

# 'Thatcher's Auschwitz' backs Red dictators

by Mary McCourt Burdman

The Establishment of Great Britain has had one response to the anti-bolshevik revolutions of 1989: to crush them. As the East Germans strive for freedom from communist police state tyranny, the British press raves about the threat of a "German Fourth Reich." Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has tried to sabotage European economic agreements that would help develop Eastern Europe, and taken the lead of the "Save Gorbachov" movement, even if that means undermining movements against bolshevism in Europe.

In an autumn 1989 legal battle, thanks to a biased judge, author Count Tolstoy was ruined with a £2.5 million libel judgment against him, for having charged that the prestigious Lord Aldington sent Cossacks and Yugoslav soldiers who fought with the Germans back to certain death at the hands of Stalin and Tito after World War II. It was the biggest libel action in U.K. history.

Thatcher's government has agreed to every condition demanded by the butchers of Beijing against the people of Hong Kong, Britain's last colonial "crown jewel." As the final imperial act in Hong Kong, the British are carrying out what is being dubbed "Mrs. Thatcher's Auschwitz." On Dec. 11, the Hong Kong colonial authorities sent 51 Vietnamese "boat people" refugees, half of them children, back to starving, hard-line communist Vietnam, against their will. Police in full riot gear moved the small group of people from the Phoenix Detention Center—considered worse than Hong Kong's prisons—at dawn. Tens of thousands of Vietnamese are due to follow.

Despite attempts by the Hong Kong colonial authorities and, later, by the authorities in Hanoi, to prevent observation of the operation, there has been an international outcry, including inside Britain. Indeed, "Thatcher's Auschwitz" may put the final nail in the coffin of her Tory government. For once correct, Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock said in the parliamentary debate Dec. 12, "Doesn't the prime minister realize, that she is the only person in this whole shameful episode who can't make the excuse that 'I was only obeying orders,' because she was the person giving the orders—and the orders are tyrannical!"

Columnist Barbara Amiel wrote in the *Times* of London Dec. 15, "What other country besides the United Kingdom has, first in 1945, then in China, and now in the camps, forcibly returned refugees to communism?" In the same paper Dec. 7, writer Bernard Levin had pointed out why the

colonial authorities had to use an airplane to return this first group of refugees: Using ships would bring to mind the actions of the Foreign Office in the 1930s, when its policy towards what the Foreign Office called the "wailing Jews" turned back boatloads of desperate European refugees trying to reach Palestine. He has seen what it takes to drag an unwilling man or woman away, wrote Levin, in newsreels of the Nazis rounding up the Jews of Italy for the death camps. The *Daily Mirror* Dec. 14 likened the government's policies to "Nazi SS tactics."

One high-level British official, quoted in the *Independent* Dec. 15, dismissed the condemnation of Britain's actions against the Vietnamese refugees as "a loud squeal" which "probably won't be sustained." The U.S. might protest, he said, "but at the end of the day we might find they are willing to be pragmatic about it." And, he insisted, no one should think the Empire had gone soft just because the colonial authorities had decided to suspend the forced repatriations for the moment. Over Christmas, such actions would be "the height of insensitivity."

The debate on how few Hong Kong Chinese would be allowed into Britain in 1997 was held Dec. 14, with Tory MPs crying out that such people would be allowed into their constituencies "over my dead body!" Former Cabinet minister Norman Tebbit distinguished himself by stressing that Britain must never repeat "the mistake" of 1972, when it let in thousands of Indians, the descendants of the civil servants who administered Britain's colonies, who were refugees from Uganda, expelled by dictator Idi Amin.

Britain was the first Western nation to recognize the Beijing communist regime a year after its victory in October 1949. In 1982, when Mrs. Thatcher initiated negotiations to turn Hong Kong over to the communists in 1997, she gave them everything they wanted. Since that year, Chinese refugees fleeing to Hong Kong are regularly rounded up and handed back, 50-100 people a day, to the communists. There is good evidence, the *Guardian* reported Nov. 14, that Britain gave China secret assurances that nothing would be done to increase self-government in Hong Kong before the handover. The Foreign Office denied the charge, but the British have been stalling on granting promised suffrage to the Hong Kong population.

The Chinese are also demanding that Britain get rid of the Vietnamese. China's Vice-Foreign Minister Zhou Nan stated that deportation of the Vietnamese refugees from Hong Kong "could be a final solution," the *Daily Telegraph* quoted him Dec. 13. Zhou told Hong Kong reporters China wants the refugees out of Hong Kong by the time it takes control of the colony in 1997. Although the U.N. Refugee officer in Hong Kong was not informed before the dawn deportation took place, the Chinese were. Li Hou, the deputy director of the P.R.C. Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, confirmed that he had heard of the plan in advance, and said he applauded it, the Chinese news agency Xinhua reported.