

'Come what may, we're here to stay'

Unions: Crush racist attacks!



Thousands march through London on 'Black People's Day of Action', 2 March. Workers must smash racist terror.

It was the largest black demonstration Britain had ever seen, as more than ten thousand protestors from around the country converged on London for the 'Black People's Day of Action' on 2 March. 'Come what may, we're here to stay' they chanted. Indeed, behind the pervasive discrimination, the poverty, the incessant police harassment and fascist violence, it is their very right to be here which is today under attack for Britain's blacks. And if the Tories offer their solution in the overtly racist Nationality Bill currently before Parliament, capitalism in decay offers another, bloodcurdling alternative, demonstrated with increasing brazenness by the fascists in the streets.

The black marchers came to demonstrate their determination to stay -- and to fight. They came because of the 'New Cross Massacre', the fiery holocaust six weeks earlier which had ended Yvonne Ruddock's sixteenth birthday party -- and

the lives of thirteen black youth -- in a run-down council house on New Cross Road in Deptford. They came because the official response to this tragedy made it as clear as possible that for this deeply racist ruling class, whose rise to imperial power was fuelled by the blood and bodies of millions of black colonial slaves, black lives don't count. Their outrage was expressed eloquently in the placards and chants: 'Thirteen dead, nothing said.'

The gutter press, which had found nothing newsworthy in the incineration of thirteen blacks, seized upon the march to vent its racist spleen. 'For seven hours a frenzied mob took part in an orgy of destruction in the West End', raved the *Sun*. The 'orgy of destruction' consisted of an outbreak of brickthrowing and a brief spree of looting by a couple of hundred youth toward the end of the march which led to 23 arrests. And even this was the result of a

police provocation: as the march approached Blackfriars Bridge on its way into central London, the cops waded in to 'compact' it even though the march stewards had maintained effective discipline up to that point. The concern for the broken Fleet Street windows, measured in column inches alone, could not have contrasted more sharply with the lack of concern for the black victims of the Deptford fire.

There have been six as yet unexplained fire-bombings within a one-mile radius of the Ruddock house within the last four years -- five of them clearly aimed at black targets. This is also the area where the fascists polled 44 per cent of the vote in a local by-election five years ago (failing to gain the seat only because their vote was split between two rival fascist groups). Black residents and community spokesmen saw the Ruddock fire as one more fascist-instigated at-

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On the afternoon of Friday 27 March Birmingham's Socialist and Trade Union Bookshop was the target of a murderous fascistic arson attack. Police have charged a man with criminal damage with intent to endanger life in the bookshop, the murder of a woman in connection with the attack and also with the attempted murder of a Birmingham Asian man shot in the neck with a crossbow three days earlier. The arrested man is reported to have close connections with the fascist National Front, having marched on NF demonstrations, and is a collector of Nazi regalia.

This was a maniacal but calculated act of anti-communist terror with *intent to kill*. A car was driven across the entrance of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) bookshop blocking the escape route. A man then poured petrol over the car, tossed the cannister into the doorway and set the car and shop alight. According to one of the people trap-

Firebomb outrage!

ped in the shop flames and smoke filled the ground floor within thirty seconds, and when a fire extinguisher proved unable to douse the fire all seven occupants were forced to flee up the stairs and out a first storey window. The ground floor of the shop was completely gutted, destroying the contents of the bookshop. According to an SWP spokesman substantial damage was also incurred in the upper floor offices and to printing equipment kept in the basement. Although all the occupants of the shop managed to escape without injury the body of a woman was later found in the boot of the burned car.

The arson attack comes at a time of increased racist and fascist activity in the economically-ravaged West Midlands including

anti-immigrant marches through a number of cities. Recently leading members of the local British Movement were convicted on charges of possessing a massive cache of guns and other weapons. The previous Saturday a Birmingham CND demonstration was harassed by BM supporters, resulting later in an attack on two leftists selling papers in the city centre.

The attack on the Socialist Workers Party bookshop is an attack on every socialist and worker and all the oppressed. An appeal fund has been established to help defray the costs of restoring the premises, and contributions can be sent to the Socialist Workers Bookshop Appeal Fund, 224 High Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. But more, this act of murderous arson must be met with massive, active protest by the entire labour movement and defenders of democratic rights, and underlines the urgent need to build trade union/black defence guards to stop the fascists' rampage of terror.

Will the Kremlin sue? Bull caught cribbing

There's a lot of strange flora and fauna in the undergrowth of the British fake-Trotskyist left, and revolutionary sanitation dictates spending a bit of time cleaning up even the more eccentric varieties. So two months ago (*Spartacist Britain* no 29, February 1981) we ran a polemic against a little outfit centred in Stockport which was set up by Royston Bull when he parted company with Gerry Healy a couple of years ago, entitled: 'What is the Workers Party?' Its refusal to tail the Vatican in Poland led some of its members to think they were in a Trotskyist organisation, and we don't sneeze at the possibility of educating potential Trotskyists (feeling the pressure from his membership, Bull wrote us a letter lauding our 'excellent articles' on Poland and Afghanistan).

Bull's two-part reply to our polemic offered nothing new or creative on the timeworn theme of the 'petty bourgeois cranks' of the Spartacist League. Well, it did have a peculiar comic touch and a lot of purple-prose invective ('these humbugging Jesuits write off great revolutionary achievements to make their own petty bourgeois piggery of perpetual compromise with capitalism smell sweeter'). Getting the goods on Bull hardly requires scouring the Marxist classics, but for those of his members who do want to be Trotskyist we'll simply reiterate a few of the more fundamental political charges we made which this polemical Bull simply confirms.

We charged them with being parochial, placing the question of a revolutionary party in Britain above and before the question of the International. So Bull gives us a Chamber of Commerce

WORKERS PARTY BULLETIN

Plotters are disguised as trade union leaders

IN POLAND "plotters, disguised as trade union leaders, taking the bit between their teeth, are striving for political power." That is the conclusion reached by Iona Andronov, a correspondent who recently visited that country.

The correspondent says that "leaders of Solidarity, while describing it as an apolitical trade union association, have, in actual fact, launched a fierce political struggle masked by the pseudo-economic camouflage of strikes."

The unbridled extremism of some Solidarity

"Kuron's men their utmost to people's weak so poor understand and also of mista and public organ correspondent s
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SOVIET NEWS

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The correspondent says that "leaders of

malities, so that Kuron's men obtained an excellent outpost for receiving foreign emissaries bearing instructions, money and propaganda materials"

Iona Andronov quotes the well-informed Warsaw journalist Franciszek Lewicki as saying that KOR members "had an assignment to infiltrate into the workers' ranks, set simpletons against the Polish United Workers' Party, link economic grievances against the

Workers Party Bulletin (5 March), Soviet News (17 February): could have at least changed the headline, Royston.

publicity hype on the virtues of Stockport, Cheshire ('an old industrial town ... in the heart of the Greater Manchester industrial conurbation ... convenient for rapid motorway and rail connections to the rest of Britain'). We attacked their denial of the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution in painting just about every petty-bourgeois nationalist and tinpot 'third world' dictator in red colours. So we get back yet another paean to the likes of Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe's 'social revolution', made by one of 'the most disciplined revolutionary political parties' -- which only last month unleashed the white ex-colonial army (still intact!) against his black opponents.

Finally, we charged the Workers Party with Stalinophilia -- political adaptation to the Stalinist bureaucracies. Well, huffs Bull, this just isn't true. Of course, he does call the Hungarian workers political revolution, where 'Workers councils were formed, some even with socialist slogans', a 'counter-revolutionary flare-up' which the Stalinists were right to suppress in blood. But Vietnam, there was a 'real workers revolution', led by Ho Chi Minh's Stalinist 'revolutionary party'. Quite a revolutionary party: Ho butchered the Trotskyists in order to head off a proletarian uprising against colonialist/capitalist rule, and then handed the country back to the French imperialists in 1946.

The Stalinists tried time and again to set up a capitalist coalition government in the South before finally being forced to consummate a social revolution (which Bull stupidly claims we deny happened -- has he ever heard of the slogan, 'All Indochina must go communist?') because of the venality of their hoped-for capitalist coalition partners.

But calling this bunch Stalinophile gives them a bit too much. When we noticed that much of the *Bulletin's* copy on Poland was markedly superior in layout and style to the rest of this slovenly rag, we decided to research our suspicions. We didn't have to look too hard. This lot applies its Menshevik amateurism even when it plagiarises -- paste and scissors is as far as it went! Thus the *Bulletin* (19 February) article signed by 'An East European correspondent' denouncing those who would 'resist everything undertaken by the [Communist] party and government to normalise the situation' probably was written by an East European correspondent ... working for the Soviet government. It, like a number of other articles in the *Bulletin*, appeared first in *Soviet News*, weekly organ of the Soviet embassy in London! To give Bull his due, he did bother to white out references to *Pravda*, but *Bulletin* readers could save some money and eyestrain if they ordered the original. ■

Free higher education for all!

Occupations protest racist fee rises

For the first two weeks in March, primarily overseas students at five campuses around the country -- UMIST and Leeds and Queen Mary College, University College and LSE in London -- took the lead in organising campus occupations against the Thatcher government's latest round of swingeing cuts in higher education. The government's 'recommendation' of a 25 per cent increase in overseas student fees means that these students will now be forced to cough up £2700 per year or more, an astronomical increase by more than 1000 per cent from the £250 per year fee in 1974.

With the sun setting on the British flag, the former lords of the Raj demand with imperious arrogance that the colonised pay for the dubious

privilege of education in the metropolis that looted their lands for so long. The fee rises were capped by an announcement that overseas students will no longer be allowed to use NHS facilities -- which could not even function were it not for staffing by nurses and junior doctors from the very countries whose students are now being declared persona non grata.

At LSE the occupation began with a small protest action, originally organised as a 48-hour publicity splash by the Overseas Students' Action Committee (OSAC), on 3 March. But the action was significantly stepped-up the following day when protestors occupied the entire administration building. Support for the occupation spread as well, as more than 500 students flocked to a Union General Meeting (UGM) which overwhelmingly endorsed the action and demand for no fee rises.

When LSE director Ralf Dahrendorf, slandering the occupiers as 'hooligans', sought a court injunction to call the cops onto the campus, Spartacist Society members successfully fought for the demand, 'No cops on campus' to be taken up by the occupation. Despite attempts by the Union's newly elected Social Democratic leadership to end the occupation, another UGM meeting again voted overwhelmingly to continue support. Dahrendorf won his injunction, but the writ was never served. Nevertheless, the numbers involved in the protest began to sharply dwindle with the approach of term break and by Saturday, 14 March, the twenty remaining students decided to call off the occupation.

From the start, the Spartacist Society fought to broaden the struggle beyond the narrow student-parochialist confines imposed by the predominantly Maoist leadership of OSAC who, despite the support of TGWU and NALGO members at LSE, did nothing to extend the fight. A Spartacist Society leaflet explained that:

'The current Tory attack is only part of their onslaught on the rights and standard of

living of the working class, women and racial minorities. As an isolated group and without any real social weight, students are simply incapable of withstanding this onslaught.'

The leaflet underscored the demand for full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers and students and pointed to the necessity of a fight for no fees, open admissions and a full mandatory grant tied to the cost of living -- to smash through the barriers of class and race which maintain the universities as the haven of a privileged elite. Yet both the Maoists of the London Student Movement and the reformists of the Socialist Workers Student Organisation opposed even our call for no fees ('unrealistic!') and joined also in cautioning against bringing 'politics' into the occupation!

In the context of a decaying capitalism which threatens to shut down entire universities and lay off thousands of tenured staff, such small-time apolitical reformism will lead students exactly nowhere. The place for 'students who really want to fight the Tories', as our comrades argued, is in the struggle for a revolutionary workers party 'fighting for the revolutionary transformation of the whole of society, including the education system.' ■

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SPARTACIST BRITAIN

Monthly newspaper of the Spartacist League, British section of the international Spartacist tendency.

EDITORIAL BOARD: Len Michelson (editor), Caroline Carne (production manager), Judith Hunter, Mark Hyde, John Masters, David Strachan.

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Rob Holt


Published monthly, except in January and September, by Spartacist Publications, 26 Harrison St, London WC1. Address all letters and subscription requests to: Spartacist Publications, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE. Subscriptions: 10 issues for £2.00; international air mail rates: Europe £3.00, outside Europe £4.00. Printed by Anvil Printers Ltd, London (TU).

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

Women & Revolution:
Journal of the Women's
Commission of the
Spartacist League/US

£1.50 for four issues
Single copies: 30p

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Manchester missiles conference

Trotskyists defend the USSR

We reprint below a leaflet and resolution distributed to the 700 delegates who attended the Labour Movement Conference Against the Missiles held in Manchester on 28 March. It was initiated and feverishly built by the fake-Trotskyist International Marxist Group (IMG) in its role as faithful waterboys for the conference's pacifist organisers, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). Intended by its organisers to be a pacifist jamboree for a string of Labour Party and trade union bureaucrat speakers, the conference also became the arena for a sharp struggle over the fundamental question posed in the current imperialist war drive: for or against the Soviet Union.

The issue could not have been posed more clearly than it was on the floor of the conference. The anti-Soviet 'third campist' Socialist Workers Party (SWP) successfully put a resolution calling for a 'nuclear-free zone' in Europe and 'opposition to the Warsaw Pact'; the SL delegation put its resolution calling for a proletarian-internationalist defence of the Soviet Union against the counterrevolutionary NATO cabal and a repudiation of bourgeois pacifism. And, as the leaflet points out about the Cold War in general, 'In this conflict there was no room for conciliation, pacifism or "even-handedness".' The pacifists, social democrats and Stalinists lined up in a solid bloc against the defence of the gains of the October Revolution, all voting against the SL resolution; the congenital tailists and centrist conciliators of the IMG were flung every which way. A few voted for, the floor leadership voted against, some abstained and some literally fled from the conference room to avoid voting!

Despite weeks of legwork building this intended transmission belt for bourgeois pacifism in the workers movement, the IMG had clearly lost control of the conference by the time the gathering convened. A tight lid on discussion, preventing any resolutions from the floor -- including the IMG's hobbyhorse of a national peace crawl on 24 October -- turned the first part into a dreary tedium of speeches from worthies like MP Frank Allaun and TGWU bureaucrat Ron Todd. But a floor fight at the start of the afternoon session overturned the bureaucratic procedure, with the SL and SWP delegations demanding democratic floor discussion. Even here the IMG refused to confront the CND heavies, as IMG'er Martin Collins argued against allowing resolutions from the floor.

Though virtually half the speakers were supporters of the IMG, only two of these supposed 'Trotskyists' so much as touched on the key programmatic question under debate. 'What about Russia?', asked IMG supporter Pauline Stanton. 'It's an issue we cannot dodge.' Indeed, but try she did. The second, leading IMG'er Jonathan Silberman, felt constrained to mouth a few words against equating the Soviet Union with US imperialism in response to the SWP resolution, but even on the vote for this openly anti-Soviet position the IMG abstained. Such was the tenor of the conference that even for this mealy-mouthed stand Silberman was greeted with heckling cries of 'Hungary' and 'Afghanistan'. He had no answer.

Confronted with our Trotskyist stance, IMG leaders could only mumble a uniform refrain of 'you support the Soviet bureaucracy'. This is a rationale for the politics of the 'third camp', repudiating military defence of the historic gains of the Bolshevik revolution as identical with political support for its Stalinist usurpers. On the contrary, it was the SL speaker who argued from the floor, 'There is a bureaucracy; they need to be overthrown. But not by social revolution, but by political revolution.... These gains, comrades, should be defended.' There were political supporters of the Soviet bureaucracy there -- not the Trotskyists -- but the pro-Moscow New Communist Party (NCP). And it was NCP national secretary Eric Trevitt who took the floor to denounce our resolution for 'trying to sabotage the detente process!' The politics of the Kremlin is class-collaborationist 'detente'; the politics of Trotskyism is defence and extension of the proletarian revolution. The distinction could not be simpler. It is a distinction which IMGers who wish to become Trotskyists will have to learn.

As Trotsky wrote in 'The Fourth International

and the Soviet Union':

'Just as revolutionists defend every trade union, even the most thoroughly reformist, from the class enemy, combating intransigently the treacherous leaders at the same time, so the parties of the Fourth International defend the USSR against the blows of imperialism without for a single moment giving up the struggle against the reactionary Stalinist apparatus.'

The only way of effectively mobilising the labour movement against the siting of Cruise missiles must start from the same recognition that any class-conscious worker brings to the industrial front: *there is a class war going on*. On one side stand the anti-Soviet NATO cabal gearing up their megadeath war machine, which includes Cruise and Trident; on the other the Soviet Union, home of the world's first and only successful workers revolution.

In this conflict there is no room for conciliation, pacifism or 'even-handedness'. The capitalist class is prepared to turn the whole planet into a nuclear incinerator in order to preserve its dying system of exploitation and oppression -- and reimpose it on those countries where it has been overthrown. It will only be stopped by a proletariat mobilised to defend the targets of imperialist aggrandisement and complete the overthrow of capitalism worldwide. The Spartacist League says: No to the daydreams of disarmament! Wage class war to stop imperialist war! Smash NATO! Defend the Soviet Union!

Today the prospect of World War III and nuclear barbarism is posed with ever more terrifying acuteness. Since its defeat at the hands of the Vietnamese workers and peasants in 1975, US imperialism has been rearming apace, adding some *three warheads a day* to its arsenal of destruction. After three years of Carter's anti-Soviet 'human rights' offensive, the US seized upon the Soviet military intervention against a reactionary CIA-backed gang of mullahs, moneylenders and landlords in Afghanistan to bring back the Cold War with a vengeance. Now Ronald Reagan and Alexander Haig, cheered on by the Iron Lady of Downing Street, are busy directing the slaughter of thousands of workers and peasants in El Salvador as the first stage in their efforts to 'roll back Communism'.

Meanwhile they rattle their missiles at Cuba,

pray for Vatican-inspired social counterrevolution in Poland and keep their sights firmly set on what has been the primary target of imperialist revanchism since October 1917. It is the Soviet Union's strength as the military/industrial powerhouse of the deformed/degenerated workers states -- and particularly *its nuclear weapons capability* -- that causes US imperialism to think hard before 'bombing North Vietnam back into the Stone Age', as some Pentagon neanderthals demanded a decade ago, or shipping the Marines into Nicaragua or El Salvador today.

Even under the stranglehold of a counterrevolutionary bureaucratic caste which robbed the workers of political power, the social system established by the Russian Revolution has catapulted the Soviet Union from semi-colonial backwardness to become the second most powerful industrial country on earth. While capitalist decay turns former thriving industrial centres into wasteland, the overthrow of capitalism in the bureaucratically deformed workers states has brought whole areas of former wasteland into the modern epoch and allowed the Soviet Union to attain 80% of US industrial capacity and two-thirds of its national income.

It is this which the imperialists want to 'roll back', to gain a bit more breathing space for their outmoded system. The deployment of Cruise in Western Europe is part of the Pentagon's project to achieve strategic nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union, the ability to carry out a nuclear *first strike* which destroys the Soviet Union while leaving US imperialism relatively intact. And once achieved, they will not hesitate to use it, to eliminate the Soviet Union as an obstacle to their rapacious appetites to expand and safeguard imperialist exploitation around the world. They will not be stopped by pleas for 'peace' and 'disarmament'. For all the Kremlin bureaucracy's incessant grovelling before the imperialist warmongers in the name of 'peaceful coexistence' and 'detente', disarmament agreements with the imperialists only increase the danger of nuclear war aimed at annihilating the Soviet Union. The 1972 SALT agreement, for example, did nothing to stop the US arms build-up; on the contrary it paved the way for the deployment of Cruise. Henry Kissinger made it clear what imperialist 'arms limitations' agreements were all about in his memoirs *White House Years*: 'Our strategy was to agree on a five-year freeze -- the interval we judged would enable us to catch up....'

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Leninism v pacifism

Spirited Spartacist League (SL) contingents in Sheffield, 14 March, and Birmingham, 21 March, counterposed militant proletarian opposition to the anti-Soviet war drive to the pervasive pacifism, as exemplified in Sheffield photo (bottom), of CND, Labour Party and fake-lefts. The appeal to anti-Sovietism was captured by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) float in Sheffield which featured a missile with the initials 'US' and 'CCCP' and a banner reading, 'Neither Washington nor Moscow'. While the Communist Party (CP) wallowed in memories of 'detente' the International Marxist Group and Workers Power were effectively invisible, refusing to confront the prevailing pacifist mood, the strong impact of our intervention--behind a banner reading, 'Smash NATO! Defend the Soviet Union!'--was underscored by solid sales and the comment of one veteran CPer: 'You've got the best banner on the demo.' And the only communist one!



Twenty-two years ago Fidel Castro's band of petty-bourgeois guerrillas marched victorious into Havana -- and within two years virtually all of the Cuban economy had been nationalised as the bourgeoisie fled to Miami. The following article, reprinted slightly abridged from *Workers Vanguard* no 102 (26 March 1975) is a complement to the analysis of the Cuban events and their lessons for Marxists first elaborated by our tendency in the early 1960s (see 'Cuba and Marxist Theory', *Marxist Bulletin* no 8). Its republication is particularly appropriate today given the immediate focus on the Central American countries of El Salvador and Nicaragua of US imperialism's anti-Soviet war drive. In the face of such bellicosity combined with counterrevolutionary sabotage by the native capitalists, the petty-bourgeois Sandinista government in Nicaragua could, like

Castro, be compelled even against their expressed desires to take the road of expropriating the bourgeoisie in a social overturn creating a bureaucratically deformed workers state.

No other ostensibly Trotskyist tendency was able to understand Cuba. Gerry Healy's 'International Committee', which simply denied reality by calling Cuba capitalist, has since left the workers movement by becoming a press agency for Libya's Colonel Qaddafi and other -- genuinely capitalist -- 'radical' regimes. After uncritically cheering for Nicaragua's Sandinistas the International Marxist Group now increasingly joins with its reformist cousins in the US Socialist Workers Party to sing Castro's praises, denying the need for political revolution and recommending the 'Cuban road' for all Latin America.

Some smaller centrist groups, notably the Workers Socialist League, have been attempting to resurrect Tim Wohlforth's Kautskyan 'theory of structural assimilation', the notion that somehow Cuba was gradually transformed from a bourgeois state to a workers state via the agency of the Kremlin. More recently leading members of the left-centrist Workers Power group in Sheffield and Birmingham have been publicly defending a similar position. (For a full debunking of Wohlforth's thoroughly revisionist 'theory' see our article 'The Real Lessons of Cuba', *Spartacist Britain* nos 3 and 4, July/August and September 1978).

For those who seek a Marxist answer to the problems posed by the role of petty-bourgeois guerrillas in the creation of deformed workers states we are proud to offer an analysis that has stood the test of time.



Castro's road to power: from petty-bourgeois guerrilla in the Sierra Maestra (1956) to Stalinist bureaucrat with Khrushchev (1963).

How Cuba became a deformed workers state

Guerrillas in power

As part of a broader effort to 'institutionalize' its rule, the recent congress of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) approved a new 'socialist' constitution for the country to replace the bourgeois 'Fundamental Law' of 1940 (see 'Castro Holds First Ever CP Congress', *Workers Vanguard* no 100, 12 March 1976). Prime Minister Fidel Castro also made use of the occasion to present the 'revised standard version' of the history of the Cuban revolution.

The extensive overview was doubly significant in the context of the new constitution, since one of Castro's key original demands -- from the attack on the Moncada on 26 July 1953 until taking power from the dictator Batista on 1 January 1959 -- was precisely for a return to the 1940 constitution. This raises the crucial questions of the class character of the guerrilla movement, the nature of the revolution it carried out, and the causes and significance of the shift from a 'democratic' bourgeois program to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

These issues are of tremendous significance for communists as they concern the most fundamental questions of revolutionary strategy in the backward capitalist countries. Can the petty bourgeoisie -- traditionally considered by Marxists as a vacillating group, incapable of giving independent class leadership -- carry out a socialist revolution, as the revisionist 'United Secretariat' claims? Or has Cuba remained throughout a capitalist state, as the Maoists and Gerry Healy's fake-Trotskyist 'International Committee' contend? On the other hand, if, as uniquely put forward by the international Spartacist tendency, the Castro regime has since late 1960 been a deformed workers state, how was it formed, and what implications does this have for the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution?

A closet communist?

In his opening speech to the PCC congress, 'Comandante' Castro repeatedly praised the policies of the Stalinist leaders of the Soviet

Union. Having long ago become locked into the Soviet orbit, Castro now seeks to project his current policies back onto the militant youth who stormed the army barracks in Santiago in 1953 and the nucleus of the Pebel Army that initiated guerrilla struggle in the Sierra Maestra mountains three years later.

Castro includes among the 'solid pillars' on which the leaders of the 26th of July Movement based themselves 'the principles of Marxism-Leninism'. He goes on, 'Even though this was not the way of thinking of all those who had embarked upon the road of revolutionary armed struggle in our country, it was that of its main leaders' (*Granma*, 28 December 1975). Castro also claimed that among the young combatants there was 'a deep respect and admiration for the old Communists' of the pro-Moscow People's Socialist Party (PSP), who 'had held aloft with unyielding firmness the noble banners of Marxism-Leninism'.

The reality was considerably different. Castro's speech was silent on the program of the anti-Batista movement, but in an oblique aside for the benefit of those who know something of the struggle during the 1950s, he added: '... not only the most resolute action was necessary, but also astuteness and flexibility on the part of revolutionaries.... The proclamation of socialism during the period of insurrectional struggle would not have been understood by the people, and imperialism would have directly intervened in our country with its troops.'

A radical democrat

All these 'explanations' come down to a conspiracy theory of history and ignore the real social character of Castro's movement. To begin with, Castro himself did not even pretend to be part of the workers movement during the struggle against the US-backed dictatorship. Instead, he was a radical Jacobin petty-bourgeois democrat, following in the footsteps of 'the Apostle' of Cuban independence, Jose Marti. His political background was as a liberal student leader and

constitutionalist lawyer. He was for a time head of the student government at the University of Havana, and in 1948 voted for Eduardo Chibas, candidate of the Ortodoxo Party, who was running for president of the country on an anti-corruption program. In 1952, Castro was a candidate for the Cuban Congress on the Ortodoxo slate, but a coup d'etat by former military strongman Fulgencio Batista forestalled the elections.

After the March 10 coup, the young lawyer's first action against the dictator was not to undertake agitation among the workers and peasants, but instead to appeal to an emergency court in the capital to arrest Batista for violating the Code of Social Defense! Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy's simplistic apology for Castro (*Cuba: Anatomy of a Revolution*, 1960) commented: 'When his petition for the imprisonment of Batista was rejected by the court, Fidel decided there was only one way in which the usurper could be overthrown -- revolution.' His goals were listed as 'honest government' and a 'truly sovereign Cuba'.

The methods which the young lawyer then resorted to were well within the framework of traditional Latin American bourgeois politics. Various pseudo-Marxists -- from Castro himself to the followers of fake-Trotskyist Ernest Mandel -- pretend today that the Cuban guerrilla 'strategy' was somehow to the left of traditional Stalinist reformism because it engaged in 'armed struggle'. They 'forget' that in the unstable conditions of Latin America, just about every political tendency has at one time or another 'picked up the gun'. Castro's first attempt at revolutionary action, for instance, was but an old-style *pronunciamento*.

The plan for the assault on the Moncada to surprise the 1000 soldiers quartered there, seize their arms, then take over the radio station and broadcast the last speech of Eduardo Chibas (who had committed suicide in 1951), followed by a call to arms inviting the Cuban people to rise up against the dictator. Similar actions have been carried out scores of times in

Mexico, Bolivia, Peru or Argentina. However, in this case it failed, partly due to bad planning, and most of the 200 attackers were killed during the attack or brutally murdered by Batista's torturers in the mopping-up operation which followed.

The 26th of July Movement

At his trial the following September, Castro (who had been caught hiding in the hills around the eastern provincial capital) was able to turn the tables on the government with a dramatic speech indicting the regime for its oppression of 'the people'. In this speech, later edited into a pamphlet entitled 'History Will Absolve Me', Castro laid out five 'revolutionary laws' that would have been immediately proclaimed after the capture of the Moncada barracks.

These projected decrees show quite clearly the social content of the revolution which the July 26 rebels were planning. The first was to return to the constitution of 1940; second was to grant land titles to tenants and squatters (with the state indemnifying former owners on the basis of rental values they would have received over the next ten years); the third provided for profit sharing, the fourth that cane growers would get 55 percent of sugar production (instead of the lion's share going to the mills), and the last was to confiscate 'ill-gotten gains of all who had committed frauds during previous regimes'.

As the Cold Warrior journalist-academic Theodore Draper wrote: 'There is virtually nothing in the social and economic program of History Will Absolve Me that cannot be traced at least as far back as ... the 1935 program of Dr Grau San Martins's Autentico party, let alone the later propaganda of Chibas' (*Castroism: Theory and Practice*, 1965).

Castro's anti-Batista struggle following the catastrophic landing of the yacht *Granma* in Oriente province in December 1956 is usually thought of exclusively in terms of a tiny guerrilla band gradually winning support from the *jibaros* (peasants). But the leader of the tiny 26th of July Movement was simultaneously negotiating with a number of prominent bourgeois politicians. Thus the 'Manifesto of the Sierra Maestra', dated July 1957 and the most widely circulated of the rebel documents, was signed by Castro, Raul Chibas (brother of Eduardo) and Felipe Pazos, ex-president of the National Bank of Cuba.

The Castro-Chibas-Pazos manifesto called for 'democratic, impartial elections' organized by a 'provisional, neutral government'; 'dis-sociat[ion] [of] the army from politics; freedom of the press'; 'sound financial policy' and 'industrialization'; and an agrarian reform based on granting ownership to squatters and tenants (with prior indemnification of owners). The ten-point program was to be carried out by a Civilian Revolutionary Front, made up of representatives of all opposition groups.

The final programmatic statement from the Sierra Maestra, issued in October 1958 as the Batista regime was crumbling, was 'Law no 3' on agrarian reform. Based on the principle of land to the tiller, it did not mention cooperatives or state farms.

When Fidel and Raul Castro swept out of the Sierra Maestra to link up with Ernesto 'Che' Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos in the plains of Camaguey province and then march on to Havana, the Rebel Army was far from being a mass organization, counting only 1100 soldiers, most of them peasants.

The provisional government, installed with Castro's approval, was hardly dominated by 26th of July ministers. The president was Manuel Urrutia, a former judge; the prime minister was Jose Miro Cardona, former head of the Havana Bar Association; the foreign minister was Roberto Agramonte, the Ortodoxo presidential candidate in 1952; and Felipe Pazos was again head of the National Bank. In the new armed forces, the head of the Revolutionary Air Force was Pedro Diaz Lanz. By the end of the year, all of these men had defected to the US, joining the *ex-batistianos* in Miami. Miro was later to be the puppet head of a 'Revolutionary Council' set up by the CIA to serve as the front for its Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961.

The policies adopted by the new regime during its early months were certainly a radical departure from the laissez-faire debauchery and wholesale corruption of the Batista 'government', which was something akin to having Al Capone in the White House. However, the actions of the revolutionary government did not exceed the limits of the capitalist regime.

Among the first steps were the slashing of electric rates by half in rural areas, up to 50 per cent cuts in rents for the poor, and the implementation of the agrarian reform law of the Sierra Maestra together with seizure of the



Workers militia in Cuba during early 1960s.

estates of Batista henchmen. In the United States, the bourgeois press, led off by *Time* magazine, whipped up a reactionary publicity campaign against the war crimes trials of the blood-stained butchers of the Batista regime (of whose bestialities the imperialist media had reported nothing). In all, only 550 of the most notorious criminals were executed, with the broad approval of virtually all classes of the Cuban population.

But while this first post-Batista government was headed by authentic liberal bourgeois politicians, real power was in the hands of the Rebel Army, which is why the openly counter-revolutionary leaders left without waging any kind of fight. The guerrilla struggles in the hills had been militarily marginal, but they succeeded in crystallizing the massive popular hatred for the Batista regime. By the time the leaders of the 26th of July Movement entered the capital, the official army and police apparatus -- the core of the state power -- had collapsed. The Castroites proceeded to sweep it away, and organize a new repressive apparatus recruited and organized along quite different lines.

The guerrilla army was a petty-bourgeois formation, politically heterogeneous, with its leadership recruited from among ex-students and professionals and the ranks from the peasants of the sierra. While Castro and the rest of the leadership had signed various programs, manifestos, etc, with oppositional liberals, their previous direct connections with the bourgeoisie had been broken. Most importantly, the Rebel Army was not faced with a combative and class-conscious proletariat, which would have polarized the petty-bourgeois militants, drawing some to the workers' side and sending others straight into the arms of Urrutia, Miro & Co. Consequently, what existed in Havana following the overthrow of Batista was an inherently transitory and fundamentally unstable phenomenon -- a *petty-bourgeois government* which was not committed to the defense of either bourgeois private property or the collectivist property forms of proletarian class rule (see 'Cuba and Marxist Theory', *Marxist Bulletin* no 8).

The consolidation of a deformed workers state

While such a regime was temporarily autonomous from the bourgeois order -- that is, a capitalist state, namely armed bodies of men dedicated to defending a particular property form, did not exist in the Marxist sense -- Castro could not escape from the class struggle. After 1 January 1959 a new bourgeois state power could have been erected in Cuba, as occurred following the departure of the French colonial rulers in Algeria in 1962. In the Algerian case, this process was aided by the conclusion of the neo-colonial Evian Accords, explicitly protecting the property of French colons, and the fact that power was handed over to a regular army which played little role in the guerrilla fighting.

However, in Cuba US imperialism was far from accommodating and soon began a sharp economic struggle against the new rulers in Havana which rapidly grew into military actions. This imperialist pressure, in turn, pushed the core of the Cuban leadership to the left, while leading other segments of the 26th of July Movement to join the bourgeois liberals and *batistianos* in exile.

The first sharp clash with the domestic bourgeoisie came over the proclamation of a moderate agrarian reform law in May. The new law expro-

riated all land over 999 acres, to be paid in bonds of the revolutionary government which could be redeemed in 20 years. The reaction was predictable: landowners declared this was 'worse than Communism' and the US State Department sent a pious note deploring that American investors had not been consulted beforehand.

The next move by Castro which stirred the ire of the capitalists was the removal of Felipe Pazos from the National Bank where he was replaced by Guevara. In February 1960, Russian deputy prime minister Mikoyan visited Cuba and signed an agreement to purchase 1 million tons of Cuban sugar yearly. This relieved Cuba of its hitherto almost exclusive reliance on the US for foreign trade, and when on 29 June 1960 US-owned oil refineries refused to accept crude petroleum imported from the USSR, they were nationalized. On July 3, the American Congress approved a law cutting off Cuba's sugar quota, and two days later Castro seized US-held property (primarily sugar mills) on the island.

Meanwhile the polarization within the diverse Castroite movement had proceeded apace. Already in July 1959, President Urrutia had provoked a government crisis by denouncing the PSP and Communism; almost simultaneously, air force head Diaz Lanz called on defense minister Raul Castro to purge Communists from the armed forces. Diaz soon fled to the US and Urrutia resigned and was replaced by Osvaldo Dorticos. In October, the military commander of Camaguey province, Hubert Matos, tried to launch a regional rebellion together with two dozen of his officers, but was quickly overpowered and arrested.

Not only in the new armed forces was the differentiation taking place. The Havana organization of the 26th of July Movement and its newspaper *Revolucion* throughout early 1959 were a source of aggressive anti-Communism.

The crisis between the right and left wing came to a head in the battle over the trade unions, where David Salvador had been installed as head of the Cuban Labor Federation (CTC) to replace Batista's gangster crony Eusebio Mujal. Salvador immediately dissolved the working unity between the PSP and the 26th of July in the labor movement which had been established in late 1958, and assigned all seats on the CTC executive committee to non-Communists. In the November 1959 CTC congress there was a showdown, and after a personal intervention by Fidel Castro the back of the anti-PSP wing (which reportedly included a number of *ex-mujalistas*) was broken. Salvador resigned a few months later, and control of the unions passed to longtime Stalinist Lazaro Pena (see JP Morray, *The Second Revolution in Cuba*, 1962).

The culminating step in the nationalizations came in the fall of 1960, with a series of rapid-fire seizures (tobacco factories, American banks, and then, on October 13, all banks and 382 business enterprises). By mid-October all agricultural processing plants; all chemical, metallurgical, paper, textile and drug factories; all railroads, ports, printing presses, construction companies and department stores were nationalized. Together this made the state the owner of 80 per cent of the industrial capacity of Cuba.

With the takeover of capitalist property in Cuba, for the first time in the Western Hemisphere -- and only '90 miles from Florida' -- the world witnessed the expropriation of the bourgeoisie as a class. This naturally made the Cuban revolution an object of hatred for the imperialists. It also made Castro and Cuba into objects of adoration by would-be revolutionaries of all sorts and a large spectrum of petty-bourgeois radical opinion. The New Left, with its hard anti-Leninism, grabbed instinctively for a revolution 'by the people' but without a

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Guerrillas...

(Continued from page 5)

Leninist party or the participation of the working class.

For ostensible Trotskyists, however, the Cuban revolution posed important programmatic questions. The theory of permanent revolution held that in the backward capitalist regions the bourgeoisie was too weak and bound by its ties to the imperialists and feudalists to achieve an agrarian revolution, democracy and national emancipation -- objects of the classical bourgeois revolutions. Trotsky's analysis of the Russian revolution of 1905 led him to his insistence that the proletariat must establish its own class rule with the support of the peasantry, in order to accomplish even the democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution; and it would from the beginning be forced to undertake socialist measures as well, making the revolution permanent in character.

The Cuban revolution demonstrated that even with a leadership that began its insurgency with no perspective of transcending petty-bourgeois radicalism, real agrarian reform and national emancipation from the yoke of Yankee imperialism proved to be impossible without destroying the bourgeoisie as a class. It vindicated the Marxist understanding that the petty bourgeoisie -- composed of highly volatile and contradictory elements lacking the social force to independently vie for power -- is unable to establish any new, characteristic mode of property relations, but is forced to fall back upon the property forms of one of the two fundamentally counterposed classes in capitalist society, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat.

Thus the Castro leadership, under exceptional circumstances due to the collapse of the Batista regime in the absence of a powerful working class able to struggle for state power in its own right, was pushed by the pressure of US imperialism's frenzied hostility into creating a *deformed* workers state which in power increasingly duplicated the mode of rule of the degenerated USSR as the Castroists consolidated a bureaucratic state apparatus. The evolution of the Cuban leadership from petty-bourgeois radicals to the administrators of a deformed workers state (and the incorporation of the Cuban Communists) confirmed Trotsky's characterization of the Russian Stalinists as a *petty-bourgeois caste* resting upon the property forms established by the October Revolution. Moreover, the Cuban revolution provides a negative confirmation that only the class-conscious proletariat, led by a Marxist vanguard party, can establish a democratically governed, revolutionary workers state, and thus lay the basis for the international extension of the revolution and open the road to socialism.

Unlike the Russian Revolution -- which required a political *counterrevolution* under Stalin to become a bureaucratically deformed workers state -- the Cuban revolution was deformed from its inception. The Cuban working class, having played essentially no part in the revolutionary process, never held political power, and the Cuban state was governed by the whims of the Castroist clique rather than being administered by democratically elected workers councils (soviets).

The revisionist current which had emerged from within the Trotskyist movement in the late 1950s saw in Cuba the perfect justification for its abandonment of the construction of Trotskyist vanguard parties. By ignoring the crucial index of workers' democracy and thus sliding over the qualitative difference between a deformed workers state such as Stalinist Russia or Castroist Cuba and the healthy Russian workers state of Lenin and Trotsky, the European supporters of the 'International Secretariat' (IS)

embraced the Cuban revolution as proof that revolutionary transformations could take place without the leadership of a proletarian vanguard. Cuba became the model of the 'revolutionary process' under 'new conditions' -- and the schema to which the revisionists have clung despite the failure of countless guerrilla struggles in Latin America to duplicate the 'Cuban road'.

For the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), however, Cuba was a watershed in the degeneration of that party as a repository of revolutionary Trotskyism. During the 1950s it had fought Pablo's notion of 'deep entrism' in the mass reformist parties. But with its revolutionary fibre weakened under the impact of McCarthyism, the SWP leaders were desperately searching for a popular cause which could enable them to break out of isolation.

SWP leader Joseph Hansen crowed enthusiastically:

'What provisions are there in Marxism for a revolution, obviously *socialist in tendency* but powered by the peasantry and led by revolutionists who have never professed socialist aims.... It's not in the books! ... If Marxism has no provisions for such phenomena, perhaps it is time provisions were made. It would seem a fair enough exchange for a revolution as good as this one.' ('The Theory of the Cuban Revolution', 1962; our emphasis) Having declared the revolution 'socialist in tendency' and equated it with Russia under Lenin, Hansen could not simply ignore the crucial question of workers' democracy. 'It is true that this workers state lacks, as yet, the forms of proletarian democracy', he wrote. But he immediately added, 'This does not mean that democracy is lacking in Cuba.'

The SWP tops took the convergence on the Cuba question as the opportunity to propose a reunification with the IS. In a 1963 document, 'For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement', the SWP wrote of 'the appearance of a workers state in Cuba -- the exact form of which is yet to be settled'; the 'evolution toward revolutionary Marxism [of] the July 26 Movement' and concluded:

'Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power.... It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries.'

In response to this open revisionism, Healy and his International Committee followers simply thrust their head in the sand like an ostrich and declared that Cuba, even after the 1960 nationalizations, is 'a bonapartist regime resting on capitalist state foundations', one not qualitatively different from Batista's regime. But within the SWP the Revolutionary Tendency (RT -- forerunner of the Spartacist League/US) was able to analyze the post-1960 Cuban regime as a *deformed workers state* and point out the significance of that characterization for Marxist theory.

In a resolution that was submitted as a counter document to the 'For Early Reunification....' document of the SWP leadership, the RT made clear that 'Trotskyists are at once the most militant and unconditional defenders against imperialism of both the Cuban Revolution and the deformed workers' state which has issued therefrom.' But it added: 'Trotskyists cannot give confidence and political support, however critical, to a governing regime hostile to the most elementary principles and practices of workers' democracy....' ('Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International', June 1963).

Directly rejecting the SWP's embracing of guerrillaism and Castroism in place of the Trotskyist perspective of proletarian revolution, the RT resolution summarized:

'Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decay of imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strategy revisionism on the *proletarian* leadership in the revolution is profound negation of Marxism-Leninism....'

CND...

(Continued from page 3)

It would be a monstrous crime against all the oppressed and a virtual death warrant for all humanity if the Stalinist bureaucrats in the Kremlin, through their attempts to conciliate imperialism, ever allowed the Pentagon to gain the upper hand in nuclear preparedness. The imperialists have already given the world a small taste of what it would mean. When the US was the sole possessor of nuclear weapons, it used them to devastate Hiroshima and Nagasaki, not to vanquish the all-but-defeated Japan, but as a warning of intent directed at the Soviet Union. These were the first shots in the Cold War.

Pacifist campaigns never stopped poison gas, submarine warfare or civilian bombings -- they won't stop nukes now. The labour movement must be mobilised in opposition to Cruise and the whole NATO anti-Soviet war machine in the militant spirit of *proletarian* anti-militarism: Not a man, not a penny, for the imperialist war drive! The main enemy is at home!

Class-conscious workers can no more desire the nuclear disarmament of the Soviet Union than they would wish to see anti-colonialist guerrillas in Southern Africa or Irish nationalist fighters lay down their arms. The purpose of nuclear weapons, like all weapons, is determined by those who control them. In the hands of the imperialists they are a means toward counterrevolutionary aggrandisement. In the hands of the Soviet Union they are a necessary defence against it.

The organisers of this conference, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), draw no such class distinction. They want 'nuclear disarmament', pure and simple. For pacifists, the Soviet SS-20 is equivalent to Cruise; the class line is denied. That is why they have the gall to grace their appeals for 'peace' with quotations from no less a colonial butcher than the late, unlamented Lord Louis Mountbatten -- as though exploited and exploiter can somehow make common cause in fighting against a nuclear war drive in the exploiter's interests. The Labour Party, whose Ernest Bevin was one of the instigators of NATO, claims to be for nuclear disarmament now as well. And what that means in terms of a working-class policy is demonstrated by Labour's continued support to the obscene British presence in Ireland and Michael Foot's appointment of the ardently pro-NATO Brynmor John as shadow spokesman on foreign policy.

Yet this pacifist deception is enthusiastically built and backed by self-styled revolutionaries of various stripes who refuse to take a *class* position. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has once more brought to the fore their Cold War slogan of 'Neither Washington nor Moscow' -- which in Afghanistan means SWPer Paul Foot screaming for the Russians to be starved out by a boycott of 'our' beef exports. They are increasingly echoed by the supposed Trotskyists of the International Marxist Group (IMG), who despite their ever fainter calls for defence of the Soviet Union, show where their hearts really lie these days by trying to become the best builders of CND's classless pacifism. The IMG's letters page abounds with denunciations of the Soviet 'workers bomb' while IMG supporters in various places openly espouse Soviet nuclear disarmament.

The working class wants peace; but it will get peace only when it has broken the backs of its exploiters. The bourgeoisie will be disarmed only when it has been overthrown -- a task which requires the leadership of a party like the one which led the Russian workers to power in 1917. Until then every weapon available for the defence of the workers interests must be guarded with vigilance -- from the picket line to the Soviet ICBM. The Spartacist League calls on all participants at this conference to support the following resolution:

- This conference calls on the whole labour movement to take up a policy of intransigent opposition to Cruise and Trident installations, including the blacking of work, and other necessary industrial tactics.
- The labour movement must defend the USSR and the other workers states against the imperialist warmongers who seek to destroy the social gains achieved through the eradication of capitalist exploitation in these countries.
- Conference rejects the notion that the road to world peace lies through pleas for 'detente' or 'disarmament'. The Soviet Union must maintain the utmost nuclear vigilance against the NATO threat; we reject any call for Soviet disarmament. The watchword of the workers organisations must be: Not a penny, not a man, for the imperialist armed forces! Smash NATO! Defend the Soviet Union! The road to peace lies through class war and the struggle for a workers government to end the capitalist system. ■

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Racist attacks ...

(Continued from page 1)

tack, pointing to evidence suggesting a petrol bomb. The cops responded with a full-scale investigation which, as Malcolm X once put it, was designed to make 'the victim appear the criminal'. Known fascists in the area have not been touched, while black youth who were at the party have been rounded up, interrogated and even held overnight -- in some cases denied solicitors and threatened in an attempt to force a confession.

Whoever was responsible for the New Cross fire, the fascists certainly did nothing to hide their glee. In the wake of the black protest, the National Front (NF) threatened to march past the burnt-out Ruddock house the following weekend as a grisly reminder of what *they would like to do to every black* if given the chance. The march was prevented by a month-long ban imposed under the Public Order Act -- and as always it also banned a proposed anti-fascist demonstration, among others.

These murderous scum will not be stopped by state bans. The broad-daylight firebombing of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) bookshop in Birmingham on 28 March -- clearly aimed at murdering everybody inside at the time (see box, pl) -- is only the most recent evidence of a dramatic increase in fascist terror. Anti Nazi League (ANL) spokesman Peter Hain and actress Miriam Karlin have both had bricks thrown through their windows, and the South London NF has publicly targetted leading 'anti-Nazis'.

But the victims have been primarily blacks, West Indian and Asian. Several months ago a gang of some one hundred skinheads armed with clubs charged a queue of West Indians outside a South London cinema. An Asian youth in Southall has recently been attacked by skinheads who carved the initials of the Young National Front (YNF) into his stomach with a knife (the cops could 'discern no racial motive!'). A young Pakistani man was murdered by a teen-aged Nazi who gave a Hitlerite salute at his sentencing and openly vowed that he would have done it again. 'Many Asian communities now live in a state of fear' explained a spokesman for the Joint Committee Against Racism. 'Families are converting their homes into fortresses with barricades against windows and doors' (*Times*, 5 February).

There have been more than one thousand reported incidents of racist attacks in the past eighteen months alone, and the government is even mooting the creation of a special police task force to deal with them. Tell it to Blair Peach's widow! Or the 1500 rounded up on 'suspicion of looting' following last year's cop-provoked black outburst in Bristol (of whom not one among the 91 charged who were tried before a jury could be convicted!). The racism is so noxious inside the police force that it can only hold on to 234 black cops out of a total of 100,000. And when the Islamic Academy in Manchester was stormed by a gang of hooded men carrying crosses and screaming 'Kill the Pakis' last October, the police who were called to the scene confined themselves to checking the immigration papers of the besieged victims to make sure they were not here illegally.

The fascist growth is facilitated by a climate in which 'get the blacks' is all-but-official government policy. From the obscene practice of demanding virginity tests as a condition for entry for Asian women to the plight of Anwar Ditta, who had to wage a valiant, vigorous five-year-long campaign to bring her children here, the message has been clear: Blacks and Asians not wanted. These are particularly disgusting examples of the inherently racist character of all capitalist immigration laws. Indeed, in contesting the Commission for Racial Equality's right to investigate its practices, the Home Office openly admits as much:

'The whole system of immigration control is based upon discrimination. It is of the essence of the Immigration Act that people will be discriminated against on the grounds of race or nationality and it is the function of certain officials to ensure that the discrimination is effective.' (*Guardian*, 3 October 1980)

The new Nationality Bill goes one step further in the direction of an open 'white Britain' policy, effectively denying non-whites the right to live here. As the Manchester Law Centre noted, the White Paper which lays out the new policy (prepared by the last Labour government's Green Paper) is predicated on:

'... the assumption that the "battle" against black immigration has already been won... What it is actually about is attacking the security, status and rights of black people already living in the UK.'

Commonwealth citizens resident here will be deprived of rights they formerly had, most notably the right to vote. Children born abroad to

citizens will themselves not be granted that status unless the parents were born here; and even children born here will not be British citizens if the parent was not yet settled here or was in some minor respect in violation of the immigration laws. And once settled, applicants for citizenship status must somehow demonstrate that they are not of 'bad character' and have a 'sense of loyalty'. Undoubtedly left-wing sympathies or involvement in trade-union activity could be sufficient evidence of 'bad character'. The explicitly racist character of the law is underscored by the fact that a Canadian in Winnipeg with one British grandparent will have more rights in Britain than a British-born black whose father lived and worked here most of his life.

The labour movement has every interest in seeing this pernicious legislation smashed. Working-class unity against the bourgeoisie can only be forged and maintained through a struggle against discrimination and for equal rights for all workers. Black workers must not be allowed to be set up for racist victimisation and deportation. Full citizenship rights for all foreign workers! Smash the Nationality Bill!

As the crisis of British capitalism deepens, the ruling class moves ever closer to an open embrace of Enoch Powell's racist 'repatriation' scheme. With fewer jobs, less housing and less to be spent on social services, somebody has to be the first to go -- and blacks and immigrants are always the most 'expendable'. When the blacks are gone, they'll go after the Irish. All the bourgeoisie -- and particularly the British bourgeoisie -- is capable of offering in its death agony is a sliding scale of misery for the proletariat. But the handful of jobs and housing which would be made available for white workers today if the blacks were kicked out would tomorrow be taken away from them as well.

Yet the nationalist/racist premise which locks the working class onto this treadmill of despair is provided by its reformist misleaders, who have no other programme but to scramble for a piece of an ever smaller pie. When the NF organises marches for 'British jobs for British workers', they appeal to the same backward sentiments as the trade union bureaucracy and Labour 'lefts' in their plea for import controls, except the fascists' programme of race/national war is ultimately directed not just at blacks, but at the organised working class -- the trade unions, the Labour Party, socialists.

The current level of fascist violence provides grim evidence of the bankruptcy of the ANL's popular frontism. Two years ago, the ANL seized upon the temporary disarray of the fascists to crow over the 'victory' achieved by their puerile 'rocks' and 'carnivals' against racism. But as long as capitalist despair is allowed to provide a fertile recruiting ground among hopeless lumpenised white youth, the fascists will overcome temporary weaknesses and return in greater strength. There is no substitute for the struggle to mobilise the mass organisations of the working class to smash the racist/fascist threat. And impotent taunting is at best useless, if not dangerous. Adventurist stunts by the likes of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency (RCT) and its pretentiously misnamed East London Workers Against Racism simply embolden the fascists, who thrive on small victories against isolated leftists. For all its huffing and puffing about its anti-racist 'patrols' and 'workers defence', the RCT's denial that anything 'serious can be done within the labour movement so long as the working class is riddled with divisions' (*the next step*, March 1981) is counterposed to the fight for effective workers defence guards.

In order to defend its class interests as a whole, the working class must rally to the defence of black rights -- the right to equal opportunities in jobs, housing and education, a defence against fascist terror and police victimisation -- not through sharing out the misery, but through fighting the capitalist system that imposes it. It is only the working class which has the social power to defend black people. Those like the fake-Trotskyist International Marxist Group, who enthuse over the 'black rebellion' and cheer 'long may it prosper', commit a grave and criminally irresponsible disservice to blacks in Britain. Blacks and Asians combined are some 4 per cent of the population. The very fact that the bourgeoisie can contemplate repatriation reflects upon their relative social weakness -- despite significant industrial concentrations in such areas as London Transport and Ford Dagenham. The 'black rebellion' must be an integrated part of a multiracial working-class struggle for power. Any other road is a road of despair and defeat for black people. Join the fight for a revolutionary vanguard party which can do away with miseries and oppression of British capitalism once and for all! ■

Arrogance ...

(Continued from page 8)

industries such measures are only a recognition of reality. The whole of Britain is a lame duck. And that's why, despite all the grousing over Thatcher, nobody has really come forward as a challenger; they have no alternative. The only way out for the ruling class is to break the back of the organised workers movement. And despite the evident treachery of the trade union and Labour Party bureaucracy, the bourgeoisie is not yet in a position to tackle this working class head on.

The only glimmer of economic hope lately has been the plan of Japan's Datsun Corporation to build a car plant somewhere in Britain. For once the union bureaucrats have shelved their protectionist 'buy British' slogans in order to join the competition for the plant to be sited in their particular part of the country. In South Wales they even had a choir learn Japanese songs to welcome representatives of the firm.

The bourgeoisie would like to retain at least the image of an imperialist power. But the recent defence debate in Parliament points to the problem -- it takes money to finance Britain's contribution to the anti-Soviet war 'drive spear-headed by its far senior partner across the Atlantic. Britain has none of the grandeur, and all of the headaches, of an empire. To be fair, it does have a potential monarch whose personal attributes seem precisely suited.

But those like the Socialist Workers Party and International Marxist Group, who simply echo Willie Hamilton's populist anti-monarchism with their expose-type raves about the cost of the royal nuptials, miss the point. The pomp and circumstance that will be inflicted on the population through July is politically deadly at any price. Prince Charlie and all, the monarchy is just about the only focus of 'national unity' left in this battered country -- and it is one hundred per cent reactionary and dangerous. As Walter Bagehot once noted, it 'diminishes the necessity for the exhibition of force. We do not need bayonets to disperse crowds.'

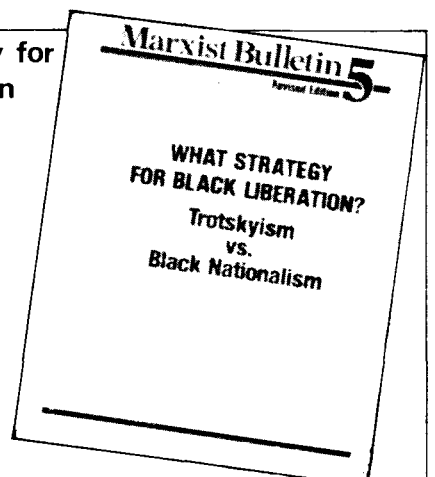
It is not only the monarchy that saves the bourgeoisie from being forced to call out its armed forces against a working-class upsurge; it is also the servility of the labour bureaucracy, whose aspiration in life is not to serve the class that it purports to lead but to make it on the honours list. On the centenary of his birth the bourgeoisie has looked back fondly on the life of Ernest Bevin, the anti-communist Labour and trade union leader par excellence. There is even talk of erecting a statue of him alongside his 'great contemporary' and World War II coalition partner, Winston Churchill. Bevin was a ruthless and much-feared bureaucrat who stood firm against the Labour 'lefts' of his day and is remembered for his role as an enthusiastic advocate of the post-war Marshall Plan, through which the US propped up European economies against the danger of social revolution and the 'Communist threat'. Under today's conditions, a faction-wrought Labour Party with a weak-kneed leadership does not promise the bourgeoisie an attractive alternative government to the hated Tories. And despite all the media hype the new Social Democrats are hardly likely to prove any better.

What this country desperately needs is a party that can solve the proletariat's crisis of leadership: a Leninist vanguard. The massive explosion of class struggle needed to smash the proletariat forward on the road to smashing capitalist class rule demands a leadership which does not vow obeisance to King, Country and Parliament. A revolutionary leadership must be constructed in the labour movement that will lead the fight for decent pay, decent living and working conditions and social services through the methods of class struggle. Then we need no longer be subjected to centenaries for Ernest Bevin. Towards a workers Britain! ■

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No fags, no booze, no jobs - give them a royal wedding!

Tory arrogance

The miners had a good chance to deliver a body blow to this government two months ago. They didn't, prevented by a leadership dead set on avoiding a major class confrontation. As it is, sheerly through their exercise of industrial muscle the miners succeeded in saving their jobs (for the time being) and giving the Tories a useful reminder that the organised working class in this country is still ready and capable of fighting back.

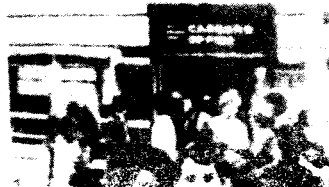
But it stands as a powerful indictment of the treachery of the trade union bureaucracy that Sir Geoffrey Howe was able to get away with a budget three weeks after the miners settled which so exemplified the state of misery to which the British ruling class has reduced life in this country. A classwide offensive led by the miners would have left Howe's budget in a pile of shreds. And the only compensation the bourgeoisie offered in all this added insult to injury: Buckingham Palace celebrated its rescue from a massive class upsurge by announcing the heir apparent's betrothal to a teen bride, Lady Diana Spencer. During the decline of the Roman Empire the masses were given bread and circuses as a diversion from their woes. This ruling class offers no bread, just circuses. And even the circuses don't match up.

Above and beyond the £5 cut it will mean in the average family income every week, there was a particularly nasty, vicious, vindictive quality to this budget -- it hit especially hard at cigarettes and alcohol, two of the few amenities left in this fading empire. The posters which taunt the aging poor with death by 'hypothermia'



Capitalism in decay: school-leavers with no hope, no jobs, no future; and the ruling class answer.

"You're right. The trouble with us kids today is we've never done a decent day's work in our lives!"



with full knowledge that the only and obvious solution (more heat) is inaccessible to them; the health service which scarcely tries to make you *think* they'll cure you; the buses that keep you waiting 45 minutes in a queue when you're late for work. And with the new duty increases, even the dream of a car becomes impossible, a pint of bitter in a pub becomes a major outlay, and every cigarette feels like an extravagance.

Britain is a 'lame duck'

Even the CBI and wide sections of the Tory party were appalled by Howe's budget, and rural backbenchers who feared their constituents' wrath over the rise in petrol tax revolted. The acrimonious dispute which flared openly between

Thatcher's hard-liners and the 'wets' in the Cabinet was not over the ideological niceties of monetarism as an economic theory. Thatcher's policies are not working. The unions are being pushed to breaking point, the social overhead of massive unemployment threatens to become uncontrollable (even the government now admits the increase in racist violence) and still inflation goes up, the depression refuses to 'bottom out' and now even the promise that taxes would not rise has been shattered.

But Tory critics of the Iron Lady's U-turn in raising taxes to subsidise 'lame duck' industries like steel and coal miss the point. In an economy that has staggered on for years through state intervention to prop up ailing essential

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British mercenaries try Afghanistan

Live like pigs - die like pigs!

'British mercenaries set for Afghan war' read the headlines late last month describing the arrival of anti-communist 'soldiers of fortune' in the Afghan border region of Pakistan. The *Sunday Times* (22 March) quoted one, a 'former British paratrooper from Clacton-on-Sea' named John Pilgrin: 'In Africa we killed Cubans and East Germans. Now we want to kill a few Russians.'

The imperialist war threats against the Soviet Union are serious, but these particular scum were not. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was the pretext for Jimmy Carter, aided and abetted by Margaret Thatcher, to launch a full-blown Cold War drive against the USSR. Now Ronald Reagan makes no bones about his readiness to provide arms for the anti-communist Afghan 'freedom fighters' who sell women like chattel and shoot school teachers for teaching little girls how to read and write.

Cuban gusanos and ex-officers of the Nicaraguan National Guard scheming in the United

States show that all kinds of human dirt will have their part in Reagan/Thatcher's crusade to 'roll back Communism'. The US Defense Intelligence Agency has reportedly been footing the bill for mercenary excursions to get Soviet equipment for examination, and doubtless both the US and Britain already have many direct agents in and around the notorious spy nest of Peshawar in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province. But Pilgrin and his gang seemed pretty obviously a bunch of freelancing, media-hungry swine, and were speedily labelled a 'source of embarrassment' by the US and British embassies in Islamabad. The Pakistani government of General Zia obligingly threw them out of the country before they could link up with the Afghani rebels.

We recall what happened when one John Banks recruited British mercenaries and sent them with World War II vintage equipment to Angola to face Cuban troops and MPLA guerrillas armed with Soviet weapons. They got so demoralised and crazy that they did the decent thing and slaughtered each other. It would have been

interesting to see how such vermin, who get their kicks and cash from rape, torture and butchery, fared in Afghanistan. They might not even have got to face the Russians. Doubtless they would have acted boorishly and insulted the cultural traditions of their Muslim allies by swigging some booze or ogling the chief mullah's daughter. That would have perhaps earned them disembowelment -- certainly something as bad as the most lurid mercenary tales about how their cohorts fell to Simba insurgents in the Congo. And if they survived long enough to see a Russian soldier, in the present military situation in Afghanistan they probably would not have lasted much longer -- although death at the hands of the Red Army would doubtless be more clinical and humane.

A few years back, writing about the alleged massacre of Belgian colons at the hands of African nationalist fighters in Zaire we raised a slogan which is if anything even more appropriate for Pilgrin and his Afghanistan-bound mercenary band: Live like pigs, die like pigs!