Workers of all countries, unite ! Vol. 19 No.8 March 8th 1989

MARXIST-LENINIST WEEKLY

ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRELAND (MARXIST-LENINIST)

Yugoslavia - Kosova - Albania

ALBANIANS UNJUSTLY VICTIMISED AS SCAPEGOATS FOR YUGOSLAV CRISIS

Over the last six months the ever-deepening crisis in Yugoslavia has hit the headlines, at least in the international sections of the world press, on several occasions. Since Tito the names of Yugoslav politicians have been relatively little known internationally, but now the name of Slobodan Milosevic has been given some prominence, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, a certain notoriety, and in the context of the aspect of the Yugoslav crisis which has become the focus for the greatest apprehensions about where events in that country are leading - the growing pretensions of great Serb chauvinism for hegemony over the Yugoslav federation, a policy of flagrant aggrandizement which Milosevic has built his dubious reputation around.

Of course, there has been growing resistance of the other participants in the federation to this great Serb pressure, a pressure for a certain kind of unitary and centralised state - one under Serb domination - which has thrown up into the air all kinds of old rivalries amongst the ruling circles with their competing factions, as well as justified resistance to the denial of national rights due to the different elements in what is after all a union of various nations and nationalities.

Certain Yugoslav politicians such as Milosevic have once again raised the question of the status of the autonomous region of Kosova amongst other questions, for instance the autonomy of another region under the Republic of Serbia, Vojvodina, as if somehow the restructuring of the relative status amongst the constituent elements in the Yugoslav federation and the removal of the established, but quite limited, democratic rights of people in some areas, such as Vojvodina and Kosova, provides the key to the solution to Yugoslavia's problem of economic bankruptcy, soaring inflation and foreign debt.

With its overwhelmingly Albanian population of some 2 million, Kosova has once again as before in 1966, on occasions during the 1970s, then in 1981, been presented as if it were the roadblock to the solution of all of Yugoslavia's problems today! But this has been a total distortion of the facts. The Albanian people in Kosova have suffered most severe national oppression by a policy of forced assimilation - a policy which includes measures to prevent them speaking their mother tongue as well as unequal treatment within the Federation both economically and politically. Kosova is one of the most underdeveloped areas in Yugoslavia with massive unemployment. The just resistance of the Albanian population at this policy has met with savage reprisals and there

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The Making of Michael Stone

Once again, as he came up for trial and was sentenced to a minimum of 30 years imprisonment for 6 murders, Michael Stone - the so-called 'lone loyalist attacker' at the funeral of the patriotic Gibraltar Six at the Milltown Cemetry, Belfast - was flashed across the mass media, with his Rambo-image captured on video film oft-repeated along with his brief life-story, yet another snap-shot of 'the conflict in Northern Ireland' presented for all the world to witness and wonder at . . . . for a few brief moments, or at most for a day or two.

But the presentation of this man as some kind of monster of 'protestant extremism' has done nothing to enlighten anyone as to what is going on in the north of Ireland for the last 20 years. Quite the reverse. And indeed this has been done quite deliberately by the mass media of the British imperialists and the national traitors who rule the nominally 'independent' southern 'Free' State.

Even from the few facts about Michael Stone that one could manage to glean from the glib recitations about his life and background anyone with some empathy for their fellow human beings and some grasp of social realities and the operation of social pressures could see that the real analysis to explain the making of individuals like Michael Stone would have to be completely different to the absurd caricature - the sectarian loner and megalomaniac after notoriety - which the media presented.

The picture created of Michael Stone has been of the stereo-typed kind of psychpathic mass-murderer which has become notorious in various imperialist societies, such as America or Britain, but given a particular 'Northern Ireland sectarian' twist.

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PUBLIC MEETING

The National and International Dangers Posed by Growing Disunity in Crisis-torn Yugoslavia Today

BANKRUPTCY OF TITOITE REVISIONISM AND OF FRAUD OF 'SELF-ADMINISTRATIVE SOCIALISM'

8 pm, Wednesday, 22nd March, Clarence Hotel, by Capel Street Bridge, Dublin

No to Victimisation of Kosova!

No to Provocations against Socialist Albania!

Albanian Victimisation

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are thousands in prison and tens of thousands have been forced to emigrate to Turkey and other countries as a direct result of persecution.

At the same time, just as on the previous occasions, attempts have been made on a day-to-day basis by leading politicians, such as Milosevic, as well as through provocative articles in the Yugoslav press and TANJUG (the national news agency), to present the People's Socialist Albania as if it were actually the moving spirit behind the resistance of the people of Kosova to the great Serb diktat, allegedly 'interfering in the internal affairs of Yugoslavia', and cynically fanning up the resentments of the population of Kosova with the sinister objective of destabilizing the federal structure and very integrity of Yugoslavia as a state, in order to realize the objective of a 'greater Albania' through the union of Kosova into present-day Albania itself. But Socialist Albania has on the contrary taken a most principled stand on these issues. It has never laid claim to any part of the territory of Yugoslavia - not even Kosova, but has however, quite rightly and within the accepted norms of international relations between states supported the just demands of the Albanian population there for their rights within the Yugoslav Federation and an end to persecution.

The apprehensions of international public opinion about the growing tensions in Yugoslavia are indeed justified, both in terms of what could happen to large sections of the ordinary people in the different regions and republics of that country, as well as the implications which chaos in Yugoslavia poses to international stability. And this latter does not simply mean calling to mind the old apprehensions about the Balkans constituting 'the cockpit of Europe', the fear of what might happen to the world as a result of a spark in the 'Balkan powder-keg' which remains widely established in the popular mind as a result of the precedent of the Sarajevo incident. (The assassination of the heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, which provided the pretext which was used by the imperialist powers to initiate world war in 1914).

Recently, on January 24th, 'Zeri i Popullit', the organ of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania, reprinted an article which the Yugoslav press itself had previously published last October, which gives a more concrete, but no less worrying, idea of the real international dangers presented by the growing tension in Yugoslavia. This article in 'Mladina', a magazine published in Ljubljana, Slovenia, outlines a 5 stage scenario by means of which a savage bombardment of people within Yugoslavia, organised secretly by the Yugoslav national army itself, would be presented through an orchestrated campaign of lies and deception in the world news media as an act of aggression from the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, thus providing the pretext for the Yugoslav army to invade and occupy Albania itself in the name of 'liberating' the Albanians!

Such an extraordinary outburst in the Yugoslav press might be dismissed as the isolated product of some jaded journalist's fevered imagination were it really an isolated phenomenon, and in particular if it had been disavowed by the responsible Yugoslav authorities themselves. But the fact is that such inflammatory articles and speeches have become the standard diet in Yugoslav political life over these last months once again, with photographs of mass demonstrations published front page which show quite clearly the bellicose slogans of great Serb and Yugoslav chauvinism, such as "We want arms!", "Let us kill the Albanians!", and even "Go ahead Slobodan, if necessary to Tirana!" The responsible Yugoslav authorities have done absolutely nothing to deny the association of the Yugoslav state with such dangerous talk. Indeed some of these very 'responsible authorities', such as Milosevic, have been the ones openly engaged in such public incitement!

The Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist) is going to hold public meetings, beginning with the meeting advertised below in Dublin, in which the true causes of the current perilous situation in Yugoslavia are explained, and the just stand of the Albanian population in Kosova and also of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania are presented for what they really are: not for the destabilization or dismemberment of Yugoslavia, but for good, principled relations of equality within Yugoslavia as the federal constitution itself proclaims (which means, amongst other things, an end to the unjust victimization of the people of Kosova), as well as for good, principled relations between Yugoslavia and Albania as fraternal, neighbouring states in the Balkan peninsula.

Anyone interested in the truth about this important issue in international affairs is most welcome to attend.

MARXIST-LENINIST WEEKLY

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Of course we all know that such monsters do exist in the social degeneration which is now universally characteristic of those kind of countries, especially as the crisis of monopoly capitalism deepens and poverty accumulates ever more vastly at one pole and wealth at the other. We are all familiar with the rival theories of 'nature versus nurture' around which a fruitless controversy is encouraged as to what gives rise to such phenomena - on the one hand, social and educational deprivation, an alienating urban environment, pornographic and sadistic mass-culture versus alleged inherent genetic factors on the other; or as an alternative which combines the two, absorption of lead from car exhaust and even over-consumption of sugar as well as additives to food by children and so on and so forth (not to mention drugs) which, as it were, chemically induce an internal predisposition to crime, even leading, so some bourgeois 'experts' claim, to transformation of the genes and transfer to the next generation of now-innate criminal characteristics.

The ruling class in Britain, America etc. try to get as much mileage as possible out of promoting such liberal debate and pseudo-scientific speculation (ideology for fascism). By this means they try to demonstrate that in their imperialist society there is enough 'democracy' to allow questioning that it is the social system which gives rise to psychopaths, and at the same time they brainwash people with the taboo that to do anything to change the system would be 'simplistic' precisely because there is no end to the 'chicken- and-egg' debate about the 'complexities'. But for the British imperialists to attempt to impose the same ground-rules for discussion of 'the Northern Ireland Conflict', as they have tried with the case of Michael Stone, simply will not wash with anyone.

For the conflict which has been going on in the north of Ireland for the last 20 years cannot be equated in any way with the situation of growing lawlessness in the urban wildernesses of Britain, America and so on, notwithstanding the fact that even in those cases the crime and consequent tragedies are also the result of the vicious system of social oppression and exploitation of monopoly capitalism. What has been going on here has been a politically conscious continuation of the previous 800 years of resistance to foreign occupation since the Anglo-Normans first invaded in 1169, not any kind of spontaneous and direction-less criminal behaviour. Michael Stone was one of the individuals who have been mobilised as savage tools of the foreign colonial

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Michael Stone

power, the British imperialists, individuals who have been incited, armed and set in motion in a planned and carefully orchestrated fashion in concert with other under-cover colonial forces and with open police and military back-up - as was really the case with this attack on the crowd at Milltown Cemetry, quite the reverse of the concoction that Stone was a 'lone attacker'.

Of course, in Michael Stone we no doubt might find many of the characteristics of some criminal psychopath produced by the imperialist urban jungle. Such features are what qualify such lumpen individuals to be picked up by the authorities and groomed as tools of fascism and as state agents and undercover state-terrorists. But even then Michael Stone's career is explained more scientifically through the special mode of colonial oppression which has operated for so long in the north of Ireland, instead of through British and American models of 'urban alienation'. For instance, reports have said that in his youth Michael Stone's closest friend was a catholic, but that later on all the catholics were driven out of his estate as a result of the developing conflict and the incitement of sectarian divisions. These have always been deliberately organised by the British imperialists and their fascist unionist politicians and the terror-gangs set up in concert with British Military Intelligence, the UDA, UVF etc. precisely so as to conceal the justice of the patriotic cause in the welter of sectarian demagogy that Ireland's patriotic struggle is 'against protestants' and to literally terrorize protestants to prevent them from uniting with catholics in the cause which should be common to them both as Irish people who are all, regardless of religion or background, oppressed and exploited by British imperialism. Such are the skills of the British imperialists, the past-masters of divide-and-rule: to turn friendship into frustration and a source of fear for one's own safety, to make enemies of former friends on pain of being a labelled a 'fenian-lover' or a 'Lundy', and even beaten up or shot as such.

Michael Stone does not represent the mass of ordinary protestant people in the north of Ireland in any way, as the imperialist caricature is to make out, even as a so-called 'extremist'. Such people do not accept him as their representative any more than they did the Shankill Road Butchers of the 1970s. But the objective of British imperialism is to make people of catholic background believe this. Equally it is the case that nobody should accept the lying concoction that Michael Stone, bad and all as he is, is only the mirror-image of what is called 'catholic' or 'nationalist extremism'. Nobody brought up in the patriotic tradition would accept this in any case. But the objective of the British imperialists is to make those brought up under the iron grip of unionist fascism think that this is so.

Either way, the objective of the British imperialists in literally manufacturing the likes of Michael Stone (notwithstanding his own responsibility as a man for his own criminal actions) is to present 'the Northern Ireland Conflict' in sectarian Irish-versus-Irish terms or the racist Irish-versus-British-in-Ireland terms and thus discredit the justice and the necessity for all the people of Ireland to unite in struggle for our sovereignty as one nation. But the fact that the perpetuation of the existing system in Ireland has to rely on such abominable and cynical manipulations as has gone into the creation of Michael Stone and then his discarding into prison, as has happened to others of his ilk, will in the end prove to be the real eye-opener. The British imperialists' system of divide-and-rule will prove to be their own undoing. For it will in the end prove to be one of the main factors in motivating the Irish people to unite, regardless of background, to throw their common enemy, the foreign power who is the alien oppressor and exploiter of them all, out of their common homeland.

International Women's Day Contd. from P 4

But as the crisis worsens increased hardship is being forced onto women. The proposals on deserted wives' benefit (arising no doubt from the increasing incidence of family breakdown with increased social welfare costs to the state), contained in the Social Welfare Bill published very recently, expose the total disregard for women's condition and rights shown by the "Free ' State government and bourgeoisie. A deserted wife with one child receiving £55 from her husband under a court order will in the future lose her entitlement to deserted wives' benefit worth £65 per week. Under the new legislation the £55 a week maintenance will go to the Department of Social Welfare whereas in the past it went to the woman along with the social welfare benefit. A deserted wife with one child is, according to this legislation, to be forced to 'live' on £65 per week!

Necessity for women to take up struggle

One of the features of the present situation of worsening crisis in the system of imperialism is how women in particular are being singled out for attack today, how women are being made a chosen target within the terms of the general capitalist policy of shifting the burden of the economic crisis onto the backs of the working people. For instance, the right of women to work is being now being widely negated as a legitimate entitlement, where formerly this was acknowleged, even if only on paper in the statute books. Unmarried mothers are being subjected to censure and victimisation without any regard to the social conditions, including plain poverty, which prevent so many people from establishing normal married life together. Child-care facilities, inasfar as they did exist, are being cut back. Wages and conditions in the service industries and in health and education, i.e. the very jobs where the largest proportion of women find employment, are being drastically cut. The family as a social unit has come under such severe pressure it is now at breaking point. Violence against women has drastically escalated.

Such attacks on women are part and parcel of the comprehensive policy of fascization of society and the state being pursued by the monopoly bourgeosie today. This is a repetition of the same policy advocated by the prize-fighter of the international monopoly bourgeoisie to meet the same crisis conditions of the 1930s, Hitler himself, with his slogan that the lot of women should be limited to 'Kinden, kuchen und kirchen' (children, cooking and the church). (Incidentally, one notes the almost identical terms in which the Khrushchevite revisionists talk about 'the place of women' today. Almost echoing Mrs.Thatcher and Ronald Reagan word for word, Gorbachev has made the great discovery that 'women find their highest fulfilment in the home'!)

Marxist-Leninist Weekly hails the great contribution of women in all the democratic and revolutionary struggles for social progress and political freedom in Ireland and abroad and stresses the necessity for greatly increased numbers of women to get organised to fight for their rights and those of the people. Becoming involved in the general political movement is the key to women's emancipation, but also women's participation is essential to the struggles of the working class and all mankind for an end to the savage system of class exploitation, and in particular to avert the real current threats of fascism and world war.

Hail International Women's Day!

Despite the grave situation facing the women and people globally on this March 8th, 1989, with wars of aggression, economic devastation and famine in existence across the world, it is with a profound sense of conviction that women throughout the world celebrate International Women's Day once again this year.

The source of such optimism lies first of all in the justice of the cause itself - the clear right of women to equality with men. But secondly, and equally importantly, women rightly feel a sense of pride about the heroic struggles which women, past and present, have waged for their own rights and complete emancipation, as well as their glorious role in the progressive and enlightened movement of all humanity for a better world order and for freedom.

The struggles of women form an integral part of today's epoch of resistance to the hellish and nightmare world system of imperialism and social imperialism. Women are playing a vigorous role in the struggles everywhere today, for instance in Nicaragua, Palestine as well as in Ireland. In Albania the efforts and initiative of women are playing a key role in the successes being achieved in building what is today for the moment (since the betrayal of socialism in the Soviet bloc by Khrushchevite revisionism) the only genuinely socialist system in the world.

The fact that women are involved so deeply in democratic struggles for national liberation, in every working class movement and struggle for socialism as well as in the struggle for peace against the threat of world war coming from the two superpowers, U.S. imperialism and Soviet social imperialism, demonstrates how closely integrated is the women's movement in the general stage of historical development today. It shows how deeply the cause of women is integrated and indeed identified with the world proletarian socialist revolution.

The origins of International Women's Day

This identification of the emancipation of women with the struggle to end the system of exploitation of man by man itself was exemplified by the very origins of International Women's Day, first of all known as International Working Women's Day. For the initial proposal of Clara Zetkin in 1910 to designate March 8th for this annual world event was placed before a women's conference held under the auspices of the Second International, the socialist successor of the International Workingmen's Association of Marx and Engels (the First International), and the precursor of the Communist International of Lenin and Stalin (the Third International).

In fact, the proposal stemmed largely from the wave of strikes and demonstrations organised by women textile workers in the United States in the period 1857 to 1908. This was a struggle of women as militants of the working class against their savage exploitation as female labour and the conditions which had resulted in a large fire and loss of life in New York City.

Then, as now, the masses of women on the world-wide scale suffered poverty and oppression precisely as a result of the social system in existence. In fact the origin of women's oppression lies in the emergence of private property, with women becoming the first victims of the division of humanity into opposing classes, the division between those who own the means of production and those who are the exploited by them. What the American women workers were revolting against was the monopoly capitalist system. Women workers saw clearly that their own oppression was part and parcel of the exploitation experienced by the working class and people under capitalism and imperialism throughout all the countries of the world.

Keeping sense of perspective

In the last couple of decades a whole rash of bogus theories, presented as if they are scientific, have tried to make out that it is men who are the cause of women's oppression. Some even make out that even if women's emancipation must involve a matter of social emancipation from capitalist exploitation, the reason is that this capitalist society is evil fundamentally because it is 'patriarchal'. According to such anti-scientific theories and as they have been further elaborated, socialist society itself is alleged also to have proved to be another form of 'patriarchy' . . . . with the clear injunction that women must not get involved with the working class in their struggle for socialism. But what is their solution ? Women should become capitalists i.e exploiters and oppressors themselves !

But women in general have not fallen for this logic which can only perpetuate their oppression. For one thing they have increasingly seen that women presented as 'women's liberation' success-stories in politics and business have proved to rival male capitalists at their worst, witness Mrs Gandhi, Mrs Thatcher and so on. Thus women are coming more and more to appreciate and understand that their complete emancipation can only be achieved through uniting with the most revolutionary class, the working class, in the struggle for the emancipation of society and all the countries of the world as a whole from class exploitation and the oppressive system of capitalism and imperialism.

The general context of the struggle of women today

Due to our domination and exploitation by British, U.S., EEC and world imperialism in general the crisis here has been particularly devastating, with massive unemployment forcing young men and women to emigrate in large numbers, while those who remain are forced to bail capitalism out of its crisis through wage reductions and cuts in social welfare, health and education. Meanwhile, in its attempted colonial reconquest to put down the people in the north, the British imperialists have forced the Irish people to pay a terrible price for the doubtful privilege of remaining a part of the so-called 'free world' - i.e. as part of the imperialist world market, as a source of cheap labour and super-profits for the world's multinational companies.

As a doubly exploited section women have suffered considerably in these conditions, north and south. As well as unemployment and low wages they bear the pressure of trying to cope and rear families on ever-declining incomes; 2,500 children in care in the Irish 'Free' State testify to the number of families which have had to face severe social and economic hardship. Single parents, predominantly women, have increased in number by 50% in the past five years, while in the decade 1977 to 1987 the number of deserted wives has increased seven- fold. And this situation is mirrored in the northern Six County state as well, where, in addition, women, whose husbands and children have been jailed on such a large scale, have had to bear perhaps the heaviest share of the terrible burden of foreign colonial oppression over the last 20 years, as well as themselves being arrested and jailed in increasing numbers, where they have suffered systematic physical and psychological abuse in the form of strip- searches, carried out in the most sinister and sadistic manner on the pretext of 'security'.

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Title: Marxist-Leninist Weekly, Vol. 19, No. 8
Organisation: Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist)
Date: 1989

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