epic hero-god). Such themes are the basis for subsequent fascistic Hindu chauvinism, such as the BJP/RSS combine today. In the absence of a communist leadership consciously able to transcend and combat it by bringing the revolutionary proletarian, anti-communal, integrated class axis decisively to bear on the events leading up to 1947, this poison was bound to skewer any possibility of a progressive solution to India's complex internal problems.

Far from communalism being an "eternal" feature of the Indian landscape, as the racist imperialist apologists would have it, it was the British who, through their systematic backing of one community against another to subjugate both, consciously nurtured this phenomenon as well as other caste, religious and national differences. Following the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny (significantly sparked by the refusal by Muslim and upper-caste Hindu sepoys [soldiers] alike to bite a new cartridge coated with animal fat) which far exceeded the bounds of the initial triggering episodes and revealed the depth of anti-British anger in the country, Governor General Elphinstone urged: "Our endeavor should be to uphold in full force the (for us) fortunate separation which exists between the different religions and races: not to endeavor to

amalgamate them" (Henry Judd, *India in Revolt*). From this to the creation of separate Hindu and Muslim electorates in 1905-6 and thence to a series of other notorious "Communal Awards" culminating in the Partition: the imperialist logic of "divide-and-rule" was clear.

The novel *Tamas* no doubt truly portrays the efforts of CPI militants in the Punjab to fight the communalist slaughter during the Partition, but that blood-bath was prepared both by the CPI's general support to the bourgeois nationalists and its particular wartime policies with respect to the Muslim question. One aspect of the Cripps' Mission proposals in 1942 was a concession aimed at the Muslim League that areas could "opt out". Given that Jinnah's Muslim League had pledged "benevolent neutrality" in the imperialist war and the importance of recruitment from Muslim Punjabis, Pathans and Baluchis for the British Indian Army, this was a crucial divide-and-rule attempt to uphold the British war effort. The CPI, in its Central Party Education Department's *Guidelines of the History of the Communist Party of India* (1974) admits the "serious mistake our party made on the question of Pakistan":

"With the anti-struggle line referred to above went the right-opportunist approach to the question of Congress-League (or national) unity, logically culminating in our support to Pakistan and the akali demand for sikh homeland. Failure to build up enough pressure on British imperialists and to build unity from below led to helpless reliance on unity from above. 'Destiny of the nation depends on national unity—Congress-League unity' which with Jinnah adamant on his demand for Pakistan led to trailing behind the Muslim League in order to bring Gandhi-Jinnah together."

The CPI went from denouncing the Muslim League as reactionary and communalist (which it was) to generally giving it more favourable coverage than Congress. Muslim League General Secretary Liaquat Ali Khan for example praised the CPI for its "ceaseless efforts to convince the Hindu masses of the justice of the demand for the rights of self-determination to Muslims". And CPI leader Joshi argued in August 1944 for strong and independent Muslim states in the north-west and north-east. Additionally in late 1944 the CPI argued for separate electorates for Untouchables, exactly in line with British imperialist "divide-and-rule" manoeuvres at that time.

The CPI's flirtation with the Muslim League and Pakistan was not some healthy attempt to grapple with the complexities of the national question as some apologists have suggested, but a direct product of the alliance with Churchill and their efforts to cement that alliance. After all the Muslim League was also opposed to the "Quit India" struggles. And when the CPI "corrected" its flirtation with the feudalist Muslim League it was only to swing back to bourgeois Congress, policies that led directly to the CPI and CPI(M)'s refusal today to defend legitimate national struggles such as those of the Kashmiris and the Sikhs.

In the service of tailing Congress, CPI leader PC Joshi reached new depths of Stalinist prostration before the leader of India's Kuomintang. At the time of Gandhi's release from prison in 1944, Joshi declared:

"Gandhiji, the beloved leader of the greatest patriotic organisation of our people, the mighty Indian National Congress is back in our midst again.... Every son and daughter of India, every patriotic organisation of our land, is looking to the greatest son of our nation to take it out of the bog in which none is safe."

Amidst this record of sordid betrayal, acknowledged by the Stalinists' own self-criticisms, about the only thing left for them to point to in that period is the

relief work that the CPI organised during the Bengal famine. That famine in 1943 was a direct result of the imperialist war: wartime inflation, grain speculation and hoarding exacerbated by the loss of grain from Burma led to mass starvation. The arrogant indifference of the colonial administration was compounded by Churchill's decision to cut back shipping to India. AJP Taylor noted "A million and a half Indians died of starvation for the sake of a white man's quarrel in North Africa" (*English History 1914-1945*).

The CPI's famine relief work was not part of some revolutionary agitation against the war, but linked closely to its "war effort" on the food production "front". Even if it did assist many in dire straits, the CPI's famine relief work was a variant of Salvation Army mission work for Winston Churchill. In Bengal the CPI lost cadre because of its flirtation with



Artrage

Demonstrators massacred by British authorities during protest in support of Indian sailors' mutiny, February 1946.

the Muslim League, and it is noteworthy that in areas where the CPI dominated the peasant associations such as eastern Bengal and Telangana the peasant struggles over land and usury were restrained during the war compared to other areas.

The situation in Bengal impinges directly on the question of Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army (INA). There are Stalinoid critics of Gandhi's Congress (and thus presumably its CPI tails) who look to Bose's INA as a revolutionary alternative. At one time a left critic within Congress and elected as its head over the objections of Gandhi et al, Bose split to form the Forward Bloc Party in Bengal. Forward Bloc was banned and Bose arrested in 1940; he escaped on the eve of his trial in 1941 and travelled across northern India to Afghanistan, from there to Moscow. During the pre-June Russo-German alliance, Bose was welcomed by Hitler and "given high-powered radio facilities to beam daily broadcasts to India...urging his countrymen to rise in revolt against British tyranny" (Wolpert). In the spring of 1943, Bose travelled to Southeast Asia whereupon Tojo turned over all his Indian POWs to Bose's command. In January 1944 he started his Indian National Army on their march north crossing the borders of India and reached the outskirts of Tripura's state capital, Imphal, by May. Defeated by the British garrison, the INA surrendered in Rangoon and Bose escaped on the last Japanese plane to leave Saigon. He died in Formosa after a crash landing. When the captured officers of Bose's INA went on trial in the winter of 1945-6 they were widely heralded as nationalist martyrs. On 18 February 1946 the Royal Indian Navy mutinied in Bombay harbour; the mutiny spread to Karachi. The British stepped up

their attempts to extricate themselves from India.

Undoubtedly the INA was popular, particularly in Bengal, and among its ranks were those seeking a way to fight British imperialism rather than "turning the other cheek" à la Gandhi. However the pacans offered to Bose in, for example, a feature article in the 4 August *Asian Times* as achieving "a signal victory" and providing "the last nail in the coffin of British rule in India" miss the point that larger world events had intervened and in fact Bose had subordinated himself to the Axis powers who were Britain's imperialist rivals during the war. Where the CPI bowed before Churchill, the INA functioned at the behest of and under the protection of the Japanese imperialists. As the Japanese forces scored victories in rapid succession at Hong Kong, Malaya, Singapore and Burma the possibility of a Japanese invasion and victory in India was strongly felt. Bose had thrown his lot in with another would-be colonial conqueror. The INA fought in Burma—just as Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang fought on the other side with American imperialism. Both the Kuomintang and the INA subordinated the national struggle to their respective imperialist overlords. In China and in Southeast Asia the colonial masses very quickly learnt that the Japanese masters were no better than their deeply hated English, American, Dutch and French masters. The tragedy in India, and especially Bengal, was that the masses were given no choice but subordination to one or another imperialist.

These betrayals in India expose those such as the Stalinists of the *Lalkar* publication of the Indian Workers Association who absurdly insist that "revisionism" began with Khrushchev's reign. For them, "So long as Comrade Stalin was in the leadership of the CPSU and was organising the tireless vigilance that needed to be exercised" "trou[n]c[ing]" "the reactionary Trotskyite and Bukharinite opposition" all was well! (In fact, the CPI(M) still celebrates Stalin's birthday in Calcutta.) And the Stalinists today prefer not to talk too much about their record in India during the Second World War, not only because it is such an affront to the revolutionary aspirations of the masses but also because they continue to pursue a class-collaborationist alliance with the Indian bourgeoisie.

Instead they seek to hide behind the figure of Stalin as a great war leader who defeated fascist barbarism. Somehow the Stalinist sins in India are to be exonerated on the basis that Stalin saved mankind. To this end, *Lalkar's* Harpal Brar turgidly regurgitates all the old Stalinist lies about Tukhachevsky being an agent of Hitler to justify his murder and the purge of the Red Army officer corps in his book *Perestroika: The Complete Collapse of Revisionism*. In the course of these bloody purges—between 1937 and 1939 (ie beginning during the popular front period)—the Red Army lost three of its five Marshals, all eleven of its Deputy Commissars for Defence, 75 of 80 of its members of the Military soviet, all its military district commanders who held that post in June 1937. The naval and air chiefs of staff were killed. Thirteen out of 15 army commanders were shot, 57 out of 85 corps commanders were shot, as were 110 out of the 195 divisional commanders. In the Far Eastern forces, over 80 per cent of the staff were purged. Tukhachevsky had predicted an attack like Operation Barbarossa and he and his comrades had a lively sense of technological innovation. These experienced and talented veterans of the Civil War were replaced by incompetent cronies of Stalin, who abolished the Red Army's tank units—one of these replacements thought automatic weapons were just for police-

men.

Right up to the day of the invasion Stalin was shipping vital raw materials to Germany. Warnings and precise intelligence from Trepper's Red Orchestra and Richard Sorge in Japan were labelled as "English provocations" and not passed on to the general staff. Stalin forbade the dispersal of the air force (and it was consequently massacred on the ground) and ruled out any effective planning of defence in depth. Even after the invasion had begun, Stalin countermanded orders for the artillery to return fire, and forbade air-raid precautions in cities under attack. The criminal conduct of Stalin and his gang directly led to the loss of two and a half million soldiers in 1941, huge areas of territory (including important industrial plants which Stalin had refused to locate east of the Volga until that summer) and an almost fatal blow being delivered to the workers state.

The Soviet Union survived because despite Stalin the Red Army fought tooth and nail to stop the onslaught. In December 1941 Zhukov's effective counterattack was wrecked by Stalin's personal meddling and as late as the summer of 1942 the simple incompetence of Stalin and one of his toadies led to the loss of 200,000 men in the Crimea. It was only with the emergence of a competent layer of generals not liable to listen so much to Stalin that the heroism of the Red Army and Soviet peoples was turned into the liberation of the Soviet homeland and Eastern Europe from the Nazi scourge. Not only did Stalin's general policies of "socialism in one country" lead to near fatal catastrophe but his particular military contribution was disastrous.

For a revolutionary proletarian solution!

At independence the subcontinent faced the unspeakable horrors of Partition and today it remains one of the most impoverished, oppressed and exploited areas in the world, a veritable prison-house for national minorities, women and lower castes. The communalist slaughters engulfing Partition killed between one and two million Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus (mainly in Punjab and Bengal) and the forced migrations in its aftermath displaced over eleven million. A *New York Times* correspondent, Robert Trumbull, reported of the Partition: "In India today blood flows oftener than rain falls. I have seen dead by the hundreds and, worst of all, thousands of Indians without eyes, feet or hands. Death by shooting is merciful and uncommon" (quoted in Collins and Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight*). Muslim babies were discovered "roasted like piglets on spits" and the 45-mile road from Lahore to Amritsar became such an "open graveyard" that, according to one British officer, "The vultures had become so bloated by their feasts they could no longer fly". A stationmaster at Amritsar recounted what had initially seemed to be a "phantom train", one of many rolling into Punjabi stations at the time: "The floor of the compartment before him was a mass of human bodies, throats cut, skulls smashed, bodies eviscerated. Arms, legs, trunks of bodies were strewn along the corridors of compartments.... He turned to look back at the train. As he did, he saw in great white-washed letters on the flank of the last car the [Pakistani] Moslem assassins' calling card. 'This train is our Independence gift to [Indian Congress nationalists] Nehru and Patel'" (ibid).

The lessons of the struggle for Indian independence and the social liberation of India's toiling masses are crucial not only for revolutionaries on the subcontinent but in all those countries where the permanent revolution applies, from South

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Pit closures...

(Continued from page 1)

over the pit closures onto the road of parliamentary adjustments. It could not be more clear that the Labour traitors and their trade union misleaders are the main obstacle to the necessary struggle against not just a discredited and wretched government, but the *capitalist system* which has led inexorably to the deindustrialisation of these isles and the vindictive attack on the militant miners. This battle cannot be waged within the framework of Labourite parliamentarism, lobbies of the TUC, or any other sort of legalistic gimmicks. Decaying British capitalism cannot be reformed, lobbied, legislated into providing a decent living wage and life for the working people: it is necessary to smash the profit system root and branch!

Trade unionists, the unemployed, pensioners, students, minorities, unorganised and immigrant workers: *this fight is our fight!* These brutal measures against the miners are designed to obliterate the most class-conscious section of workers in this country. Thatcher's heirs and their Labour quislings have not forgotten the massive support from all sections of the working class and oppressed for the miners' bitterly fought battle in 1984-85. Heseltine's "stay of execution" for 21 of the pits after a massive popular outcry (extending to Tory backbenchers with their own axe to grind) is nothing but a continuation of government plans to smash the miners and the entire trade union movement. They couldn't get away with the whole hog, but their backtracking will be reversed at the first opportunity. Let's be clear: if the bosses succeed, there will be no NUM, no mining jobs, whole communities devastated and increased reaction down the line. The wretched, incompetent and desperate British ruling class hopes to wield this final assault on the miners as the spearhead of its war against *all* the organised working class and oppressed.

The time to strike is now! Scargill now says "we need a public debate and an independent inquiry". Thus he has placed himself in the van of an extremely pure form of popular front which extends from the TUC and Labour Party, through odious UDM scab leaders to the Church of England bishops and Tory Party rebels

in the shape of Winston Churchill Minor and a slew of Thatcherites. What we need is the mobilisation of the working class in the miners' defence; the political independence of the proletariat from its class enemies and their agents within the workers movement! It won't solve anything to have a few Labour behinds warming ministerial seats. And the whole popular-front lash up is rushing to *save* British capitalism.

In the aftermath of the Cold War, the imperialists' "new world order" has already revealed itself as capitalist disorder — preparations for interimperialist war, a rising tide of racism and fascism, renewed attacks on the unions. The assault on coal miners is part of the British bourgeoisie's enforcement of capitalist austerity in the context of the widely hated Maastricht Treaty. But while the bosses were not so long ago boasting about the "death of communism", workers throughout Europe are increasingly combative, from the German public workers strike this spring, a massive strike wave in Greece, and the biggest workers mobilisation in Italy since the "hot autumn" of 1969. Italian workers have made this a "hot autumn" not only for the bosses but the sellout labour lieutenants of capitalism as well. Thus, trade union bureaucrats were pelted with a hail of eggs, tomatoes, red paint and bolts from workers shouting "traitor" in Florence and Milano last month. Defying the clerical-nationalist Solidarność "free market" regime, Polish workers are resisting their systematic subordination to the IMF. A strike wave throughout the summer embraced the coal and copper mines and workers chanted "Down with Walesa!"

Above all what's necessary to win here and abroad is a *revolutionary leadership* of the working class! The Labour traitors — echoed by their fake-left camp followers — will try to push protectionist poison against workers abroad: but the *international* support to striking miners — from South Africa to the USSR — was key in the heroic battle of 1984-85. On the eve of the last miners strike, the Fleet Street press viciously witch hunted Scargill for his correct statement that the company union Polish Solidarność was anti-socialist. The same TUC tops who scabbed on the miners endorsed this red-baiting, scandalously initiated by the Workers Revolutionary Party of Gerry Healy/Cliff Slaughter. And the whole lot of Labourite

fake lefts — like Workers Power, the WRP, Militant — were on the side of Solidarność then just as they were on the barricades with Boris Yeltsin's capitalist-restorationist counter-putsch in Moscow in August 1991. The bosses and their Labour lackeys have pursued a vendetta against Scargill and the NUM, for rightly accepting "Russian gold" from Soviet miners. In October 1990 at a Soviet miners conference, we Spartacists of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) temporarily spiked a bid by UDM and American AFL-CIO hacks to poison Soviet miners against the NUM. Those who pimped for capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have and will betray again the workers here.

The heroic yearlong strike of 1984-85 was isolated and betrayed by Labourite traitors like Ramsay MacKinnock and Norman Willis — *this time the miners must not fight alone!* Britain is already an industrial wasteland, and every day thousands of additional job cuts are announced. British Rail, London Underground, British Telecom: massive redundancies are in the works. The trade union tops have stood by without lifting a finger as hundreds of thousands of jobs have been slashed. Even a bourgeois journalist from *Scotland on Sunday* can note: "It is a historical irony that would have made Leon Trotsky laugh out loud. Just when you thought it was safe to embrace the market, capitalism blows up in your face."

Shut down the pits — from Yorkshire to Scotland, Wales and Notts! Those redundancy payments mean little stacked up against a lifetime on the dole. While predictably the scabberding clique around soon-to-be-retired UDM head Roy Lynk opposed industrial action, many Notts miners who thought they would get special treatment under the Tory government are beginning to realise that scabbing doesn't pay. (And we can support the sentiment that at least *one* shaft should be sealed tight during Lynk's so-called sit-in.)

The increasingly hated government can and must be defeated, but that requires linking the miners to other sections of the working class in massive anti-capitalist struggle. For a *solid strike of miners, power, rail and transport workers!* For elected strike committees to co-ordinate the struggles! Dump the labour traitors! For a fighting programme to get what we need, not what the capitalists say they can afford: smash the privatisation schemes and cuts in social spending, no sackings, jobs for all through worksharing at full pay, for a big pay boost and full cost-of-living protection!

The unions must be mobilised in struggle, but appealing to the TUC tops — whose recent invitation to the head of the CBI led to Scargill's own walk-out at the TUC Conference — or relying on the Jimmy Knapps is just as much a recipe for defeat as looking towards the tender mercies of the Churchills. Today the pathetic TUC misleader Willis bleats that workers must abide by the bosses' anti-union laws. Miners got it right in 1984 when they lowered a noose by Willis at a strike rally. And miners will also remember that trade union "lefts" like Knapp helped sabotage the 1984 strike by sending back to work railworkers who struck alongside the NUM.

Screw the bosses' laws — as striking militants put it eight years ago: "The only illegal strike is one that loses." Then miners said "bollocks to the ballot", defying the government and spreading the strike through the coalfields. Millions of workers, jobless and oppressed are looking to the miners for a lead. *For flying pickets* to shut down the coalfields, the power stations, rail and transport. No coal must move! Call out the brothers and sisters in North Sea oil — many of these largely unorganised workers fighting

the bosses' Murder, Inc. are ex-miners.

A class-struggle programme to bring out rail, transport and power workers alongside the miners opens up the possibility of a *revolutionary* fight. When the trains stop running, the lights go out and the City grinds to a halt it's not just a matter of "pulling the plug on Major" but poses point blank *which class will rule*. And such a struggle will not be led by the anti-Communist Labourite leftists whose empty calls to "Sack Major" in reality translate into some sort of National Government or a Labour government comprised of the Kinnockites who knifed the last miners strike and will take over the administration of decaying capitalism for their masters.

It is no accident that *Militant* appeals to capitalist "logic" — not to mention national chauvinism — pointing to how much cheaper British coal is than German coal, without any word, let alone criticism of the Labour Party's role. *Socialist Organiser* grovels to the Labour traitors, demanding they campaign for a General Election: "Kick the Tories out!" and providing spineless tactical advice to the TUC on how to keep its calls within bourgeois legality. The Socialist Workers Party of Tony Cliff can only say of the Labour Party for which they actively campaign no matter where, no matter when: "more people supported the miners during the 1984-85 strike than voted Labour in the subsequent general elections". Yes — because even despite Scargill's call on his members to support the vile scabberder Kinnock many miners and their supporters would not stomach a vote to Labour. Such cannot be said about the British fake left. Workers Power (17 October leaflet to TUC General Council lobby) doesn't breathe a word of criticism of the Labour Party, but moans that "it would be fatal to rely on support from Liberal and Tory MPs. Every one of them will support using the anti-union laws against workers giving solidarity". As every worker knows, the *Labour Party* pledged to maintain these anti-union laws. While criticising the most blatant manifestations of popular frontism, all these fake lefts are in fact for an anti-working-class Labour government. Most of these birds want to sing for a "General Strike" which for them is but an extra-parliamentary tactic to make John Smith the next Harold Wilson. And should the Labour Party enter into a pact with sections of the Liberals or other bourgeois outfits, there is every reason to believe Workers Power et al would repeat their betrayal in 1977 when they supported the Lib-Lab pact.

We said at the conclusion of the miners strike in 1985: "The key lesson of this strike is the burning need to forge a revolutionary workers party so that the next battle can end in victory" (*Workers Hammer* no 67, March 1985). Trade union reformism is a dead end, and for all his militancy Scargill has kept workers tied to the traitorous Labour Party. What's necessary is to forge a Bolshevik party in the course of sharp class struggle, splitting the working-class base from the pro-capitalist tops of the Labour Party. We are fighting to forge such a Leninist/Trotskyist party! We need workers rule and the establishment of a planned, collectivised economy and a five-year plan or two to overcome the devastation of capitalism in Britain. Under capitalism there won't be a "rational" policy on energy or anything else — to rebuild the economy in the interests of the working people will require the co-ordinated efforts of at least several workers states with an evolved division of labour. Not a call for new elections to install an anti-working-class Labour government, but revolutionary class struggle to point the way to a federation of workers republics in the British Isles, as part of a Socialist United States of Europe! ■

Vienna...

(Continued from page 3)

Yugoslavian Stalinists whose later "market socialism" policies paved the way for the triumph of counterrevolution, we Trotskyists stand with the tradition of Tito's partisans against those like LRCI who have grossly defended in turn Ustashi-loving Croatian nationalists and Chetnik-loving Serbs. Amid the horror of nationalist slaughter, a new generation of internationalist Yugoslav proletarian militants will have to be cohered to defeat the counterrevolutionary drive.

The AST should have been something of an embarrassment ever since it alibied the Nazi war criminal Kurt Waldheim, calling two years after his exposure to "unconditionally subordinate all his decisions to parliament" and to pay him "the average wage of a skilled worker". But with its soft core support to German unification under capitalism, its goading of the "one-fatherland" mobs of skinheads and social democrats to "hunt down" the Stalinists, its calls on the government of Margaret Thatcher to aid the Nazi-infested Lithuanian Sajudis, the Butchenko scandal and not least openly siding with Yeltsin/Bush counterrevolu-

tion in the Soviet Union, Workers Power has more than moved far to the right — it has become *unhinged*.

WP's Great Serbian "united front" is now infamous throughout the European left, but the pages of *Workers Power* in Britain have contained not a word of this "work" of its Austrian section. (Instead, you can read Workers Power's self-serving apologies for gooning leftists at the behest of the anarcho-thugs of Red Action who dominate "Anti-Fascist Action".) If Workers Power's leadership thought their alliance with Serbian monarchists and fascists could be thus swept under the rug in its little English homeland, they're more unhinged than even we thought. In Russia, the political platform which the AST shared with the monarchists/Chetniks is called the "Red-Brown" bloc. Workers Power's LRCI now bears the "distinction" of singularly translating the "Red-Brown bloc" to the murderous competing nationalisms of the Balkan cockpit that have savagely torn apart the Yugoslav deformed workers state. Now all the "old crap" is coming back and Workers Power are up to their necks in it. We think you should be told.

The English translations of material, which originally appeared in other languages, contained in the above article were made by the ICL.

London tube workers: strike to win!

London Underground's vicious "Company Plan" must be smashed through determined strike action. Management wants to slash 5000 jobs—a quarter of the workforce—and institute a regime of virtual slavery and massive intimidation where you don't have a job if you don't lick the bosses' boots. The union misleaders have grovelled so long that the bosses think they can get rid of the unions altogether—pitting the workers against each other, threatening to sack anyone who strikes or who doesn't sign their phoney "contracts".

But these scare tactics won't work if all transport workers—RMT, ASLEF and TSSA—strike together. They can't fire the entire workforce—and they can't run the tubes, buses and trains with court injunctions or cops! Transport workers

have the power to shut down London—and without London this country won't run. Millions of working people—outraged at the closures of pits and hospitals, the massive unemployment—will love watching the City fat cats crawl for a change. The working people want to fight and a solid London transport strike could galvanise broad sections of the trade union movement in struggle.

Above all what the workers need is a fighting anti-capitalist leadership. The attack on London tube workers is the government's answer to the toothless "days of action" and lobbies of parliament sponsored by the trade union misleaders. The Labour Party traitors hate class struggle because they want to administer the stinking capitalist system that dictates union-busting, cuts in jobs

and social spending. London transport union leaders have already accepted whole parts of the "Company Plan", significant chunks of transport operations have been privatised or contracted out, while workers' militancy has been thrown away by limiting struggles to one-day actions. Last spring Knapp, among others, derailed strike action in the service of the Labour Party's effort to court the bankers and bosses at election time.

The union tops have put transport workers in a hole, but this is no time for defeatism: every worker must answer the RMT's strike call and take his place on the picket line. Shut down the tubes—and spread the strike to the buses and British Rail through flying mass pickets! One out, all out: fight together—or hang separately! For one powerful industrial

union embracing all transport workers! No sell-outs—no arbitration! Above all, what is necessary is a class-struggle leadership to prevent treachery by the bureaucrats and lead the strike to victory. For elected strike committees! Such strike committees, chosen from among the most militant and determined workers, should appeal to other unions—miners, hospital workers, power workers—for joint class struggle.

Exactly five years ago thirty-one people were incinerated and scores injured and severely burned in the King's Cross inferno. This was no accident, but wanton capitalist murder through negligence. Now, the profit-gouging bosses want to slash more jobs in the dilapidated Underground. For free, safe, decent public transport! The workers who sweat in the factories, mines and Underground must rule. Dump the labour sell-outs—for a revolutionary workers party! For workers action committees to smash the bosses' attacks and to run the country! ■

India...

(Continued from page 7)

Africa to Iran. A Leninist-Trotskyist party must be built in irreconcilable struggle against every kind of nationalism and popular frontism, counterposing a revolutionary programme for the emancipation and reconstruction of the oppressed nation under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Writing in 1915 of the tasks for

Russian revolutionaries Leon Trotsky called for "a revolutionary workers' government, the conquest of power by the Russian proletariat":

"But revolution is first and foremost a question of power—not of the state form (constituent assembly, republic, united states) but of the social content of the government. The demands for a constituent assembly and the confiscation of land under present conditions lose all direct revolutionary significance without the readiness of the proletariat to fight

for the conquest of power..." ("The Struggle for Power")

Because the Bolsheviks were committed to such a programme, the Russian Revolution of 1917 produced the first workers state on the planet. The USSR stood then as a beacon for the colonial and semi-colonial masses struggling for their liberation, as well as for the exploited working masses in the imperialist countries. Lenin and Trotsky's Third International, later to be destroyed by Stalin, sought to bring

the lessons of October to the workers of every land.

Today we in the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) fight to forge a revolutionary international which Lenin and Trotsky would recognise as their own. It will be an especially gratifying victory when the workers of the entire Indian subcontinent lead all the oppressed in throwing off the chains of neocolonial enslavement through victorious socialist revolution. ■

Irish Elections...

(Continued from page 12)

coalition. We say: Down with all forms of class collaboration from the PESP to electoral blocs! For the complete independence of the working class!

The explosive nature of the abortion question today is graphically demonstrated in the ominous appearance of the sinister Youth Defence. Fronting the reaction to the demand for abortion rights, its provocations have steadily grown. It has held night-riding pickets at the homes of mainstream politicians considered "pro-abortion", organised marches of aggressive thugs in Dublin and recently launched a full-scale assault with pick-axe handles against leftist protesters, hospitalising several. Youth Defence is generating a fascist core harkening back to the Blueshirts. And behind the ominous figure of Irish fascism there will always loom the spectre of Opus Dei, the Knights of Columbanus and the Church hierarchy. While the working class of Ireland sent more than its share to join the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s, the Church also took its side in openly blessing Blueshirt contingents departing to fight for Franco and fascism! The time to act is now to crush this outfit while it's still in the egg. On counterdemonstrations in Dublin against Youth Defence we have raised the slogans: *Workers movement take a stand—For free abortion on demand! Workers movement must take action—Smash Youth Defence and SPUC reaction!*

As Irish society polarises over the abortion issue, the fake left has buried itself firmly in its various sub-reformist "campaigns" to oppose the "bigots" or "repeal the Eighth Amendment" (which would simply remove one constitutional prohibition but leave in place other legislation outlawing abortion). Not surprisingly, these same fake socialists who cheered capitalist counterrevolution from Poland and East Germany to the former Soviet Union fail in the struggle against

clerical reaction here in Ireland. Abortion rights have been among the very first targets of the capitalist restorationist regimes in East Germany and Poland. Indeed the role of the Catholic Church in Poland today mirrors that of the Church in Ireland—spearheading attacks not only on abortion rights but also divorce, contraception and secular education. We in the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)—of which the Dublin Spartacist Group is the Irish sympathising group—fought down the line against the reunification of Germany under capitalism, Solidarność in Poland and Yeltsin/Bush counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. But, doing their bit for the "new world order" groups such as the Socialist Workers Movement, Militant, Irish Workers Group and People's Democracy took their side on the barricades of the counterrevolution—with Solidarność, with *Anschluss* in Germany, with the Yeltsinist rabble in Moscow in August 1991.

Socialist Worker's "General Election Special" blares: "Kick Out Fianna Fail/Vote Left But Build a Socialist Alternative", shamelessly arguing that "a high vote for the main parties of the Irish left, the Labour Party, Democratic Left and

the Workers Party, would be a signal that thousands of Irish workers have had enough of the years of sacrifice and the FF lies". Yes, they've had enough—but the popular front offers more of the same! *Militant Socialist* likewise headlines: "Kick Them Out! Vote For Left Candidates" and in a new low of parliamentary cretinism announce that Labour "should force Fianna Fail and Fine Gael into coalition, and then lead a mass movement of opposition to them, to prepare the way for a Labour government"! (This is the same outfit which has actually argued that the "Army and Gardaí should have the right to refuse to break strikes" in its October issue.)

The Irish Workers Group have announced it "will call for a vote for Labour and Democratic Left and urge workers' organisations to demand full co-operation between the parties to maximise the vote against the openly capitalist parties"! But of course Labour—historically the party of coalition which twice in the 1980s joined a reactionary Fine Gael government—is clearly set to make a deal with any of the "openly capitalist parties"! For its part, the pre-split Workers Party, supported the short-lived minority government of Fianna Fáil in 1982. These

reformists and centrists stand qualitatively to the right of even those in the pre-World War I Second International who were outraged at the French socialist Millerand joining a bourgeois government.

Groups like the IWG have belatedly tried to catch up with the sentiments of masses of women and started to call for free abortion on demand. But this more radical-sounding rhetoric is utterly gained by the fact that they wish to put in power the Labour Party and Workers Party, neither of which even defend legalised abortion.

The workers and women of Ireland are being offered increasing capitalist misery from the reformist parties and their tame left tails. The struggle for such elementary rights as the separation of church and state, free abortion on demand, free 24-hour childcare and free, quality health care to name but a few will be won on the road to the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of a workers state and a planned, collectivised economy. We in the DSG are fighting to build the revolutionary Leninist party necessary to lead the struggle for victorious socialist revolution. No to the popular front! Workers to power! ■

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Anti Spartacists...

(Continued from page 5)

workers". With the SPD as prosecuting attorney?

To be sure, many of the Stalinist rulers and secret police were guilty of crimes against the working class. But they are being charged with the wrong crimes before the wrong class. What began as a nascent political revolution in 1989-90 was derailed by the intervention of the Fourth Reich of German imperialism, which cut across the whole question of working-class justice under a proletarian state. While the Matti wing of the USec championed the cause of German reunification and the Mandel wing accepted the imperialist annexation of the DDR with some "conditions", the ICL was the only organisation which forthrightly fought against capitalist reunification.

Elliott, by sneering at the Treptow mass mobilisation, is dismissing the very possibility of a proletarian political revolution which would have sent shock waves throughout Europe, East and West, in particular pointing the way forward to the beleaguered Soviet proletariat. Now he amnesties the reunified German imperialist state by objecting to our references to a Fourth Reich, claiming that the Spartacists are "thus placing themselves on the terrain of the French Stalinists of the

drawal from one of the USec's typical mealy-mouthed, hedge-your-bets resolutions, he hides the fact that the Mandelite majority joined the imperialists in condemning the Soviet intervention. Meanwhile, a hefty minority (including a near-majority on the LCR central committee) had an openly defeatist position calling for Soviet withdrawal. And the majority's "courage" rapidly evaporated, as it caved in to the imperialist furor and demanded Soviet withdrawal.

This raises the interesting question, to paraphrase Mao: "where do incorrect ideas come from?" Elliott tries to slide over this sticky point by pretending that "some sections" continued to support Soviet intervention, citing the American SWP. Even at the outset, the SWP tried to minimise the question of Soviet intervention, but by December 1980 Jack Barnes' outfit publicly came out for withdrawal of the Soviet forces. Barnes explained that seeing the "Spartacist sect" calling to "Hail Red Army" convinced him that the SWP was "off base". So one month after the election of Ronald Reagan, the quirky reformist Barnesites got back "on base" with the bourgeoisie. The Mandelite majority, in turn, came out for Soviet withdrawal in June 1981, one month after the election of Cold War "socialist" Mitterrand (who they supported). If the SWP was running scared, the LCR smelled opportunities in the social-democratic union bureaucracy.

Elliott then takes on our slogan "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" A typical example of "obtuse sectarianism", he

for stating, in a speech on the 25th anniversary of the October Revolution: "The Red Army that the world hails is an army created by a proletarian revolution."

Elliott recognises that our proposal to organise an international brigade to Afghanistan at the time of the pull-out of Soviet troops in February 1989 was the "logical conclusion" of our aggressive defence of Soviet intervention. At the LTF meeting-debate he denounced it as "adventurist" and "substitutionist" (unlike the financial aid campaign—to which Elliott contributed—for the civilian victims in Jalalabad which we conducted when our brigade offer was not accepted). In his letter to the Algerian PST, this becomes the occasion for a tirade against "Spartacist guru Robertson" and our supposed "cynicism" in proposing to recruit, not just "hard Trotskyists", but sundry radical elements internationally. Just as Elliott can't imagine the masses hailing the Red Army, so imbued is he with Europacifism that he can't conceive of leftist youth angry enough with the whole system to trek to Afghanistan to fight imperialism.

It's nothing but "pulling together ten lumpens that you were contemptuous of", he sneered contemptuously in the 25 September debate. What about the possibility of enlisting fighters from among the thousands of leftist Iranian exiles, or Latin American youth inspired by the internationalist example of Che Guevara? In India, masses of young Communists marched in support of the Kabul regime. Just who does he suppose joined the

even a few hundred would have had, not only in Afghanistan but in the Soviet Union? Former Afghan veterans, the *afgantsy*, actually petitioned the Soviet government to allow them to go back and fight on a volunteer basis. Consider the impact that an international brigade for Afghanistan could have had on subsequent events in the USSR. For that matter, consider the impact in Algeria, where Islamic fundamentalists sent volunteers to fight alongside the Afghan counter-revolutionaries. Things might look somewhat different in Algiers today if the shock troops of the FIS had been bloodied and defeated in Afghanistan.

"Anti-Imperialist" front with Islamic reaction

Elliott can't stomach actually making a military bloc with the Stalinists against the bid for power by counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność, cries "Stalinist manipulation" over the Spartacist-initiated mass anti-fascist pro-Soviet demonstration at Treptow, denounces our call to hail the Red Army fighting CIA-backed *mujahedin* in Afghanistan. But over the Persian Gulf War he is foursquare for a bloc with the Islamic reactionaries of the Algerian FIS. This is simply an extension of the traitorous policy of the USec which cheered on Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution" in Iran. And Elliott is quite forthright about this as he accuses the ICL of having "a vision of anti-imperialist struggle so narrow that it led them to sectarian abstentionism on such central questions as the Iranian Revolution". Of course, we hardly abstained but rather called for the mobilisation of the powerful Iranian proletariat against the shah and Khomeini's mullahs. It is this that sticks in Elliott's craw as he lectures about the "anti-imperialist united front".

In justifying the call for a "Workers and People's Front" by the Algerian PST—that is, a popular front with Islamic reactionary forces—Elliott grotesquely attributes the "AUF" to Trotsky. But to accomplish this he has to resort to crude falsification, extracting a clause to give it a meaning counterposed to that intended by Trotsky. The quote he cites does not mention the words "anti-imperialist united front", nor does the article it is taken from; nor does Trotsky use this formula at all after the disastrous experience of the Shanghai massacre of 1927, which was prepared by Stalin/Bukharin's "bloc of four classes" with the butcher Chiang Kai-shek. Moreover, Elliott omits Trotsky's call for the proletariat to take power. What Trotsky really said was:

"But if the Indian revolution will develop on a basis of a bloc of the workers, peasants, and petty bourgeoisie; if this bloc will be directed not only against imperialism and feudalism but also against the national bourgeoisie which is bound up with them in all basic questions; if at the head of this bloc will stand the proletariat; if this bloc comes to victory only by sweeping away its enemies through an armed uprising and in this way raises the proletariat to the role of the real leader of the whole nation—then the question arises: in whose hands will the power be after the victory if not in the hands of the proletariat?"

— "The Revolution in India, Its Tasks and Dangers" (May 1930)

Trotsky summarises here the programme



Friends of Afghanistan Society

Afghan women under arms prepared to fight to the death against the CIA-backed Mujahedin cutthroats. USec joined the imperialists in condemning the Soviet intervention on the side of social progress; JCR's Elliott condemns Spartacist slogan "Hail Red Army!"

PCF with their traditional anti-German xenophobia". Does this mean that our comrades of the Spartacist Workers Party of Germany are *boche*-hating French nationalists? No, it means that Elliott squirms at telling the truth about the reactionary consequences of the bourgeois "democratic" counterrevolution in Germany.

Two, three, many lines on Afghanistan

On Afghanistan, Elliott pretends to be for military victory of the Soviet forces and outrageously claims (in his letter to the Algerian PST) that the USec "early on took a courageous and correct position". Courageous, correct? He is cynically presuming ignorance among young comrades who have no personal knowledge of the USec's actual policies. While quoting some lines against Soviet with-

claims, designed to separate the Spartacists from the rest of the left, in the service of "self-interest", rather than to "increase the consciousness of the masses". First of all, what separated us from the rest of the left is that they bowed to imperialist anti-Sovietism, while we were enthusiastically for the Red Army intervention, which not only defended the USSR's southern flank but also opened the possibility for social liberation in Afghanistan. Our slogan highlighted the temporary contradiction between the Soviet bureaucracy's act of self-defence and its overall counterrevolutionary policy of peaceful coexistence.

Elliott calls our slogan "Stalinophilic". The Stalinists, of course, never hailed the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Elliott should likewise denounce as Stalinophilic American Trotskyist leader James P Cannon (whom he claims as a mentor)

international brigades in Spain—plenty of footloose adventurous types flocked there to fight against Franco. Don't forget the "Red '48ers", exiled from Germany after the defeat of the 1848-49 revolution, who spread across the world, fighting in revolutions and civil wars from Poland to the United States.

And does Elliott give a moment's thought to the impact that a brigade of

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Spartacist

January 1990, East Berlin — Spartacists initiated 250,000-strong rally against Nazi desecration of Treptow Park memorial to Red Army liberators from Nazi scourge. JCR's Elliott echoes social-democratic slanders that Treptow was Stalinist "smokescreen".

of permanent revolution, which is diametrically opposed to the USec's line on Iran, and on Algeria today.

Elliott raises this in the context of the Gulf War, saying that according to the ICL, "standing fast on Saddam's trenches was correct, but attacking the imperialist coalition from behind its own lines" — through "a bloc with the FIS or the FLN" — "would have been a popular-frontist betrayal". He is wilfully confusing military and political support, the vital distinction which Lenin drew in 1917 between fighting on the side of Kerensky against White general Kornilov's attack, and making a political alliance with Kerensky's capitalist Provisional Government. To understand the principled difference between support "from behind the lines" and support "in the trenches", just read Trotsky on the Spanish Civil War, where he insistently calls for a common military front against Franco while denouncing any political support to the bourgeois Republican government.

Interestingly, on the Persian Gulf War, Elliott attacks the ICL for "proposing 'Victory to Iraq' as a slogan in all countries, including France and the U.S.". As he knows only too well, our slogan during the Gulf War was "Defeat US Imperialism! Defend Iraq!" The call for "Victory to Iraq!" was in fact the central slogan of the tiny "International Trotskyist Committee" (raised by the RWL in the US and the RIL in Britain), formerly led by one Peter Sollenberger and Grisolia, Elliott's new bloc partner. So Elliott wants to pin on us the slogan of the former comrades of his new comrade.

As we noted at the time, the call for "Victory to Iraq" implied political support to Hussein's Ba'athist regime and more generally to Arab nationalism. But Elliott simultaneously denounces us for holding a position which we did not have and for our opposition to the mythical "Arab Revolution". The very notion that there is an "Arab Revolution" is an "anti-imperialist" alibi for the bloody-handed, imperialist-dependent bourgeois (and feudal) rulers of the Arab states who have time and time again stabbed the besieged Palestinian people in the back.

Elliott's convoluted polemic against the ICL over the Persian Gulf War reflects the fact that the JCR membership was powerfully attracted to the ICL's internationalist line on the Gulf War. In his "Real Trotskyism" document to the PST, he dismisses Spartacist "verbiage about 'strikes'" against the war and claims that our position showed "lack of confidence in the working class". This applies quite accurately to his own policies on the war. The JCR initially campaigned on the slogan of "immediate withdrawal of

French troops" (*Autre Chose*, October 1990). This attempt to build a "united front" (really a popular front on a social-pacifist line) was modelled on the "anti-war" "coalition-building" of their USec comrades of Socialist Action in the US. Socialist Action took a cravenly social-patriotic line in the red-white-and-blue "peace marches", even condoning the wearing of yellow ribbons to "support our boys" (ie, the imperialist troops) in the Gulf. Krivine's LCR followed a similar line in France.

Under the impact of the war, the youth in the JCR were impelled to take a more militant stance. After the LTF criticised them for refusing to call explicitly for defence of Iraq, in February 1991 the JCR published an article, "Hands Off Iraq—For Iraq", criticising the "essentially pacifist" character of the anti-war protests and calling for "boycott and strikes" against the war. But this went hand in hand with talk of being in the same trench with the Algerian FIS and calling for Kuwait to be incorporated into Iraq.

Under the guise of the "anti-imperialist united front", Elliott blocks with Arab nationalism, seeing this as the only mass

ing class (rather than the unemployed lumpen base of the FIS) in the Maghreb was very real. And in Europe there were the beginnings of organised working-class action, with a de facto general strike in northern Italy and attempts by French rail and dock workers to stop the transport of arms and troops to the Gulf.

Spartacism is real Trotskyism

As always, behind Elliott's war of lying words against the ICL stand more nefarious methods of seeking to "neutralise" revolutionaries. Last February, when the JCR-*l'Egalité* organised a "meeting-debate" of its own, their goon squad threatened and shoved militants of the LTF for protesting the JCR's glorification of Palestinian nationalist PFLP leader George Habash as a "hero of the struggle for Palestinian national liberation". And a subsequent reply to our comrades' letter of protest set us up for even more violent attack, accusing us of spreading "Mossad's slanders about Habash's 'indiscriminate terrorism'". In fact the PFLP in the past took credit for various indiscriminate terrorist attacks, and more



Workers Vanguard

Abortion rights rally in Washington, D.C., April 1989. Partisan Defence Committee/ICL launched campaign on behalf of besieged Afghan city Jalalabad following Gorbachev's treacherous withdrawal of Red Army.

force siding with Iraq. The FIS actually was organising brigades to go to fight in Iraq, just as they sent groups of *mujahedin* to fight against the Soviet-backed reform nationalist government in Afghanistan. But if Elliott had ever tried to get into a trench with these fanatical anti-communist reactionaries, they would have slit his throat. In contrast, the possibility of organising anti-war action by the work-

recently has made a political bloc with the fundamentalist Hamas movement, which grew out of the arch-reactionary Muslim Brotherhood. At best the PFLP's nationalist strategy is an expression of the politics of despair and impotence in the face of brutal Zionist repression.

But for the JCR, this is the acme of the nationalist "Arab Revolution" which they hail. Behind this fig leaf, the USec

has tailed behind the various kingdoms, sheikdoms and colonels' regimes in every Middle East war. For them, as for the petty-bourgeois PLO, this was the road to liberation for the Palestinian masses. Today Elliott accuses the ICL of "complacency toward Zionism", lyingly accusing the ICL of "refusing to defend self-determination for the Palestinians" and calling our revolutionary defeatist position in the 1948 Arab-Israel War a break with the Trotskyist position. In fact, the position of the Fourth International in that war was revolutionary defeatism. An article, written even before the entry of the Arab League forces, adamantly declared:

"Make this war between Jews and Arabs, which serves the end of imperialism, the common war of both nations against imperialism!..."

"The only way to peace between the two peoples of this country is turning the guns against the instigators of murder in both camps."

— "Against the Stream", *Fourth International*, May 1948

But swimming against the stream is anathema to the Pabloites, whose liquidationist revisionism destroyed the Fourth International. Instead they tail the Arab bourgeoisies who have historically conived with the Zionists to disenfranchise and destroy the Palestinian Arab nation. While Arafat embraces Jordan's King Hussein, the butcher of the Black September massacre of 1970, the USec embraces Arafat and his colleague Habash. We Spartacists say that it will take an intransigent fight against both Zionism and the Arab bourgeois regimes for the Palestinian people to achieve national liberation. What upsets Elliott is that we recognise the right of self-determination for all the myriad, interpenetrated peoples of the region, including the Hebrew-speaking people. The national question can only be resolved in an equitable and democratic manner through common class struggle for socialist revolution and a socialist federation of the Middle East.

It is grotesque that, out of loyalty to the stinking corpse of the USec, Elliott goes to such lengths to seal off leftward-moving youth from Trotskyist internationalism. To the oppositionists in the PST, he says to embrace the Islamic reactionaries through a "Workers and People's Front" including all "anti-governmental forces". This is the same treacherous line as in Iran, where the USec went from calling for "unity" of all opponents of the shah, to chanting "Allah Akbar!" ("God is great") along with the mullahs, to seeing their own comrades arrested and executed by the Khomeini regime they helped put in power. This is the suicidal logic of Pabloist liquidationism, abandoning the struggle for a Trotskyist proletarian vanguard in favour of tailing after "substitutes" led by alien class forces. Ironically, it was in Algeria that Michel Pablo reached the apex (or nadir) of his career, becoming a government adviser in the first FLN regime under Ben Bella.

To the youth of the JCR-*l'Egalité*, Elliott/Grisolia offer only a rehash of 1970s-vintage Mandelism, which paved the way to support for Mitterrand and the current paralysis of the USec in the face of the "New World Order". Once again the USec school of opportunism is pushing leftist-minded youth into the arms of inveterate manoeuvrers like Grisolia, where they are learning how to use "left" criticisms to alibi their rightist Mandeliste leadership. The way out of this morass is to take up the fight to reforge a genuine Fourth International on Trotskyist politics. As Trotsky wrote in *The Lessons of October*, "Without a party, apart from a party, over the head of a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer." ■

No vote to Labour, Democratic Left, Workers Party

Irish elections: scoundrels and charlatans against workers and women



Demonstrators for abortion rights in Dublin, 6 June 1992. Sign reads: "SPUC OFFI 6794 700" in defiance of ban on abortion information. Right: thugs of sinister right-wing Youth Defence sport taped knuckles.

Workers Hammer prints below the leaflet dated 17 November distributed by the Dublin Spartacist Group.

The ruling Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats coalition, which has for three years ruled the reactionary clericalist state and enforced anti-working-class austerity, finally collapsed amid personal recriminations between the party leaders—Albert Reynolds and Des O'Malley. Fine Gael leader John Bruton immediately offered the electorate the "alternative" of a Fine Gael/Labour/Progressive Democrats coalition that would be equally committed to the capitalist policies which have kept 20 per cent of the workforce on the dole and condemned one third of the population to live below official poverty levels. Predictably the wretched Labour Party leadership has been salivating at the prospect. We say: *the coming general election offers nothing to the working class, women or youth! No vote to the Labour Party, Workers Party or Democratic Left!*

November 25 sees also the three referendums on the question of abortion arising from the Supreme Court ruling on the "X case" last February. Ironically, with that ruling, abortion in Ireland became nominally permitted under the so-called "Pro-Life" Eighth Amendment to the constitution, if there was a "real and substantial threat" to the life of the mother. Needless to say abortion remained as unavailable in Ireland as it had been before the learned judges' ruling, a situation due in no small part to the fact that the church controls most of the hospitals in Ireland!

In the current round, the referendums on the right of women to travel freely and to receive information on abortion services overseas are supportable and Marxists advocate a "yes" vote to these minimal gains. The third referendum proposal is a hideous statement which is a step backward even from the Supreme Court ruling, outlawing abortion under virtually all circumstances. This reactionary proposal, seeking to further enshrine the anti-woman dogma of the Catholic hierarchy in the Irish Constitution, should be soundly defeated. But the fight for even the most elementary rights will not be won at the polling booths or in the courts—*what is necessary is the mobilisation of the social power of the working class to struggle for free abortion on demand as part of a revolutionary programme to smash the whole rotting edifice of capitalist rule in Ireland!*

The elections and referendums are only the most recent reflections of deep divisions within the ruling class. Decades of urbanisation have generated a reaction against the arrogance, small-mindedness and corrupt cronyism of much of the Irish ruling class, a quality most graphically embodied in Fianna Fáil. Bugged down in endless investigations into financial chicanery and corruption Fianna Fáil are no longer seen even by significant sections of the ruling class to be a credible force for administering the state—tribunals and the hasty retiring of "CJ" [Haughey] notwithstanding.

A section of the ruling class seeks to revamp the clericalist state so as to have

something that resembles a modern secular society. This is what lay behind the election of Mary Robinson as President in 1990. At the time, the Dublin Spartacist Youth Group (DSYG—now DSG) told the truth: "Robinson's popular front: trap for workers and women". Robinson, who announced "I'm against abortion" during her election campaign, has certainly proved to be no friend of the women of Ireland on even the most elementary level. And the "enlightened" wing of the Irish bourgeoisie which she represents are notable for their efforts to accommodate British imperialism and the reactionary Unionist politicians in the North.

Regardless of their coalition appetites, there would be no reason to extend critical support to the left parties, all of whom support the blatantly class-collaborationist PESP [Programme for Economic and Social Progress]. The Labour Party was also the prime mover behind the election of Mary Robinson as president in 1990; in 1991, during the ESB [Electricity Supply Board] strike, the Labour Party and Workers Party supported an *all* party denunciation of the strike and called for strikers to go back to work. On the North, that British bourgeois mouthpiece, *The Guardian* (12 November) wrote of the defunct "talks" on Northern Ireland: "Should the present administration in Dublin be replaced by a Fine Gael/Labour coalition in the forthcoming general election, then the situation will be changed overnight. For both have already indicated their willingness to reconsider articles two and three

in the constitution: that troublesome claim of sovereignty over the North." Meanwhile, Fianna Fáil can be counted on to demagogically play the Green card of nationalism when in trouble, but our concern is not for the aspirations of the gombeenocracy, constitutional or otherwise. As revolutionary Marxists we demand *the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland! Not Orange against Green but class against class! No to forcible reunification! For an Irish workers republic as part of a socialist federation within the British Isles!*

The nationalists of Sinn Féin are also running candidates in the election, offering the same failed strategy of seeking seats at the "negotiating table" with British imperialism, its political bankruptcy reflected in the IRA's military "strategy" of increasingly targeting civilians (ie, pub and tube bombings) in Britain. Recently Sinn Féin have used exposures in the bourgeois press concerning the reformist Workers Party supposedly soliciting funds from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union during the 1980s to red-bait that organisation. To top it off, Sinn Féin has embraced the election of Democrat Bill Clinton as US imperialism's chief, inanely writing that with Clinton's election "American foreign policy would no longer be an appendage to British policy" (*An Phoblacht*, 5 November).

For the rulers of this country the situation is fraught with danger. The abortion question is so explosive that it threatens to tear apart the fragile social fabric of Irish society while the largely unionised workforce has had just about enough. The question for the Mary Robinsonites is how to keep the lid on this pressure cooker and it is here that the pro-capitalist labour traitors earn their keep. For years the trade union and labour misleaders have tied the hands of the working class by brokering class-collaborationist deals with the bosses. First it was the PNR [Programme for National Recovery] and the PESP, both explicitly designed to *prevent* class-struggle opposition to capitalist austerity. Then it was the Labour Party/Workers Party orchestrated deal with Fine Gael to put Mary Robinson in Aras an Uachtaráin [the Presidential Palace] to head off the growing pressure for change. Now it is the "Rainbow coalition" where Spring is just waiting to see if he will have enough TDs [MPs] to trade off for the Tánaiste's [Deputy Prime Minister] chair. And since no one is offering him anything yet, De Rossa declares that Democratic Left is only prepared to collaborate in a "left led"

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