

Fruits of 'Iranian revolution' Khomeini's 'holy war' on left

For workers revolution to smash Islamic reaction!

After Jimmy Carter's botched 'mission impossible' ended in flames in the Iranian desert, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini claimed that the US president's 'foolishness' proved that Allah was indeed on the side of his Islamic regime. The ayatollah explained: 'Carter still has not realised what sort of nation he is facing.... Our nation is a nation of blood and our school is the school of holy war.... Carter must know that a 35-million strong nation has been raised in a school in which martyrdom is considered happiness' (*New York Times*, 26 April).

But Khomeini's holy war is directed against the US only in words. He uses American Phantom jets and helicopter gunships to massacre Kurdish rebels in Sanandaj. He offers 'unconditional support' to his fellow Islamic clergymen in Afghanistan when they are tools of US imperialism and the CIA. Khomeini and the Afghan mullahs know that their main enemy is the Soviet Union. It was the October Revolution which broke the reactionary social power of the mosque and bazaar as it liberated the Moslem borderlands from imperialist subjugation. We call for unconditional military support to Iran against imperialist attack in order to open the road for the October of the Iranian working masses which will sweep away Khomeini and all the exploiters, capitalist and pro-capitalist.

Today the ayatollah's sword is unsheathed to 'cut short the hands' of the internal enemies of his theocratic rule. He has sent his army and *pasdars* (Islamic Guards) into a jihad on three fronts where the still unconsolidated Islamic Republic has faced its most severe challenges in many months: in border skirmishes with a well-equipped Iraqi army; against Kurdish nationalists resisting Persian chauvinism in turban; and in the universities, where the mullah chant of 'Death to the Communists' was delivered from the barrel of Islamic guns in the fiercest urban street fighting since the overthrow of the Bakhtiari regime last year.

During April dozens of leftist students were murdered and hundreds were injured as Khomeini sent his 'Islamic Revolution' onto the leftists' university strongholds to 'purge' them of 'Marxist' influence. At Friday evening prayer services on April 18, the prayer leader at Tehran University called for ridding the universities of pictures of Lenin and hammers and sickles. Within hours Tehran University was stormed by knife, club and gun wielding thugs, the *Hezbollahi* or 'people of the party of god'.

Hezbollahi attacks last August paved the way for Khomeini to ban all political parties and papers, making the universities the last refuge of organised left-wing propaganda. Now Khomeini has determined to completely annihilate such groups as the populist 'Marxist-Leninist' Fedayeen Khalq (People's Self-Sacrificers), the radical Islamic Mujahedeen Khalq (People's Crusaders) and the pro-Moscow Stalinist Tudeh party. The Fedayeen who barricaded themselves in

buildings at Tehran University reported that twenty of their comrades were murdered. In provincial universities the Islamic thugs were even more vicious. In Shiraz more than 400 were injured; and according to the *Tehran Times* (23 April) five were killed and some 100 wounded in Ahwaz. A leaflet issued by leftist Iranian students here estimated the total killed at over 265.

When the fanatical reactionary Khomeini came to power fifteen months ago, opportunists of every stripe hailed it as a victory for the Iranian masses. For months they had cheered on his mass movement of clerical reaction, their throats hoarse from chanting such 'anti-imperialist'

slogans as 'god is great', their ears deaf to the cries of 'Death to the Communists' and 'Death or the Veil' erupting from the mullah-led masses. But the Islamic 'soldiers of god' were not flattered by opportunist grovelling before them. That left-wing organisations still exist in Iran today is due not to the tolerance of the Islamic state but to its weakness. Khomeini intends to consolidate the repressive apparatus of his state power over the dead bodies of the 'satanic' Iranian leftists and rebellious national minorities.

HKE justifies anti-communist jihad

None on the left cheered more loudly for the Islamic onslaught than the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec) and its Iranian supporters, who went on to form the Hezb-e Kargar-e Sosialist (HKS). Iran was one of the few instances of major social struggle where the chronically-divided USec presented a united front -- behind Islamic reaction. But with the mullahs in power, the consistently uncritical pro-Khomeini cretinism of the reformist American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and its Iranian acolytes eventually proved too much even for many HKS members, and several months ago that organisation split down the middle, with the SWP-loyalists forming the HKE.

Now the SWP/HKE have outdone their factional competitors in the USec, carrying their criminal support to Khomeini's 'Islamic revolution' to its logical conclusion. They hailed the bloody purge of leftists on the universities and de-



Leftist students after Islamic thug attack. Fake-Trotskyist HKE claims the Islamic fanatics were 'revolutionising' the universities

nounced as 'sectarian opposition' those leftists who tried to defend their organisations and their very lives from the Shi'ite clergy's stormtroopers. In an article entitled 'Why Carter Fears "Unraveling Authority" in Iran' (*Intercontinental Press*, 5 May), the SWP quotes from an HKE statement published on April 21 at the height of the Islamic thug attacks upon university leftists:

'The Tudeh Party, Mujahedeen, Fedayeen, Paykor and other so-called Marxist organisations, which always start from their own narrow, sectarian interests, have essentially opposed this brave action. These forces, under the pretext of defending the "barricade of freedom" (these organizations think that reaction has taken over the country and that the campuses are the last bastion) have mobilized against the action of the ISOs [Islamic Student Organisations].'

The 'brave action' defended by the SWP/HKE was nothing less than an anti-communist pogrom. A line of blood has now been drawn between the HKE and other Iranian left organisations, including their former comrades, the HKS. The 22 May *Socialist Challenge* carried a brief report which noted that a member of the HKS 'was executed by Khomeini's Revolutionary Guards after being arrested on 22 April when fighting broke out in Ahwaz University between left-wing students and Khomeini supporters.' Although it now appears that this executed leftist was not in fact a member of the HKS, according to a statement re-

continued on page 6

Murray's May 14:

Not with a bang but a whimper

Len Murray said that the May 14 TUC Day of Action achieved its aim. It did. Called as a distant diversion while the steel strike raged, Murray worked overtime to see it remained a diversion. Any potential mass show of union strength was scattered into 130 mainly small local rallies. Not even bothering to mobilise a labour movement response to a Tory press witch-hunt, the TUC bureaucrats ensured the failure they wanted -- though Murray probably wished it was a quieter flop, which didn't interrupt his Madeira holiday. The Spartacist League demanded that May 14 be the first day of a long-overdue general strike to smash the Tory anti-working class offensive. But Murray & Co attempted to sabotage even a decent turnout for their one-day action.

The one-day general strike that never was, and was never meant to be, marked the end of year one and round one in the class struggle since the Iron Lady entered Downing Street. Inflation is already over 20 per cent and 2,000,000 unemployed are threatened for the near future. And the already decrepit British capitalist economy is entering a new period of long, deep recession. While the ruling class has not yet achieved its key objective of inflicting decisive defeats across the board on strategic sections of the proletariat, it feels emboldened in its chances in round two thanks to the union tops' actions over the past winter and spring. Bill Sirs and the TUC together knifed the heroic steelmen whose thirteen-week-long struggle could have been the basis of a general strike. Moss Evans followed up his sanctioning of scabbing on the steel strike by caving in before Sir Michael Edwardes' 'get back or be sacked' ultimatum while Terry Duffy took his turn to scabherd AUEW members in order to 'save Leyland'. 'Left' or right the bureaucrats have worked hard at betrayal. May 14 crowned it.

Even in the few weeks since the Day of Action the rotten fruits of past treachery have been harvested. Steelmen at Port Talbot and Llanwern have been cornered into 'accepting' the loss of over half the jobs now manned. And striking laggards on the Isle of Grain have had to stand against a Prior-Bill-boosting anti-picket offensive by the press and mass arrests while the AUEW construction leader John Baldwin and other union officials herd their members in coaches across GMWU lines.

Yet the union bureaucrats cannot easily hold back the growing resentment and hatred of this government in the working class. It is this



Print workers march down Fleet Street on May 14. Murray & Co's 'answer' to the Tories was only one half-hearted 'day of action'

which will prevent the Tories from executing their plans without massive social explosions. Despite everything May 14 still saw 250,000 on strike in Scotland with shipyards, Glasgow engineering and most pits shut down. South Wales miners struck. Docks were at a virtual standstill in Liverpool, Hull and Southampton. Fifty thousand public sector workers were out in London. Fleet Street was silent. Some towns saw the largest (if not the first) workers' demon-

strations for years and the print workers who jeered at the *Daily Express* offices in defiance of that rag's attempt to declare the Day of Action illegal through a High Court injunction summed up willingness widespread in the proletariat to defy the bosses and all their agencies should the chance arise and the lead be given. May 14 -- even as a flop -- did give a slight foretaste of what a *real* general strike would be like.

Murray & Co also have another dilemma. They want to collaborate with the bourgeoisie so bad that it hurts. 'Our voice ... is the voice of compromise' said Len to the rally in Barking on May 14. 'It is no particular joy to us to divert our energies to this sort of action', he told the press on May 15. He only hopes to pressure Thatcher into more 'consultation'. But she just won't buy it. She is at least a determined and class-conscious representative of her breed while the labour movement is paralysed by the cringing nonentities at its head.

Alan Watkins of the *Observer* (18 May) captured the crisis of working-class leadership when he took up the attacks of the *Express* on 'Lenin' Murray. 'This is surely unfair. Lenin was ruthless: Len is thoroughly decent. Lenin was a leader: Len is hardly that.' And no alternative will come from the reformists of the Communist Party who hailed May 14 as 'A day to remember' and whined on about the need for Thatcher to 'change course'. Nor will it come from the fake-revolutionaries of the Socialist Workers Party, the International Marxist Group and the like who welcomed May 14 from the very start rather than expose it for the diversion away from the steel strike it initially was, and who now cover their backsides by pretending that it was the show of strength that it wasn't.

The working class needs a revolutionary leadership which will sweep aside the Murrays and their ilk to pursue the class war with 'indecent' ruthlessness worthy of the name Leninist. Those who seek a road out of the decaying capitalism that offers only the immiseration of the proletariat and a slide towards war; those who want to smash the impasse of feeble pressure group politics, class collaboration and waiting for the Labour strikebreakers to return to the Treasury benches -- should look to the Spartacist League. We have the revolutionary programme which can lead the fight for a workers government to expropriate the senile bourgeoisie of this island. ■

The letter Socialist Press wouldn't print

When the Spartacist League (SL) and militants at BL Rover Solihull who support our politics denounced one Pat Hickey, a leading supporter of the International Marxist Group (IMG) and then deputy senior shop steward at the Rover SD1 plant, for crossing a picket line at Rover, the Workers Socialist League (WSL) of scab Alan Thornett reflexively jumped to Hickey's defence. First Thornett physically attacked SL supporters from Rover, and then the WSL produced a slimy anti-SL 'polemic' in *Socialist Press* (23 April).

Under a general headline of 'How scurrilous can they get?' the WSL attempted to amalgamate the SL's principled working-class defence of picket lines with another article charging the Healyites with a broad-daylight break-in and theft of private documents. They go on to make the slanderous and bizarre charge that in exposing scabs we 'set up opponents for the sack'. Then they attempt to project *their* disdain for principle onto militant steelworkers:

'With their first excursion into trade union work during the steel strike having proved an unmitigated fiasco, and with their demoralised forces hated and despised everywhere they make an appearance, the Sparts have developed their latest ultra-syndicalist fetish over picket lines as a desperate bid for self-preservation.'

But alas for the WSL, three Yorkshire steel militants who remember that SL supporters stood on their picket lines at BL Cowley -- while WSL members working there traipsed into work --

share our dislike for scabs and liars. Since *Socialist Press* seems to have been unable to find the space to print the letter they sent it, we print below a copy we received as a service to those of its readers interested in revolutionary honesty.

Sheffield
South Yorkshire
5 May 1980

Dear Editor,

We recently read your article 'Sparts set up opponents for the sack' in the *Socialist Press* no 195 dated April 23 1980, and would like to correct some of the untruths and lies that you printed about the Spartacist League and their involvement during the steel strike.

The allegations that the Spartacists were despised by steelworkers is totally untrue. While many steelworkers did not always agree with their political strategy and views, they were nonetheless respected for their involvement and seriousness, wanting as we all did the *victory* of the steel strike. As an example the Spartacists were welcomed and invited to the BL Cowley flying picket during the steel strike because they committed themselves to supporting the victory of our strike. This we would ask of any organisation in the labour movement, we needed all the support possible. Equally many steelworkers, ourselves included, found what they had to say was always something to think about, interesting and we at least benefited by discussing with them.

As far as we can tell, a lot of your arguments centre around the Spartacists attacking people who cross picket lines. As far as we are concerned after our 13 week strike, where a lot of strikebreaking/scabbing took place, like Hadfields, Sheerness etc, we don't like people who cross picket lines either.

We hope that in future that if you wish to treat yourselves more seriously you should address yourselves to a more truthful account of events.

Waiting for the publication of our letter in the next publication of your paper.

Yours fraternally,
R J Hall (Stainless Wks, Sheffield)
M Hart (Shop Steward, T&G Stainless Works)
on behalf of Gordon Swaine (TGWU Stainless Works Sheffield)

Spartacist literature packets

containing selected issues of Spartacist Britain

Iran: Down with Islamic reaction--
for workers revolution ...50p

The Great Steel Strike of 1980:
Class war and class treason ...50p

Order now from:
Spartacist Publications, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE

Inquest whitewashes Blair Peach murder

Killer cops go scot free

Thirteen months after Blair Peach died following an anti-fascist demonstration in the predominantly Asian community of Southall, the Hammersmith Coroner's Inquest announced its verdict: death by 'misadventure'. Blair Peach, they said, was 'an unfortunate victim' of a 'reasonable' police action. But it was not a 'misadventure' which cracked Blair Peach's skull in half. It was a police truncheon, or similar weapon, wielded with fatal effect by one or several of the more than 3000 cops who rioted outside Southall Town Hall to protect the future would-be guardians of gas chambers and concentration camps from the wrath of their intended victims.

'Not even Scotland Yard denies that Blair Peach was killed by a policeman when the Special Patrol Group was called in', noted the *Guardian* (28 May), yet Blair Peach's murderer(s) remain free to roam the streets, thanks to a whitewash so blatant and hamhanded that even the bourgeois media found the verdict 'unbelievable' and 'disturbing'.

Ten witnesses reported seeing Blair Peach attacked by SPG officers as he was attempting to leave the demonstration, attacked so brutally that the operating surgeon, Dr Richard Bentall, testified he had never 'come across a fracture of this severity'. Amanda Leon, a friend of Peach, saw him 'trying to shield himself from the blows from a policeman'. A resident of Southall who was not on the demonstration saw Peach lying on the ground, knocked down by the crowd trying to escape the rampaging cops: 'As the police rushed past him, one of them hit him on the head with a stick.... Then the police came back.... They were very rough with him and I was shocked because it was clear that he was seriously hurt.'

Nearly 100 protesters were injured in the cop riots; at least five besides Peach had their heads broken open. Not even a first aid centre set up nearby was spared. In the report of the Unofficial Committee of Enquiry organised by the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCCL) last year, one woman described running the gauntlet of police who invaded the medical centre:

'...the policeman at the top of the row got me by the hair. He pulled my head back. He then brought his truncheon down on my forehead.... By this time blood was pouring down my face and was in my eyes.... As I went down the stairs I was being kicked and my hair pulled.... I heard one of them say "Steady on. It's a girl." Then another said "She's a nigger loving cunt"....'

Yet of the 38 SPG officers interviewed in the course of the various official investigations into Southall, only one could even 'remember' seeing any demonstrators hit by the cops. Some 'forgot' having seen any truncheons drawn at all; others couldn't remember where they were or exactly what they were doing in Southall that day -- except that they were nowhere in the vicinity of where Blair Peach was felled.

The cops 'closed ranks more firmly than an East End gang under arrest' was the *Guardian's* comment. Even an 'internal' Scotland Yard investigation under CID Commander John Cass included 'evidence that lies had been told to the investigators' and 'that senior uniformed officers in the Metropolitan Police had tried to thwart the inquiry' (*Sunday Times*, 16 March). When the CID team did a search of SPG lockers for 'unauthorised weapons', they were diverted long enough for the lockers to be sanitised. Even so, the array of 'unauthorised' weapons discovered included metal truncheons, lead-weighted coshes, crowbars, axe-handles and a rhino whip. One locker contained Nazi regalia. Cass's report, which names six SPG cops as the most likely suspects for Peach's murder, was never released. Nor was any of the evidence held by the police made available to lawyers for the Peach family or the Friends of Blair Peach Committee.

The Director of Public Prosecutions has refused to bring charges against a single one of the suspected cops. Yet more than 300 anti-fascist demonstrators were arrested and charged in Southall on the flimsiest of evidence. In recent months dozens of them have been fined, imprisoned or both -- including one Asian youth whose conviction (later reversed on appeal) was

based on the testimony of one cop despite the testimony of seven other witnesses that he was elsewhere at the time of his alleged crime.

Reforming the cops?

In an attempt to head off an outcry, Scotland Yard has pledged to implement a handful of cosmetic reforms, most notably the inquest jury's proposal that SPG officers be rotated to regular duty after four years. But the bourgeoisie is not about to seriously weaken, much less disband, its elite SPG force -- indeed shortly before the inquest, the government released a Green Paper calling for wider police control over demonstrations.

Since the first SPG unit was formed in London in 1965, it has become a 'quasi-military', 'quasi-independent' force 'brought in to ... help in policing industrial disputes and demonstrations' as the Unofficial Committee of Enquiry report puts it. From Grunwick to Southall, the SPG has justifiably earned its reputation for brutality. More importantly, the esprit de corps and 'quasi-independence' of its units reinforce dangerous tendencies toward police bona-



Cop terror in Southall, April 23, 1979

partism. These trained racist killers would like to place themselves outside even the limited controls of elected bourgeois politicians. In referring to a possible police libel suit against the Friends of Blair Peach Committee for distributing posters with the names of the SPG suspects (first made public in the *Sunday Times*), the Police Federation Chairman threatened: 'People who attempt to undermine the morale of the police by making wild accusations must realise we will not sit back and do nothing.' And it is more than libel suits that this top cop is talking about. The International Marxist Group's *Socialist Challenge* (29 May) reports being visited by two Scotland Yard officers following publication of the names of the six cop suspects. Stop the cop intimidation! End the cover-up! Disband the SPG!

But while the SPG is a particularly vicious elite unit, they aren't the only killers in blue. When Kevin Gately was killed by the cops in the 1974 Red Lion Square anti-fascist protest, it wasn't the SPG that was responsible. And the 249 people officially reported to have died in 'police custody' during the past decade are another gruesome testament to the fact that the smiling bobby who poses for tourists' snapshots is no less a paid thug for the ruling class than his SPG cohorts.

The current hue and cry over the SPG is rooted in the profoundly dangerous illusion that the capitalists' police can be cleaned up. Thus the Unofficial Committee of Enquiry report calls for a return to 'the traditional role of an unarmed police force, policing by consent'. And the IMG and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) --

of which Peach was a member -- direct all their fire at disbanding the SPG. Indeed the SWP and IMG are in favour of bringing the cops into the trade union movement, and IMG leader Tariq Ali has made it his pastime to debate cops about 'excessive' brutality.

The ANL dead end

Armed or unarmed, SPG or not, the bosses' cops will never police the workers and oppressed minorities 'by consent'. Most British cops may not carry guns, but they know when to put the boot in -- with relish -- to defend capitalist property and racist 'law and order'. And complementary to the myth that the cops can be reformed either through legislation or by making them 'good trade unionists' is reliance on the bourgeois state or bourgeois alliances to stamp out fascism.

In its heyday, the SWP-built Anti Nazi League, supported by the IMG, alternated between meaningless rock carnivals and lobbies of Lords and Liberals for state bans on the fascists. All the ANL served to do was demoralise anti-fascist militants and embolden the fascists. Anti-fascist mobilisations are smaller than in many years, even as the National Front and the British Movement continue to march and rampage, feeding off the rapid decline in British living standards and social conditions to gain support for their genocidal programme. Asian shop windows in Southall have been frequently smashed in the past year and gangs of skinheads have been terrorising families -- all while the cops sit back and let the violence escalate. Nor did the cops protect Celia Stubbs, Peach's widow, when she was forced out of her home by fascist terrorism. Indeed, only a month ago, these emboldened vermin attempted to burn down a South London community centre they thought to be an SWP office. When a community worker who heard of the plans in advance notified the local police, they naturally replied that they were too busy to place a guard on the centre.

Only the social power of the working class, standing at the head of the oppressed minorities, is capable of truly crushing the fascist threat. A small taste of what is needed was provided in San Francisco, California, in mid-April when over a thousand trade unionists and other anti-fascists gathered on the spot where Nazis had been threatening to celebrate Hitler's birthday. It was the cops who backed down in this case, informing the Hitlerites that they would not be able to protect them from a turnout which could have swelled to many thousands -- with official backing by broad sectors of the city's trade union movement -- had the Nazis tried to crawl out of the sewers.

Blair Peach's martyrdom will not be completely in vain if some people are shaken out of their social-democratic torpor and come to see the need for the independent mobilisation of the proletariat to stop the fascists. But his death will only be avenged when the workers seize the reins of state power under the leadership of a Trotskyist vanguard and disband all the bosses' cops. Drop all charges against the Southall protesters! Jail the killers of Blair Peach! For the proletarian class justice of a workers government! ■

SPARTACIST BRITAIN

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

EDITORIAL BOARD: Len Michelson (editor), John Masters (managing editor), Sheila Hayward (production manager), Alan Holford, Judith Hunter, Mark Hyde, David Strachan

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Pauline Hughes

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 £1.50; international air mail rates: Europe £2.10 outside Europe £3.00. Printed by Anvil Printers Ltd, London (TU).

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

IMG launches youth group

Nothing revolutionary about 'Revolution'

In the wake of the Anti Nazi League Carnivals which drew thousands of youth to 'rock against racism' two years ago, the International Marxist Group (IMG) decided the time had come to capture a piece of the lucrative youth market. The resulting *Revolution* was an 'independent' youth paper, nominally produced by no organisation (much less an 'independent' one), but dedicated to the construction of a 'united revolutionary youth organisation' -- primarily with the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) youth group, Rebel, in mind. 'If you want to join ... an organisation that you control', said the blurb invitingly, 'come to the Revolution conference'.

This particular opportunist manoeuvre almost blew up in the IMG's face at the very start; as Macbeth put it, 'bloody instructions being taught return to plague their inventor'. Suckled on 'unity' with state capitalists and 'independence' from 'adult' parties, the newly dubbed Revolution Youth almost exploded at its founding conference on the weekend of May 17-18. As three separate articles in *Socialist Challenge* (22 May) attested, the Revolution conference was deeply split on the question which has plagued the IMG itself for several years running: can fusion with the explicitly non-Trotskyist SWP/Rebel be found within the framework of affiliation to the nominally Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec). And much as the IMG has attempted to duck politics in recruiting youth, the key programmatic question formally separating the SWP and IMG -- defence of the Soviet Union -- also became a focus for sharp debate at the conference.

While at least one IMG youth was seen sporting a badge with hammer and sickle bearing the words, 'Victory to the Red Army', others echoed



Tariq Ali and Tony Cliff, clamouring loudly for 'Soviet troops out of Afghanistan' and Afghan 'self-determination'. When one speaker argued for raising defence of the Soviet Union in the new organisation's intended campaign 'to mobilise our generation against the United States war drive', another replied that this would lead to becoming a 'group simply emphasising Russia, like the Sparts'. The conference opted instead for focussing only on 'defending the revolutions in Iran, Central America and the Caribbean'.

But nothing shook the conference like the question of affiliation to the USec. A number of youth proudly displayed home-made badges proclaiming, 'How Dare You Presume I'm in the IMG?' One punk from Cardiff swore loudly that 18 of the 20 members in Cardiff would split if the IMG attempted to 'smash up Revolution' by forcing it to affiliate. In the upshot, Revolution Youth did vote in favour of affiliation, though more than 20 per cent of the delegates (12 out of 55) balked. The opposition seemed to consist of a strange amalgam of IMG youth bent on unity with Rebel without the encumbrance of a useless 'International' combined with a youth separatist hostility to 'adult' control. But the debate itself was less light than heat, full of vituperative accusations and characterisations of 'comrades' as liars and worse.

As the Spartacist League leaflet distributed to the conference (and reprinted below) explained, there is no shortage of good political reasons for disavowing the USec, but youth vanguardism and unity manoeuvres with the reformist SWP are not among them. The IMG's unprincipled unity manoeuvres and fake-independent front group operations serve only to disorient youth intent on fighting for communist revolution. In a genuine revolutionary youth organisation the members would fight out programmatic differences alongside the cadre of the revolutionary party in the process of training to become lifetime revolutionary cadre themselves. In Revolution Youth however, youth are thrown a sop of 'self-control' while in reality being controlled by IMG members, without access to the political fights in the parent organisation. And the many-times-proven bankrupt IMG/USec programme is not the road to socialist revolution.

According to the editorial in the latest *Revolution* (May 1980) this conference is supposed to launch 'an independent youth organisation' which will 'decide its relations with other parties' as it goes on 'to win youth in this country to the struggle for Socialism and Workers' Power'. Well, if we were in the International Marxist Group (IMG) and its so-called 'International', the United Secretariat (USec) -- the party which just happens to be the founder of and majority in Revolution -- we wouldn't want to boast about it to youth intent on fighting for socialism and workers power either. But we're revolutionaries -- Trotskyists -- and we have nothing to hide. And we think there are a

Spartacist League leaflet:

**'Do you hate mullahs,
cops and capitalism?
Join the Spartacist League!'**

few things about the IMG/USec you should know which show how it's not Trotskyist. Do you know:

•That right after the Soviet military intervention against the reactionary Islamic 'rebels' in Afghanistan, the IMG's paper, *Socialist Challenge* (3 January 1980) came out on the same side as Jimmy Carter and Margaret Thatcher?

•That the entire USec, including the IMG, supported the so-called 'revolution' in Iran last year which spelled genocide for Kurds and Arabs, the veil for women, and death for leftists and homosexuals; and that one of the USec's two Iranian sections, the HKE, even tried to justify the murder of 27 leftist students by Khomeini's hoodlums in Tehran, last month (see *Intercontinental Press*, 5 May 1980)?

•That the IMG's American comrades, the US Socialist Workers Party (US SWP), supports 'free speech' for fascists, and defends 'age-of-

consent' legislation which deprives gay youth of sexual freedoms (see the *US Militant*, 13 April 1979)?

•That these same American allies of the IMG openly supported the Nicaraguan government's deportation of leftists (the Simon Bolivar Brigade) who at the time were even members of the USec themselves?

•That IMG leader Tariq Ali had a friendly dinner and 'debate' with the head of the Midlands Police Federation at Birmingham University only days after this top cop's thugs in blue had bashed their way into steel workers' strike headquarters at the Birmingham Labour Club and beaten at least one striker senseless on the picket line?

•That leading supporters of the IMG at British Leyland's Rover Solihull plant crossed picket lines to go into work throughout the BL Rover strike last month?

If you already know all these things and they don't bother you, then you might as well stop reading this leaflet. Revolution is the organisation for you, or Rebel, or, for that matter, the LPYS -- none of them is revolutionary anyway and at least the LPYS has the advantage of size. They certainly aren't intent on building the sort of youth organisation Trotsky was talking about when he said, in 'Youth and the Fourth International' (1936):

'Only through an intransigent revolutionary policy, which condemns every concession to the concepts of social imperialism and social pacifism in the sharpest manner, and which pursues the aim of the proletarian revolution with audacity and determination, will it succeed in rallying the masses of the proletarian youth again under the red banner of the social revolution.'

But if these sorts of betrayals do bother you, keep right on reading, buy a subscription to our paper, *Spartacist Britain*, and come to our public meeting. Find out why the former

National Secretary of the Socialist Youth League, Phil Moore, is now a member of the Spartacist League (SL). Comrade Phil will tell you what an intransigent revolutionary policy is -- he got expelled from the SYL and the Workers Socialist League for fighting for one!

Labour loyalism, 'debating' cops, scabbing...

Do you want to rally the masses of proletarian youth to the red banner of social revolution? Then you won't find a place in Revolution -- it wants to rally them to the pink rag of social democracy. The IMG takes the tactic of voting Labour when it serves to expose the parliamentary class traitors and turns it into a principle: through thick and thin with the party of Callaghan/Benn! The IMG even told workers to vote Labour last year when Callaghan stood on the record of Social Contract strike-breaking, wage control and the Lib-Lab coalition. Now with 'Rock against Thatcher' and 'Youth against the Tories' they are helping to channel hatred for the Tory government into new illusions in Labour.

When there really was a chance to beat back the Tory offensive -- and break the stranglehold of the Labour traitors over the working class -- by fighting to turn the steel strike into a general strike, it took the IMG weeks to even decide a general strike might be a good idea. And even then it was mostly concerned with 'kicking the Tories out' and putting Labour in. While the hard-fighting steelmen were battling the cops at Hadfields, the IMG was offering its readers a view from the 'inside' of the scab plant, and Tariq Ali was going out of his way to provide a public relations platform for the cops by engaging them in polite debate whether or not they were 'unnecessarily brutal in enforcing the law'. IMG supporters at Birmingham University even refused to distribute a petition initiated by the Spartacist Society demanding a student union meeting to discuss support for

the steel strike.

Do you want to fight with audacity for the proletarian revolution -- or do you want to spend your life figuring out excuses for scabbing? The latest *Revolution* interviews a young Rover SD1 worker who thought it was 'totally disgusting' for Terry Duffy to order 'his members to cross the picket line'. Amen! But Duffy is an open reformist and class traitor -- isn't it even more disgusting for the supposedly revolutionary IMG to order its supporters to cross the picket line? But that is just what they did. Ask SD1 steward Pat Hickey to tell you about the 'difficult decision' he made in crossing the Rover picket line. Ask him how 'difficult' it was for him to thumb his nose at strike militants who wanted to know if he intended to walk through their picket line by replying, 'What do you think I'm going to do, fly over it?' Ask him

streets to spew out their race-hate filth.

Or take a look at the latest *Revolution's* enthusiastic description of the 'new anti-war and anti-draft movements' in the US. The Spartacus Youth League has played an active role in those demonstrations, not with the pacifist 'anti-militarism' being pushed by Revolution and the American SWP but by standing up foursquare in defence of the Soviet Union against Carter's anti-Soviet war drive. By taking sides.

And if you want to condemn social imperialism, the place to start is by condemning the IMG's initial response to the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. *Socialist Challenge's* 'Soviet Troops Out of Afghanistan!' line was so close to the imperialists' own line, that even the *Times* congratulated the IMG for their forthright stand against 'Soviet aggression'. This position was so openly reactionary that the IMG

termination, because it does not have the programme of proletarian revolution. The IMG is not Trotskyist, but Pabloite. It is based on the conception put forward by one Michel Pablo more than thirty years ago that something other than the working class guided by a Trotskyist party can overthrow capitalism and open the road to socialism -- whether it's peasant-based guerrillas led by Stalinists, or 'Third World' nationalists, or even the 'unfolding dynamic' of Islamic reaction. Michel Pablo is no longer with the USec, but his ideas remain. And with that perspective, the revolutionary programme becomes not the necessary instrument for leading the only revolutionary class under capitalism, the working class, but an unnecessary obstacle to liquidating into the latest 'mass movement'.

And that goes for any mass movement, even -- as demonstrated by the USec's cheering on the 'Iranian revolution' a year ago -- mass movements for *social reaction*. Revolution spends a lot of time talking about organising 'anti-fascist gigs', but see how long a rock gig would last in Tehran today before the mad mullahs sent their mobs in to bust it up. With a Trotskyist perspective it was clear from the beginning that the lives of the Iranian masses would not be improved in the least if the tyrannical shah was replaced with the tyrannical Khomeini, that the only way forward was to mobilise the Iranian workers in struggle against the shah and the mullahs to fight for workers revolution. But that was not the perspective of the IMG/USec. As IMG supporter Azar Tabari now admits:

'It does not bode well for the future of Iran that the majority of the international left has been unable to distinguish between a deepening process of permanent revolution and a rise in irrational fanaticism serving to consolidate the rule of a repressive and reactionary theocracy.' (*Socialist Challenge*, 7 February)



Spartacus Youth League contingent at New York anti-draft demonstration in February: winning youth to Trotskyism

about the SD1 worker whom Hickey helped expel from a Leyland Action Committee meeting because he wanted to talk about the 'difficult decision' he made -- to *respect* and help to build the picket line!

That's the IMG's way of 'turning to industry'. There is another way. The American trade union militants supported by the Spartacist League/US and its youth section, the Spartacus Youth League, don't debate cops, interview scabs and cross picket lines. They fight the bosses, and they fight to win workers to the Trotskyist Transitional Programme. For example, there's Jane Margolis, a longtime elected union official in the San Francisco telephone workers union and member of the Militant Action Caucus in the union. For her record of fighting the phone company and for wanting to speak out against capitalist politician Jimmy Carter's union-bashing and anti-Soviet warmongering policies, Margolis was dragged off the floor of last July's annual national union convention (where she was an elected delegate) by Carter's Secret Service. Tens of thousands of trade unionists in the US and elsewhere rallied to Margolis' defence against this unprecedented case of government harassment of union militants.

Fighting against fascism and imperialist war

Do you want to find out what Trotsky meant by concessions to social pacifism? Take a look at how Revolution and the IMG 'fight' racism -- with 'Rocks against Racism' and the Anti Nazi League alliance with Liberals, Lords and bishops. While the IMG was rocking away at the ANL Carnival 2 in September 1978, the Spartacist League and other militant anti-fascists were trying to defend Brick Lane, where the fascists threatened to march. But the revolutionary answer to pacifism is not small-group adventurism, but mass mobilisations centered on the organised working class to repel the fascists. That's what we have fought for -- like when 500 people, primarily black car workers, mobilised for an SL-initiated demonstration in Detroit last November against a threatened fascist march. And it happened again several months later, when 1200 trade unionists and leftists in San Francisco turned out in response to a Nazi plan to 'celebrate' Hitler's birthday on April 19. This was the first socialist-initiated anti-fascist demonstration in the US in decades to win the official support of a broad section of the trade union movement. Was the American SWP at either of these demonstrations? Hell no! It was probably off somewhere trying to explain how the murderous fascists had a 'right' to take to the

had to backtrack, settling for the safer but only slightly less reactionary line that condemned the Soviet invasion but rightly figured that Soviet troops out would mean a victory for reaction in Afghanistan. Even *Revolution* did better than that, coming out in opposition to 'the imperialist offensive against the USSR around the Afghanistan question... In this situation we must defend the Soviet workers' state against imperialism.' But it too called the Soviet intervention 'a grave error'.

What was the grave error? Not allowing the mad mullahs to shoot more school teachers in the back, or to sell more young girls into slavery for the 'bride-price' of a few goats? Trotskyists don't have to be told that the Kremlin bureaucracy is counterrevolutionary, but this time they were suppressing reaction not revolution -- and defending the Soviet state as well! Our line, the Trotskyist line, was 'Hail Red Army!' While the IMG, had it been honest in carrying out its line, should have organised a protest outside the Soviet Embassy, the SL organised one outside the US Embassy, chanting loud and clear: 'Hail Red Army! Smash Carter's anti-Soviet war threats! Extend the social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!' For Carter and Thatcher, the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan was nothing but an excuse to escalate their anti-Soviet campaign, a campaign which the imperialists have been conducting to one extent or another ever since the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917. Yet the entire USec either came out openly on the same side as Carter/Thatcher or else tried to duck the main issue -- defence of the USSR. This is not only cowardly but dangerous. The imperialists' war drive will not be stopped through liberal pacifist rubbish about the war danger, but only through an intransigent revolutionary policy which takes as its starting point the mobilisation of the working class *against the imperialists and for the Soviet Union*.

Tailing 'mass movements'

But an intransigent revolutionary policy is the last thing you should expect from the IMG/USec or Revolution. Even the IMG must realise that they can't win revolutionary-minded working class youth by whitewashing scabbing and aping imperialist rhetoric against the Soviet Union, so they let Revolution take a slightly more left line and talk about 'independence'. The positions of the IMG we've described in this leaflet are not simply isolated mistakes or misunderstandings. The IMG *cannot* pursue the aim of the proletarian revolution with audacity and de-

No, it doesn't. So why go with that majority? Go with the minority -- the only organisation in the international left which did see what was happening in Iran and had a fighting revolutionary programme, the international Spartacist tendency.

There is clearly a burning need for a revolutionary youth organisation in this country. But it has to be based firmly on the revolutionary programme. The Spartacus Youth League in the US is such an organisation -- it doesn't have to work out 'its relations with other parties' because it willingly submits itself to the political discipline of the revolutionary party, bound to it by a common programme. Within the framework of organisational independence, the Spartacus Youth League is part of a common movement with the SL/US, with full access to its internal political life. It seeks to recruit youth to the revolutionary working class politics of Trotskyism and to train them to become committed professional revolutionists who will play their part as cadres in the revolutionary party. It does not just mindlessly enthuse over workers struggles, but 'seeks to become the student-youth auxiliary of the communist opposition within the labor movement' (see *Youth, Class and Party*, the basic programmatic document of the Spartacus Youth League).

So if you want to build an 'independent youth organisation' which will condone scabbing, debate with cops, play up to Jim Callaghan and Tony Benn, and hail as 'revolutionary' a movement to enslave women, join Revolution. If you want to make a communist revolution, read our material, discuss with our comrades, and join the Spartacist League. ■

Young Spartacus

1,200 Protest Nazis in San Francisco

Washington: Fake Lefts Wallow in Anti-Sovietism

Democrats Dominate Anti-Draft Demo

Monthly paper of the Spartacus Youth League youth section of the SL/US

Single copies: 15p

For subscriptions write to: Spartacus Youth Publishing Co, Box 825, Canal Street Station, New York, New York 10013, USA

Workers Power line change on USSR Still Third Campists at heart

In the mad rush away from Soviet defencism by ostensible Trotskyists succumbing to the pressure of the imperialist anti-Soviet outcry, one organisation seems to have bought a ticket in the opposite direction. In a tiny box, headed 'Statement' and accompanying a spread of articles on Afghanistan in the February issue of its newspaper, the centrist Workers Power (WP) group announced that:

'During the past year Workers Power has been involved in a reassessment of our characterisation of the USSR as a state capitalist and imperialist country. In analysing the events surrounding the invasion of Afghanistan and developing a strategy for revolutionaries in the face of a new cold war offensive we found it impossible to advance a principled revolutionary programme from any other standpoint than that of characterising the USSR as a de-generated workers' state. These articles are all written from that standpoint.'

But were they? A principled revolutionary programme in response to the Soviet military intervention and the shrill imperialist war-mongering which greeted it was encapsulated in two slogans raised by the international Spartacist tendency: Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples! We said 'Hail Red Army' because this was not simply an equivalent of the Soviet invasions of Finland and Poland in 1939, when under the sign of the Hitler/Stalin pact the Kremlin bureaucracy embroiled the Red Army in military conflicts which, once engaged, necessitated a defencist stance. In Afghanistan the Soviet intervention was on the side of social progress and was deeply just *from the very start*. The Red Army came in on the side of a left-nationalist, pro-Soviet regime against a CIA-backed feudal-reactionary offensive whose programme was the bride price, the veil and death for all school teachers.

And we demanded 'Extend the social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!', as a concrete and living perspective for social revolution in this wretchedly backward country. The Soviet state and Red Army will only become again the instruments of a truly revolutionary internationalist policy after the ouster of the Stalinist bureaucracy by Trotskyist-led political revolution. But the Stalinist controlled Red Army has before ensured the establishment of collectivised property forms. Even the creation of a *deformed* workers state would be a massive step forward for the oppressed Afghani masses.

Workers Power's position, on the contrary, demonstrated that their programme on this key question of the proletarian revolution -- the Russian Question -- still fell qualitatively short of Trotskyism. WP's light attitude towards this question -- reflected in the fact that for well over a year, in the midst of an escalating anti-Soviet campaign by the US, WP had effectively no position at all on the class character of the USSR -- was dramatically underlined when they 'explained' their line change in a box containing all of seventy words. And in the acid

test of Afghanistan WP denounced the Soviet intervention as 'overwhelmingly reactionary', joining the imperialist/social-democratic chorus of condemnation.

As James P Cannon said, 'The Russian Question is the question of the revolution.' Without a correct programmatic understanding on this question of questions it is impossible to construct a revolutionary party capable of leading the proletariat to the conquest of state power. But WP's justifications for its position on Afghanistan confirm that its break with the politics of the 'third camp' is at best partial, if not completely superficial.

WP claims that the Soviet intervention was reactionary because it will strengthen the rightist forces in Afghanistan and help 'cement their ties with world imperialism'. But if this were a valid reason for condemning a military intervention, then it would be necessary to condemn as reactionary the Red Army's attempt to take Warsaw in 1921, when the Red Army was an agency of the Bolshevik government of Lenin and Trotsky. Indeed it would leave one in the position of arguing the reactionary Stalinist line for peaceful coexistence, since virtually any foreign military intervention or even political aid by a workers state (including a healthy one) would necessarily arouse imperialist or rightist hostility. WP's argument is identical to Stalin's argument for dissolving the Comintern.

Furthermore, argues WP, the Soviet intervention will help strangle any 'independent mobilisation of the oppressed of Afghanistan'. Even assuming such an 'independent mobilisation' were a possibility in a country so socially backward as Afghanistan, the only 'independent mobilisation' at the time of the Soviet invasion was that of forces of Islamic reaction (which were really armed and supported by the US and Pakistan). In this case the Red Army was not engaged in crushing a proletarian upsurge (as in Hungary 1956) nor a struggle against national oppression (like the Eritreans in Ethiopia today). Unwilling to back the feudalist Afghani mullahs, WP casts around desperately for other 'independent' forces, looking for 'the self organisation of the Afghan proletariat and feudal elements [?!] to organise their own state power, independent of the Stalinists and the imperialists'. When Max Shachtman argued for a similar 'third camp' course in occupied Poland in 1939 -- a country with an advanced and historically developed proletariat -- Trotsky replied:

'The advanced workers in eastern Poland could justifiably say: "A simultaneous insurrection against Hitler and Stalin in a country occupied by troops might perhaps be arranged very conveniently from the Bronx; but here, locally, it is more difficult. We should like to hear Burnham's and Shachtman's answer to a concrete political question: What shall we do between now and the coming insurrection?" In the meantime, the commanding staff of the Soviet army called upon the peasants and workers to seize the land and the factories.' (In Defence of Marxism)

The Soviet military intervention gave assistance to a regime instituting significant reforms in a pre-feudal society. And if Shachtman's search for an 'independent' force was absurd in Poland, WP's is doubly so in Afghanistan, whose tiny proletariat comprises a mere one per cent of the *labour force*. It is comparable not to the small but economically-powerful and strategic working classes of pre-revolutionary Russia or Iran today -- which are central to the perspective of proletarian revolution -- but to the situation in the hideously backward Moslem borderlands of Russia before 1917. The farcical quality of WP's position simply underscores a deeply rooted opportunist yearning for a 'third camp' which would have shamed even the 1939 Shachtman. And the object of it all is to avoid taking an unambiguous stand with the Red Army.

Indeed WP charges us with being Stalinophiles for raising the slogan, 'Hail Red Army!', as several years ago they similarly took umbrage at our slogan 'All Indochina must go Communist'. WP may have formally broken from the Shachtman/Cliff Soviet-defeatist position, but it shares

their methodology.

Thus at a public meeting in Sheffield on April 15 *Workers Power* editor Dave Hughs claimed that the Soviet bureaucracy was 'thoroughly counterrevolutionary'. This is essentially a repudiation of the Trotskyist analysis of the Stalinist bureaucracy's *dual character*, which of necessity forces it in the last analysis to defend the collectivised property forms upon which its caste privileges are based, even though in general its counterrevolutionary nationalistic policies are counterposed to the preservation and extension of those property forms. It is this understanding which separates revolutionary Marxism from the positions of Shachtmanism and Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party (SWP) on the one hand. And on the other hand it is the dividing line against Pabloism, which sees no qualitative distinction between a bureaucratically-led social revolution and a Trotskyist-led socialist revolution based on the conscious mobilisation of the proletariat. The Pabloites deny the necessity for workers political revolution following Stalinist-led social overturns as in Vietnam and Cuba; conversely, WP denies, or alternately dismisses as being in no way progressive, the possibility of the creation of a deformed workers state in Afghanistan. Were the social overturns in Eastern Europe after World War II then in no way progressive? Or didn't they happen at all? Trotsky certainly considered a bureaucratically-imposed social overturn both possible and progressive. 'The invasion of Poland by the Red Army should, in the nature of the case, result in the abolition of private capitalist property', he wrote, adding: 'This measure, revolutionary in character -- "the expropriation of the expropriators" -- is in this case achieved in a military-bureaucratic fashion' (In Defence of Marxism).

Since being expelled from Cliff's state-capitalist International Socialists (now SWP), the leftward-moving centrists of Workers Power have gone down a long road. But if their formal break with Soviet defeatism is to be any more than an entry ticket into the family of fake-Trotskyism, it requires much more than WP's current toothless 'defencism'. The only consistent Trotskyist position on the Russian question is that upheld by the international Spartacist tendency. WP members who take their recent line change seriously would do well to remember that their break to the left nonetheless finds them on the concrete programmatic questions relating to Afghanistan in political harmony with fake-Trotskyists moving to the right, like the International Marxist Group and the Workers Socialist League. The choice is clear: forward to Trotskyism or back into the 'third camp' swamp. ■

'Holy War'...

(Continued from page 1)

printed in *Intercontinental Press* (2 June) the HKS has denounced the anti-communist assaults and taken the side of the students under attack. While the HKS still remains locked within the framework of the 'Islamic revolution', speaking of the supposed 'gains achieved' through the mullah-led insurrection of February 1979, its call for the defence of the campuses puts it on the opposite side of a deadly battle from its 'sister' USec group the HKE.

The HKE invented out of whole cloth a fabrication that the murders were committed not by the Islamic fanatics (who they claimed were out to 'revolutionize the universities') but by 'right-wing goon squads' mobilised by 'the Iranian capitalists'. The difference escapes de-

WORKERS VANGUARD

Workers Vanguard fortnightly newspaper of the SL/US
Joint subscription with Spartacist Britain: £5
Single copies: 15p
Make payable/write to:
Spartacist Publications, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE

Subscribe!

SPARTACIST BRITAIN

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
POSTCODE _____

Spartacist Britain: £1.50 for 10 issues

Joint subscription:

£5 for 24 issues WORKERS VANGUARD (fortnightly Marxist paper of SL/US) plus SPARTACIST BRITAIN for duration of subscription plus SPARTACIST (ist theoretical journal)

Make payable/post to:

Spartacist Publications, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE

tection -- and, in any case, who mobilised Khomeini's firing squads? Even *Socialist Challenge* (1 May) reported that the anti-communist attacks were carried out by 'groups of Islamic fanatics, the well known "followers of the line of the Imam"'. The signal for an assault was given by Khomeini himself in a speech read by his son to a mass Iranian New Year's rally on March 21. Three days after he had declared a general amnesty for the shah's SAVAK torturers and military butchers, Khomeini's 'message to the nation' was reported in the *New York Times* (22 March):

'He called for a "revolution in the universities" to purge them of professors who have "connections with the East or West," warned against "irresponsible intellectuals" and, in a clear reference to the radical guerrillas, said that "mixing Islam and Marxism" was wrong.'

The Mujahedeen refused to join the Fedayeen in defending their offices because 'to resist is to fall into the trap aimed at making us appear opposed to the imam Khomeini, when in fact we support him' (*Le Monde*, 22 April). But the intent and authorship of the ensuing attacks were obvious to almost everyone. 'Before long our parties will be outlawed', one Mujahedeen member predicted. 'It is a return to the days of the Shah' (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 4 May). They even published a letter to 'His Holiness', 'Our Worthy Father' apprehensively noting a newspaper warning 'that we can only be dealt with in the language of the bullet' (*Mojahed*, April 1980).

Yet so intent were the SWP/HKE on defending Khomeini's 'anti-imperialist' credentials that they heinously blamed the victims of the bloody Islamic assaults on the campuses for their own deaths, claiming in their paper *Kargar*:

'The resistance of the leaders of the Fedayeen and Mujahedeen to the demands of the masses of the people opened up the way for the capitalists to touch off the clashes and killing.'

(reprinted in *Intercontinental Press*, 2 June) And in a cynical and disgusting attempt to make an amalgam of leftist 'resistance' (ie desire for survival) and capitalist opposition *Kargar* added: 'Besides the 500 [capitalist and large landlord] families, the Mujahedeen and the Fedayeen opposed the occupation of the universities and the taking over of the educational institutions to put them at the service of the people's struggles. From the time of the occupations of the spy den, these organizations have continually moved further away from the anti-imperialist trenches.' (ibid)

The ISOs lauded by the HKE as 'vanguard anti-imperialist militants' were in fact the first to mobilise around Khomeini's demand for the 'Islamification' of the universities. The murderous *Hezbollahi* merely carried out this demand in a 'revolutionary' fashion. And it was Khomeini's governing 'Revolutionary Council' which adopted this slogan and closed the universities in order to complete the 'Islamification'. Yet this is what the HKE called a campaign to 'purge the campuses of the heritage of monarchy and transform them into anti-imperialist fortresses'. There was a similar purge carried out in the universities of Germany in the 1930s. Then it was called 'Aryanisation'.

But it is not simply the blood of the leftist students which is on the hands of these yellow 'socialist' followers of 'the line of the Imam'. An article in the 5 May issue of *Intercontinental Press* describes massacres in the hills of Kurdistan which recall Deir Yassin or My Lai.

Nonetheless, the SWP/HKE refuse to recognise the right of self-determination for the Kurds or other minorities in Iran. Instead they call for 'autonomy', which turns out to mean whatever the Kurdish ayatollah Hosseini says it means. Thus they write:

'Despite the bitter experiences of the large-scale fighting in Kurdistan last year, the Kurdish leaders have constantly reiterated their determination, and the determination of their people, to defend the Iranian revolution and the borders of Iran.' (*Intercontinental Press*, 12 May; emphasis added)

Suddenly the borders of Iran, carved out from the defeated Ottoman Empire after World War I by the French and British imperialist victors, must be defended -- against Iraq. The HKE has suddenly discovered that Iraq is a 'puppet' of US imperialism. Of course, the Iraqi colonels are no more friends of the Kurds than the Iranian mullahs, and for ten years waged a savage military campaign against them in the name of the 'Arab Revolution' just as Khomeini does today in the name of his 'Islamic Revolution'. Working people in both Iran and Iraq have no interest in becoming cannon fodder in a border

war. Yet the HKE statement sinks to even lower levels, appealing to the 'Brother *pasdars*' -- the hated clerical militia who are the main instruments for Khomeini's annihilation campaign against the Kurds, Arabs, Azerbaijanis and the left -- to train a mass army of 20 million to fight the US/Iraqi menace!

Fedayeen seek 'progressive' clergy

Compared to the disgusting capitulation to religious obscurantism by such 'leftists' as the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party and the HKE, the programme and actions of the Fedayeen guerrillas seem positively militant. Founded ten years ago by the merger of groups led by individuals who had broken from Tudeh and the secular wing of the bourgeois-nationalist National Front, the Fedayeen are by far the most subjectively revolutionary current of any size in Iran today. Thus the first demand in their 'minimum' programme is the destruction of the 'dependent capitalist system'. But although they have resisted arms in hands the attacks of the *pasdars* and government troops on the Kurds and the Turkomans, they too treacherously oppose the right to self-determination -- secession from the Persian state -- for these national minorities, limiting their call to 'complete autonomy' within the nationalist framework of the 'Iranian revolution'. And the Fedayeen are prone to condemning conflicts among the 'people', in which category they include the mullahs.

Indeed while recognising that the 'Islamic Republic' is a theocracy, they point to a 'progressive' faction of the clergy -- supposedly representing the interests of the petty bourgeoisie -- which has been pushed into 'anti-imperialist' action. With this justification in the past they supported the 'red mullah' Taleghani. Just before his death last year, this favourite ayatollah of the left condemned the rebel Kurds and supported Khomeini's terror campaign against them. This is what a bloc with the 'progressive clergy' means in practice!

Nevertheless the Fedayeen, unlike the craven HKE, are fighters. Were there an authentic Trotskyist party in Iran it would no doubt draw many of its cadres from among Fedayeen militants who prove able to transcend the left-Stalinist limitations of their organisation.

Blood on the USec's hands

It is urgently necessary to build a Trotskyist party in Iran, a party that tells the plain truth that Khomeini's Shi'ite theocracy is every bit as oppressive as the shah's dictatorship. But the USec has hideously discredited the name of Trotskyism, with the HKE in particular cheering on the Islamic fanatics' murderous assault on the left. However the HKE/SWP aren't the only USec betrayers. A statement issued by the USec *Leadership* on May 1, only days after the latest round of bloody terror states:

'Since the overthrow of the shah, there has been a deepening social revolution in Iran, and workers, peasants, oppressed nationalities have begun to make major gains.' (*Intercontinental Press*, 26 May)

Tell that to the Kurds who lived in Saqqez, turned into a ghost town by Khomeini's Persian army; to the comrades of the martyred Fedayeen militants butchered on the universities.

After fifteen months of an ever 'unfolding dynamic' of Islamic terror in power, even some elements of the USec have begun to recoil from their former enthusiastic support for the 'Iranian revolution'. Thus USec supporter Azar Tabari, writing in the May 1980 *Issues* uniformly condemns 'the left' for its failure to recognise that 'A reactionary struggle is not rendered revolutionary simply because its opponents are themselves reactionary', and for maintaining 'its enthusiasm for the "Iranian revolution" in the wake of all the atrocities committed against the left, workers, women and national minorities. 'By allowing the unchallenged imposition of Islamic codes' adds Tabari, 'the left effectively cooperated in preparing the conditions for its own strangulation.' She concludes that:

'Iranians may have to pay a heavy price for this. Perhaps the cost can be reduced if the international left helps to draw the appropriate conclusions and to disseminate them as widely as possible. To do so, the left must first remove its blinkers and look reality squarely in its rather unlovely

CONTACT THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE

Telephone:
Birmingham (021) 472 7726
London (01) 278 2232

face.'

Tabari is dead right. But what is breathtaking about her article is that it adds not an iota to the analysis laid out by the international Spartacist tendency before Khomeini's rise to power. Nowhere does she offer the slightest indication that there was one tendency on the left which did tell the truth, which refused to tail the reactionary mass movement simply because it was popular, and which offered a programme -- which Tabari even now cannot -- to lead the workers in struggle against both the tyranny of the shah and the clerical reaction of the mullahs. Does Comrade Tabari forget which organisation it was that the IMG helped exclude from anti-shah demonstrations two years ago for saying, 'Down with the shah, down with the mullahs!'

A decade from now the HKE will be remembered as the 'leftists' who justified the murderous Islamic thug attacks on the Fedayeen. But the whole USec is complicit in the betrayal. The future cadre of a Trotskyist party in Iran will have to absorb the lessons that this grotesque parody of Trotskyism cannot teach: that Khomeini and the mullahs did not 'betray' the revolution but intended from the beginning to build a clerical dictatorship, and that genuine national liberation from imperialism requires a struggle leading the oppressed masses to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

--adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 256, 16 May 1980

Smash NATO...

(Continued from page 8)

tective colouration through blatant denial of political and social reality. For the IMG US imperialism is armed to the teeth not for a battle to the death with the Soviet Union, but to suppress the 'colonial revolution', in particular the 'revolutions in Iran, Central America and the Caribbean' (*Socialist Challenge*, 22 May). Aside from the bizarre agglomeration of feudal reaction in Iran and petty-bourgeois Sandinista-led anti-Somoza mass upsurge in Nicaragua, what is important about this view shared by all the fake-Trotskyists is that it skirts the issue central to the current war hysteria: for or against the Soviet Union?

The 'colonial revolution' is today the new haven from the conflict between Soviet Russia and imperialism. In the absence of a powerful and well-armed Soviet degenerated workers state, there is scarcely a genuine colonial revolution anywhere which would not have been crushed with impunity by the American imperialist gendarme. But the centrists shut their eyes to this fact, and for the IMG the chief imperialist target is ... Khomeini's Iran. 'Muddlers and pacifists of the world, all ye suffering from the pin-pricks of fate, rally to the "third" camp!' (Trotsky, *In Defense of Marxism*).

Workers revolution: the road to peace

Ducking defence of the Soviet Union has ineluctable consequences. The IMG's capitulation to 'Little England' pacifist isolationism is underscored by its argument against the Cruise missile: '... even if Cruise was considered necessary [for what?...] there is no military reason for there to be bases in Britain, for Cruise can be fired from ships or aircraft.... Through Cruise, Britain will be tied to the US war machine and will be a prime target for any Soviet retaliatory attack' (*Socialist Challenge*, 22 May). The touching concern expressed by these supposed revolutionaries for safeguarding Her Majesty's realm from the vengeance of the Soviet workers state should provide food for thought for those IMGers who thought they were in a Trotskyist organisation and not an old ladies' pacifist society! Protest and survive? This sort of argument might well mobilise 100,000 to protest in the streets -- to demand they survive a 'Soviet retaliatory attack' by any means necessary.

The inevitable conflicts between the rival imperialist powers competing to plunder the world for profit, and the revanchist imperialist appetite to restore private property in the deformed workers states constitute the impetus towards nuclear world war. 'Disarmament' is a dangerous hoax; the worldwide victory of the proletariat is the only road to peace. And that requires the rebirth of a genuinely Trotskyist Fourth International, committed to the defence and extension of the world-historic gains of October through socialist revolution against the bourgeoisie and political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies. We inscribe on our banner what Lenin did in 1916: 'Our slogan must be: arming of the proletariat to defeat, expropriate and disarm the bourgeoisie.' ■

SPARTACIST BRITAIN

Only workers revolution can disarm the imperialists

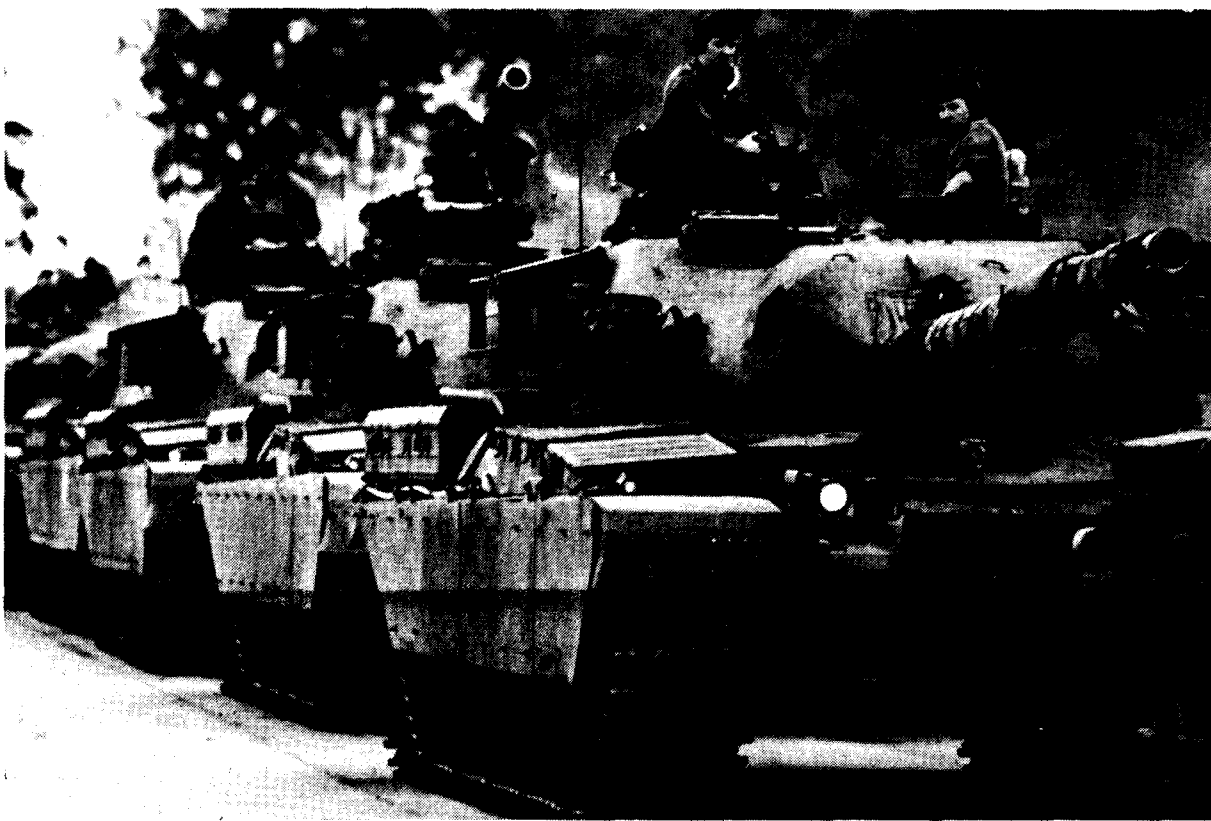
Smash NATO!

Defend the Soviet Union!

As the demented peanut farmer in the White House drives the world towards nuclear Armageddon, social democrats of all stripes have predictably resurrected the nationalist/pacifist claptrap of disarmament. But pacifist daydreams cannot wish away the reality of the class war. The enthusiasm with which 'democratic' imperialism and its 'socialist' helpmates have embraced a band of anti-Soviet clerical reactionaries fighting to make Afghanistan safe for illiteracy and the enslavement of women underscores a simple axiom of Marxism. In the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat there is no 'third camp', and there never has been. Those who today refuse to unambiguously defend the gains of the October Revolution against which the imperialist war drive is directed must inevitably end up giving aid and comfort to that war drive. Trotskyists say: *Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Defend the Soviet Union! For workers revolution to end imperialist war!*

Margaret Thatcher and the British ruling class have gone the line with Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet offensive. And the Labour Party, 'lefts', and all, have been trailing right behind. The June 22 march and rally called by the Labour Party at the behest of the 'left' National Executive Committee in opposition to NATO plans to site 160 Cruise missiles in Britain comes five months after the NEC voted unanimously to condemn the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. And every single ostensibly Trotskyist organisation with the exception of the Spartacist League (SL) jumped on the imperialist bandwagon to echo the condemnation. Having helped pull the trigger for Carter's blast of war threats, a few of the Tribune 'lefts' are now worried that the threats may become reality -- especially after Carter's crazy helicopter fiasco in Iran. Without vacating Carter/Thatcher's camp, they are seeking to channel sentiment against imperialist war into 'Little England' isolationism and pacifism.

From historian E P Thompson's appeal to 'protest and survive' by reviving the peace-
nik CND all the way to the 'Trotskyist' International Marxist Group (IMG) and its call for 'a movement based on anti-imperialist opposition to militarism' (*Socialist Challenge*, 8 May), they all share the common ground of the mythical third camp, hoping to keep this sceptred isle out of the nuclear crossfire. We recall Lenin's observation: '...the petty-



British tanks on West German NATO manoeuvres -- targetted at the Soviet Union

bourgeois desire to keep as far away as possible from the great battles of world history ... is, of course, reactionary and is based entirely on illusions, for, in one way or another, imperialism draws the small states into the vortex of world economy and world politics.' And Britain is hardly a 'small state', much as it may seem that way.

In all the hand-wringing over Cruise and NATO, they all refuse to recognise where -- and why -- Cruise and NATO are targetted. It's no secret. The 19 April *Economist*, lecturing Carter's lagging European allies, squarely posed the object of the war frenzy: 'The containment of dangerous big Russia is the item that should be at the top of the western agenda.' Indeed the 'containment' of Russia has been at the top of the imperialist agenda for more than six decades, ever since the Bolsheviks swept Kerensky into the dustbin of history and liberated one-sixth of the earth's land surface from imperialist exploitation and capitalist wage slavery. Through periods of cold war and hot war, in the Third Reich and the American Century, the imperialist bourgeoisies have maintained their determination to reconquer the Soviet Union for capitalism. They failed in the wars of intervention, and Hitler never made it to Moscow -- at a cost of millions of Russian workers. Today Carter is getting ready to try again, having paved the way with a three-year-long 'human rights' campaign designed to militarily and 'morally' rearm America in the fight against 'Communist aggression'.

And the counterrevolutionary bureaucracy in

the Kremlin has done its bit to help Carter out. Following its humiliating defeat by the Vietnamese workers and peasants, US imperialism desperately needed a breathing space to catch up with the Soviet Union's nuclear development programme. Brezhnev obliged, criminally constraining the Russians' weapons development through SALT for the dubious diplomatic benefits of an illusory 'detente'. While the pacifists and Stalinists bleat about the 'madness' of the nuclear arms race, the Pentagon knows what it is doing: straining at the bit to achieve strategic nuclear superiority over the USSR.

It is possible to win a nuclear war -- and the US wants to make sure it can, by acquiring 'first strike capability' to knock out an effective Soviet retaliatory response to an American attack. That sort of technological breakthrough is dependent not on the size of the warhead, but on the accuracy and speed of the delivery systems. The European-based Cruise missile, for example, would cut down the Soviets' warning time from 30 minutes to six! This makes the Cruise missile a particularly insidious part of the imperialist anti-Soviet armaments programme, which we oppose in its entirety. No Cruise missiles -- Smash NATO! Not one man, not one penny for the imperialist army! As Trotsky pointed out on the eve of World War II:

'The defeat of the USSR in a war with imperialism would signify not solely the liquidation of the bureaucratic dictatorship, but of the planned state economy; and the dismemberment of the country into spheres of influence; and a new stabilisation of imperialism; and a new weakening of the world proletariat.' (*In Defence of Marxism*)

The search for the third camp

And with the escalating imperialist offensive clearly aimed at the Soviet Union, the entire lot of renegades from the proletarian revolution have embarked on the path trod before them by Kautsky and the Mensheviks, by Max Shachtman and Tony Cliff in search of the safety of the 'third camp'. For Shachtman it led to the US State Department; it will not be otherwise for his latter-day followers. Cliff's Socialist Workers Party (SWP) is long-practised at preaching 'Neither Washington nor Moscow'. The SWP's panting suitor, the IMG, still needs to maintain the figleaf of formal Trotskyism, so it seeks pro-

continued on page 7

Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!