

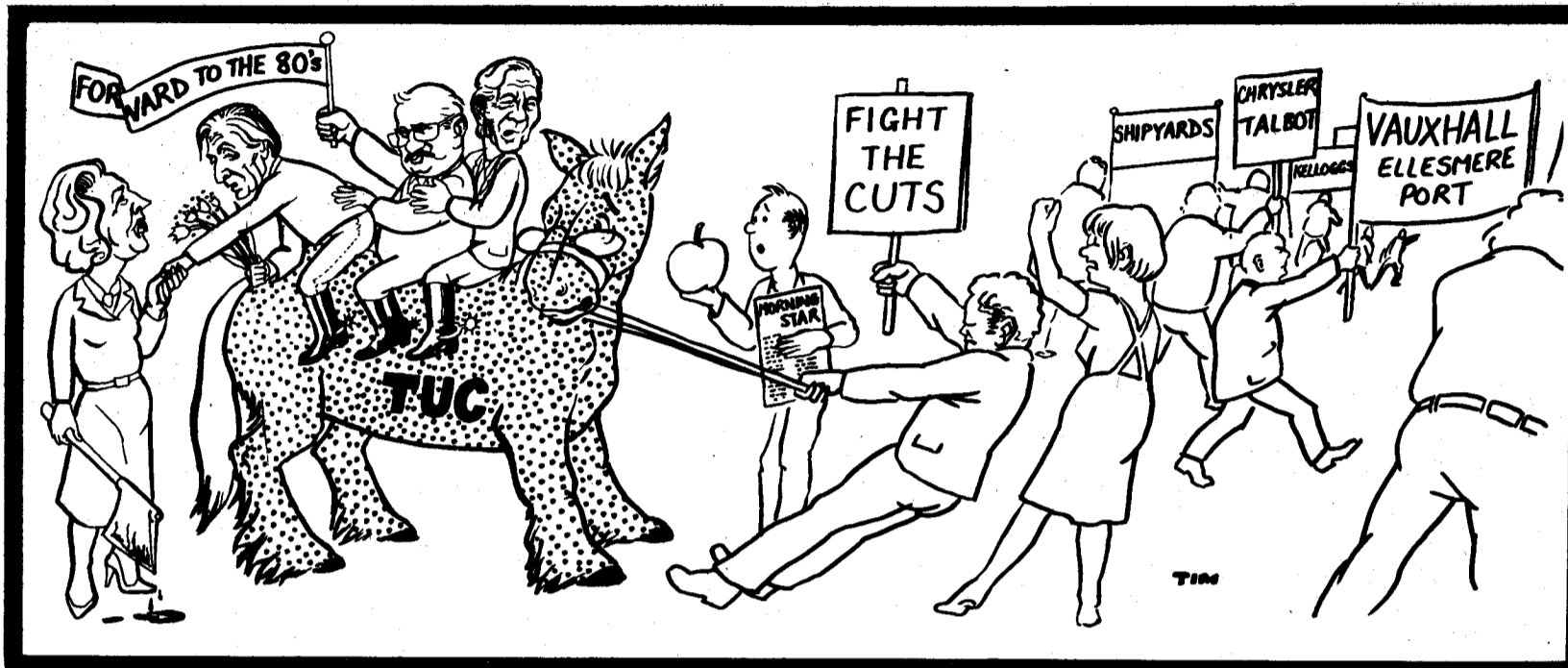
SOCIALIST PRESS



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BEHIND ZIMBABWE TALKS

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Non-aligned conferencepage 2



First casualty shipyard jobs

The first major industry to suffer the full brunt of the Tories' job cuts and the TUC policy of collaboration in these attacks is shipbuilding.

The decision of the recalled delegate conference of shipyard unions at Blackpool last Tuesday to abandon the fight to save 6,000 jobs in the industry marks a major betrayal for shipyard workers.

By deciding to lift the ban on overtime which had been the immediate response by workers to the employers' cut-backs, and allow the ships which are part of the Polish order to be launched, they have dropped all pretence of a struggle to retain the threatened jobs.

A gauge of this rising tide of confrontation and militancy was the large number of union banners on the 1,500-strong lobby of the TUC supported by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions and about 500 Right to Work marchers.

Union leaders have set their faces resolutely against any serious struggle against the Tories. But workers continue to embark on these struggles and to seek out leaders capable of defending their jobs and living standards.

Conference

It is in this situation that a revolutionary leadership and a programme for action is crucial to the working class.

In fighting to construct such a leadership the Workers Socialist League urges workers and labour movement bodies to support and attend the November 3 Conference of the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, to be held in Digbeth Hall, Birmingham.

The conference is called to discuss a fight in the labour movement for an end to talks with the Tories, preparation to force them out and the removal of those Labour and trade union leaders who won't fight.

As such it offers a unique opportunity to discuss a programme and perspective for the mass struggles that are immediately on the agenda for the working class—and which cannot be bureaucratically wished or manoeuvred away by TUC leaders.

(CDLM conference—see p. 10)
O'Fishall p.11

Hostility

That deep-seated hostility to this manoeuvre is present among shipyard workers was expressed in the anger of the delegates from the Robb Caledon yard in Dundee who stormed out of the meeting vowing to continue the sanctions, and the subsequent mass meeting vote to do just that.

Right wing Boilermakers' leader John Chalmers, who was instrumental in selling the deal, admitted afterwards that the 6,000 jobs might still go.

Indeed, whatever window dressing Chalmers and other union leaders may create, there is no hiding the fact that the jobs have been ditched. Chalmers himself has appealed for an improvement in voluntary redundancy payments—to minimise the numbers that are compulsorily sacked by British shipbuilders.

Impassioned

In an impassioned plea on behalf of the employer to the Robb Caledon workers to end their resistance, Chalmers last week declared:

"I appeal to Dundee to lift restrictions on the Polish ships or, by God, we [ie. British shipbuilders] are in very serious trouble".

Now that British shipbuilders have the measure of such leaders, they will certainly ruthlessly proceed to implement the full 10,000 cut in the labour force they aim at by the end of next year.

Spurred on by the demands of the Tory Government that the shipyards must break even the next 18 months, they will swing the axe with a vengeance now.

All the talk of placing Scotstoun Marine and Scott Lithgow facilities at Bowling

Continued page 11

TUC BLOCKS ANTI-TORY FIGHT

The TUC Congress last week set its face firmly against mobilising mass action to defeat and bring down the job-slashing Tory government.

Decisions were made to press ahead with talks with the Tory government, to maintain the reactionary voluntary restrictions on trade unionists embodied in last winter's Concordat, and to throw out even a token campaign of regional demonstrations against Tory policy.

In short, the stage was set for another year in which union leaders will attempt to prevent independent struggles by their millions of members against the attacks on jobs, social services and living standards waged by employers and by the government.

After four years of open collaboration with the anti-working class policies of right wing Labour governments under Wilson and Callaghan, TUC leaders plainly have not the stomach even for the kind of token protests mobilised in 1972 against the Heath government's anti-union laws.

Manoeuvres

A milk and water motion against Thatcher's package of anti-union legislation (which is to be put through Parliament this winter) called in the vaguest terms for the TUC to "resist vigorously"!

But, after pre-Congress manoeuvres had silenced two motions and an amendment calling for an end to talks with the Tories, the door was deliberately left open for continuing meetings with Employment Secretary James Prior.

Indeed the Tories were offered the carrot of TUC enforcement of the Concordat. Print union leader Joe Wade declared openly that:

"If the Tories are not prepared to accept the voluntary principle [!] in respect of industrial relations, then it will be on their shoulders that the blame will lie for a return to the destructive confrontation policies of 1971 and 1974."

The TUC deliberately

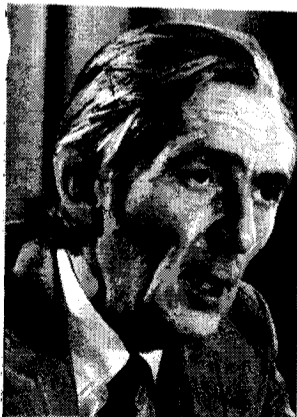


PHOTO: Andrew Wiant, Report

Murray

confined itself to a 'propaganda' campaign clearly designed to persuade the Tories that union leaders can control members better than the courts.

As the *Financial Times* pointed out:

"Government observers in the hall interpreted . . . [the mood of the debate] . . . as a sign that the rank and file were not in the mood for a fight . . ."

Of course, with possibly a mere handful of exceptions, the rank and file were entirely absent from the bureaucratic forces assembled in the Congress. But as an assessment of the mood of union officials, and their reluctance to fight the Tories this is undoubtedly an accurate estimate.

Similar opposition to a fight was reflected in the fate of one of the 'radical' amendments that survived the pre-Congress strongarm work by the General Council—the call by FTAT for mass demonstrations against the Tories' economic onslaught on the working class.

Wafer-thin

Even this modest amendment was vigorously opposed by Len Murray who argued for delegates to "trust your General Council", and for their absolutely toothless propaganda campaign ('Forward to the Eighties, not back to the Thirties') to be adopted without commitment to any form of action.

In the event the amendment was rejected—though by the wafer-thin majority of 61,000 out of 12 million votes.

A vague NALGO call for a campaign against the cuts including "for example, a national day of action" was carried, however, since it was seen to commit union leaders to nothing at all.

Lingering

Any lingering hopes that the Congress might match its periodic spouts of 'left' rhetoric by some steps to break from its deadly alliance with Labour's right wing leaders were rudely shattered on the final day.

An ASLEF motion calling

on future Labour governments to carry out Labour Party policy was manoeuvred out without a vote when Clive Jenkins of ASTMS moved 'next business'.

Yet while union leaders manipulated the agenda and formulated demagogic but vacuous speeches for the rostrum in their efforts to hold back the working class, outside the conference hall the Tories pressed ahead on the offensive, and workers stepped up their struggles.

BL management and British Shipbuilders were putting finishing touches to plans for thousands of sackings; local authorities were spelling out new rounds of spending cuts; two million engineering workers engaged in an escalation of their pay battle, and a growing number of workers looked for leadership in the fight to defend jobs and social services.



TUC Delegates—not a rank and file member in sight



INTERNATIONAL

Basque General Strike

The tempo of the long struggle against the Madrid government to secure national rights in Euskadi (the Basque country) has again quickened in the last ten days.

On September 1 a 16-year old militant was killed by the armed police during a demonstration in San Sebastian (in Guipuzcoa province).

The demonstration was in protest against recent moves made by the French government against exiled Basques in France.

The radical nationalist forces associated with ETA (military) issued a call for a general strike for Monday September 3rd which was followed by the enormous majority of workers in the Basque provinces (especially Guipuzcoa and Biscay).

Such was the strength of feeling among the masses that even the right wing nationalists of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) along with the Socialist Party (PSOE) and the CP were forced to join the pro-ETA forces (whom they normally revile) in calling for the immediate removal of the Madrid-appointed civil governor of Guipuzcoa province.

The (PNV) head of the Basque General Council, appealed to Madrid to "share" control of the forces of law and order now with "responsible" local political forces.

His desperate tone reflects growing fears within the Basque ruling class and their reformist and Stalinist friends that the boycott of the October 24th referendum, supported by the pro-ETA forces and various left-wing organisations, will be a success.

The referendum is to decide whether to accept the Statute for Basque "autonomy" recently agreed between the Suarez regime in Madrid and the right-wing nationalist, reformist and Stalinist forces.

As we go to press, reports of continued mass demonstrations, and clashes with the armed police indicate that the Statute—a mockery of self-determination—has not had the anaesthetic effect it was intended to have on the national struggle.

Castro notches up win for Brezhnev



Not quite a knock-out—but the old champ Tito was certainly down for the count when the bell rang to open Havana's "non-aligned summit" of over 90 countries.

Fidel Castro bounced around the ring like Mohamed Ali at his most confident.

In what by his standards was an almost monosyllabic keynote address (a mere 1½ hours) Castro revealed that the source of his championship form was not ginseng, anabolic steroids, nor the Koran, but the foreign policy of the Soviet Union "the natural ally of the non-aligned".

Castro punched nimbly away at the imperialists in such a way as to suggest

Successful trainer—Brezhnev that "non-aligned" opposition to the Soviet connection would be the same as imperialism itself.

And China was constantly placed in the same boat as the USA.

Castro denounced the Chinese for supporting Chilean Dictator Pinochet, South Africa in Angola, the Shah in Iran and reaction in general.

Ringside

And as if to prove the point, the Chinese observer walked out along with his US counterpart.

It was by all reports a tirade to please most of the ringside—many of whom had of course been wooed for a long time by Cuba's aggressive diplomacy of the last few years.

So it was a tired opponent who stepped into

the ring the next day.

The eighty-seven year old Tito managed only thirty minutes of morose but low key insistence that the non-aligned movement should not be dependent on any great power.

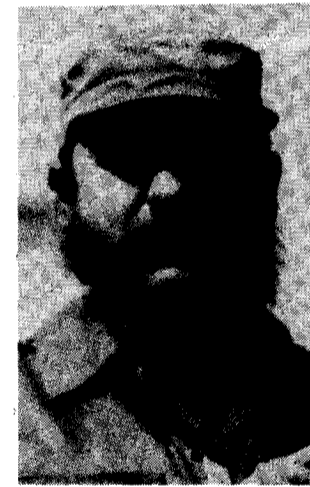
Diplomatic

Nyerere of Tanzania put up a more vigorous defence of the anti-Soviet position, but Tito had to recognise that aside from a few minor diplomatic concessions made by the Cubans, this was Castro's conference—a diplomatic and political triumph for the Cuban Stalinist premier and thus also for his backers, the Soviet leadership in Moscow.

Castro sidestepped the most potentially contentious issues by in effect agreeing to postpone them.

This applies to the representation of Kampuchea.

Neither of the two delegations present in Havana (the deposed Pol Pot regime and the puppet Heng Samrin regime) were



Castro



Carter—another gaff

seated.

And the proposed expulsion of Egypt was shelved for two years.

The Havana Conference has proved the immense importance of Cuba's role as Moscow's winged diplomatic Mercury.

While in complete accord with the Soviet leadership, the Cuban Stalinists are able to intervene in all kinds of situations and countries where a direct Soviet presence would have been more provocative to the imperialists, or more embarrassing to a government in a semi-colonial country.

Effective ally

Since Castro's important defence of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, there have been no significant public foreign policy differences between the leaders in Havana and Moscow.

And especially in Africa and Latin America the two bureaucracies have divided their labour but acted as one.

Castro has been Moscow's most effective ally because, unlike the Eastern European bureaucracies, he has been able to maintain an "independent" and "left" image (helped along by the illusions peddled by such left wing forces as the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, especially the American SWP).

Muscles

Since 1972, Cuba has been a member of Comecon, the Moscow-dominated international economic alliance.

But it has not been part of any formal military alliance with the Soviet Union, and so remains entitled to membership of the conference of non-aligned nations.

The power of this position has been very plain during the week-long Havana conference when, having disposed of Tito's opposition, Castro was given the opportunity to show off his muscles in front of 90 or more countries against an unexpected attack from the imperialist giant itself.

In what looks like yet another diplomatic blunder, the Carter administration decided to attempt to discredit Castro's position in the non-aligned conference by "discovering" 3,000 Soviet combat troops in Cuba.

Their presence was finally given away to the US spy satellite, it seems, by their soccer pitch!

It is almost certain that these troops have been in Cuba for the last ten

years. The USSR has not denied their presence.

And it is equally certain that the US administration has known about them for most of that time.

Carter's decision to use the knowledge now probably strengthened Castro's position in the non-aligned conference and landed Carter himself in new problems.

US Secretary of State Vance has taken the line that the 3,000 Soviet troops are "not a menace to the security of the United States" but that their presence is nevertheless "very serious".

Castro and Brezhnev have more or less ignored the US fulminations: but members of the US Congress have converted the presence of the troops into a new pretext for not ratifying the SALT 2 nuclear arms control treaty.

SALT 2

A few of them managed to engineer a wave of hysteria which forced Carter onto national TV to say that this was not another 1962 missile crisis and that SALT 2 should be ratified regardless of the troops issue—which was a question to be solved separately.

So Carter's plan to deflate Castro seems to have badly backfired.

But despite its apparent nonchalance, the Kremlin also stands to lose from these developments.

In its anxiety to get SALT 2 ratified it has so far shown strong signs of readiness to adopt the treaty on the lines demanded by the right-wing US senators.

It will be more difficult for the Kremlin bureaucrats now publicly to bow before the demand to withdraw its troops.

So, although Carter and Brezhnev are not exactly eyeball to eyeball, it looks as if they will both have to go through some elaborate posturing if they are to rescue the collaborationist plans embodied in SALT 2.

But if all that is a headache for Brezhnev, his junior colleague in Havana has meanwhile certainly advanced the interests of the international Stalinist partnership in its global strategy of securing diplomatic footholds in the semi-colonial countries within the framework of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism and opposition to independent revolutionary struggles by the oppressed masses.

KURDISTAN CRACKDOWN

Khomeini's army has now moved deeper into Kurdistan to extend the hold of reaction over Iran.

But the advances made this week by the armed forces do not mean that the Kurdish rising has been crushed.

Although all the Kurdish towns are now in the hands of the army, these gains were not the result of military victory over the Kurdish fighters.

In Mahabad and the other towns, Kurdish forces offered only token resistance to give cover for a major withdrawal of their armed fighters.

Exodus

As the Iranian army rolled in, Kurdish inhabitants moved out in one mass exodus after another, heavily depopulating every town. In particular, armed militants pulled out to re-gather in rural areas and continue the struggle with their conventional methods of guerilla warfare.

And a five-day arms amnesty in Kurdistan brought a grand haul of only six firearms handed in to the government forces!

These new conditions give fresh opportunities to Khomeini's hangman, the Ayatollah Khomeini. Defying calls to return to Tehran, Khomeini is deepening his reign



Firing squad in action in Kurdistan

of black terror in Kurdistan, with more executions of militants from the Kurdish Democratic Party and other forces.

At the same time, the wave of reaction has produced attacks by armed gangs on Kurdish villages, with 46 people massacred in one such pogrom at Garneh.

The development of the war in Kurdistan so far has shown quite clearly the strength of Khomeini's army. Battered and demoralised by the revolutionary struggles which

led to the overthrow of the Shah's dictatorship, the Shah's massive army was never disbanded and destroyed.

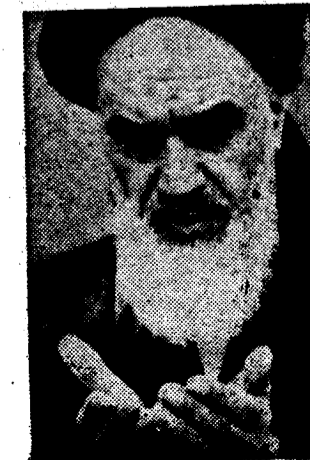
At the first opportunity, Khomeini himself sought to rebuild a unified weapon of reaction from the scattered fragments.

His success can be judged by the campaign in Kurdistan, where the army machine was able to operate in a co-ordinated and efficient manner despite guerilla attacks from Kurdish forces and disaffection and

even mutiny in its own ranks.

Today the army has become one of the main props of the Khomeini's rule, holding him up in his drive to impose absolute dictatorship on the masses of Iran.

At the same time, it still represents a dangerous threat to his power, ready to step in if Khomeini proves unable to establish the authority of Islamic reaction and preserve Iran as an area of profitable exploitation for capitalism.



Khomeini

THEORETICAL PRO THAT MUST BE RES

At the end of the previous article we criticised the attempt by the SWP to say in effect that all inter-bureaucratic wars must be manifestations of the world wide struggle between the capitalist class and the working class.

We attacked their view that material conflicts between national bureaucracies play no role as an independent cause of such wars.

This, we argued, was an aspect of a general feature of the SWP's view of Stalinism—a refusal to acknowledge the bureaucracy as a powerful material force in society.

At every point the power of the bureaucracy is belittled by the SWP, to the point where it appears to be simply a layer which responds to pressures either from imperialism or from the working class.

Parasitic

This makes the SWP unwilling to admit the possibility that inter-bureaucratic rivalries can themselves be a cause of war.

In particular it leads them to dismiss the notion that there could be any economic element in motivating the bureaucracies towards aggression.

This would violate their "orthodox" view that workers' states are exclusively defensive in their behaviour.

Yet we must question this "orthodoxy". The bureaucracy is after all a parasitic caste which maintains its privileges by feeding off the toiling masses. But at the same time bureaucratic rule is an obstacle to the development of the forces of production in the workers' states, and thus cramps the economic base on which the bureaucracy rests.

So why cannot this contradiction lead to expansionist tendencies on the part of the bureaucracy which flow from a need to augment the surplus value available to one bureaucracy through simple expansion of the territorial base from which it is appropriated?

Why should not Stalinist bureaucrats who feed off the labours of their own working classes seek to ease their internal problems by imposing some form of 'tribute' on weaker bureaucracies in other countries?

Comecon

It cannot be denied that there was an element of this in the expansion of the Soviet Union into Eastern Europe after the Second World War.

And in the subsequent period the economic arrangements within Comecon have been such as to benefit the Soviet Union at the expense of the other countries.

Only more recently,



Kampuchean refugees flock into Thailand

perhaps, have there been some changes in this as concessions have had to be made to the growth of anti-Soviet feeling in the other states of Comecon—feelings which the Moscow bureaucrats recognise as magnifying the pressures towards political revolution.

Indebtedness

And in any case, Soviet aid—or rather the situation of massive indebtedness which arises from it—has undoubtedly been an element in curbing any independent ambitions of the Cuban bureaucracy and ensuring that it does not deviate from the path chosen by the bureaucracy in Moscow.

We pose these questions not in order to give any final answer to them here but rather to insist that they are real questions which demand an answer from Trotskyists and which cannot be dismissed by an appeal to some "orthodox" theory which argues that the bureaucracies pose no threat of war.

Examine

Ernest Mandel, unlike the SWP, does at least begin to discuss some of the pressure towards war that is inherent in the conflicting national interests of the Stalinist bureaucracies.

But when he comes to possible economic motives for war, he dismisses them without discussion.

(ICP April 9, 1979, p345)

Such lines of inquiry demand to be followed up by Trotskyists. Mandel however retreats into the same kind of "orthodoxy" as the SWP.

There is, asserts Mandel,

"no basic economic reason for wars between workers states."

The "ruling bureaucracy can profit from plundering foreign countries... but this is in no way structurally linked to the nature of the workers' states' economies".

As an example, he says that:

"it is preposterous to believe that China needs 'colonies to exploit' when it is desperately lacking the resources to exploit 80% of the natural resources known on its own native soil." (ibid. p345)

So the conclusion is that "the roots of these potential conflicts are political and not economic".

Though not fully developed, Mandel's argument on this point seems to be based on some very important theoretical errors which once



Castro fetes Mengistu, the Ethiopian butcher, in Havana

again involve the belittling of the counter-revolutionary nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

It is assumed that there is a virtually absolute separation between politics and economics in the deformed workers' states. In Mandel's view what is deformed is the political workings of the state and not the functioning of the economy.

This is not only an unwarranted conclusion from the contradictory nature of a deformed or degenerated workers' state, but it also underestimates the way in which the rule of the bureaucracy distorts the development and operation of the economy from that which would prevail under a workers' democracy.

Bureaucratic economic planning is not a less efficient version of a truly socialist

economy.

It makes a qualitative difference.

Mandel, however, seems to assume that the deformity of Stalinist-worker states applies only to a compartmentalised political element.

Mandel assumes also that the bureaucracy is capable of rationally developing the economy—hence his argument that the Chinese bureaucracy could not possibly want colonies because it hasn't developed its own natural resources.

Conflict

But Mandel does not even begin to consider the possibility that, although not capitalist, Stalinist-ruled states could contain contradiction, which also create behaviour that from an economic standpoint appears irrational.

In developing his purely political theory of inter-bureaucratic conflict, Mandel therefore goes on in his own way to create illusions in the ability of the Stalinist bureaucracy to act rationally in the interests of preserving socialised property.

Because the Stalinist bureaucracy rests upon nationalised property, therefore, argues Mandel, it will act to defend that property.

If inter-bureaucratic wars should occur, the national bureaucracies will be able to keep them under control. And, he suggests, they can control the consequences of their collaboration with imperialism. (Intercontinental Press/ Inprecor April 16, 1979 pp 346-7).

In reply to this, SWP spokesmen Clark, Feldman, Horowitz and Waters (CFHW) ask "can we really be so sure" that inter-bureaucratic wars will be as limited as Mandel believes?

Challenge

Their challenge appears correct, until its basis becomes clear. What really worries CFHW about Mandel's argument is not that he so signally fails to explain the source of war between workers' states, but that he makes even tentative steps towards admitting that such wars can arise from inter-bureaucratic conflict.

"If Comrade Mandel's vision of the future is accurate", say CFHW, "then the prospects for humanity are not so bright as the Fourth International has expected up until now". (ICP, July 16, 1979, p 715).

They go on to dismiss out of hand the danger of such wars because, they argue, the bureaucracy will be prevented from entering them by the strength of the working class.

CFHW's denial of the manifest danger is therefore the outcome of their denial of the importance of the material role of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

It flows from their failure to grasp the contradiction

between the property for workers state bureaucratic

Ultimately formal "orthodox" are used to position—the amounts to a of any quality between a healthy w This means SWP in practice Trotskyist u the coun role of bureaucracy.

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PROBLEMS SOLVED



Vietnamese militia forces

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organisation of reconstruction of the international.

Indeed it is only an extreme political difference within the USFI leadership (implying support for different sides in a war) that has made the reopening of a theoretical discussion on these issues in Ernest Mandel's words, "unavoidable".

As we said in opening this series of articles, we welcome the fact that such a discussion is taking place.

We do not approach it in any spirit of gloating that such a sharp discussion is developing in the USFI.

But we must, nevertheless, make some highly critical comments on the kind of debate which is taking place.

We see continual evidence that the USFI leadership, far from welcoming the theoretical debate as a precondition for theoretical clarification, is once again taking steps organisationally to limit and curtail that debate.

One way in which this shows up is in relation to Cuba. It was the position of the USFI at its foundation in 1963 that Cuba was a workers' state which had not degenerated and was not bureaucratically deformed from the outset.

Today the SWP leadership explicitly endorses that position—indeed it uses selective reference to certain actions of the Cuban bureaucracy—which are in our opinion ever more counter-revolutionary—to "prove" that the Castro leadership is consistently a 'revolutionary' one.

It is clear that the theoretical questions which are raised by the recent events in Indochina can be resolved only by a discussion which also includes the question of Cuba.

In the present dispute the SWP leaders have complained about the extreme reluctance of Ernest Mandel, or anyone else who supports the USFI majority resolution on the Indochina wars, to discuss the question of Cuba.



Anti-war protest in Peking during the invasion of Vietnam

This is the final article in a six-part series on the major political and theoretical crisis in the United Secretariat of the Fourth International which has been exposed by the recent wars in South East Asia.

The main sources which have been referred to in the articles are the following:

Fred Feldman, "Behind the Fall of the Pol Pot Regime", *Militant* Jan. 19, 1979, reprinted in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, Jan 22, 1979.

Fred Feldman, "Socialist Revolution in Vietnam", *Intercontinental Socialist Review* April 1979, reprinted in *IP//* April 9, 1979.

Steve Clark, "Imperialism vs. Workers of the World", *Militant* March 23, 1979, also reprinted in *IP//* April 9, 1979.

Ernest Mandel, "Behind Differences on Military Conflicts in Southeast Asia" *IP//* April 9, 1979.

Steve Clark, Fred Feldman, Gus Horowitz and Mary-Alice Waters, "War and Revolution in Indo-china - What Policy for Revolutionists?" *IP//* July 16, 1979.

For further background on the positions of the Workers Socialist League on the post-war evolution and world role of Stalinism see the book *Communists Against Revolution* (£2.00 inc post and packing from Folrose Books, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR) and the document *The Poisoned Well* (30p inc p&p from the same address).

But what explains this reluctance? Surely it is the fact that to reopen theoretical discussion on Cuba would reveal, even more clearly than the present dispute, the shaky theoretical foundations on which the rickety political edifice of the USFI rests. So, on the question of Cuba, it seems that Ernest Mandel at least would like to extend the moratorium on debate.

Uncritical

Within their own party, however, the SWP leaders have not been able to hold back a growing pressure to debate the party's position of virtually uncritical support for the Castro leadership.

This has now reached the position where the SWP whitewashes the role of Castro in support of the genocidal policies of the Ethiopian military dictatorship.

For SWP members and supporters "information" about the "progress" of the Cuban masses is provided in the pages of the SWP's weekly paper *The Militant* via the reprint without comment of the statements of a member of the Cuban bureaucracy (See *The Militant*, August 3, 1979).

Opposition within the SWP to these policies of adaptation to Castro has existed for some time and has now begun to emerge in public.

'Unity'

In *Socialist Press* we will soon be publishing some articles which take up and comment on this debate in the SWP, at which the rest of the USFI seems still to be merely looking on in embarrassed silence.

In other words, despite the outbreak of public debate in the USFI press, they are uniting to try to preserve the opportunist political agreement reached in 1977.

Like the 1963 "reunification" agreement this has been based on a common wish to avoid discussion of the most divisive theoretical and poli-

tical issues in the interests of a fake 'unity'.

Today, as in 1963, such moves can only damage the prospects of reconstructing the Fourth International on a principled basis as an authoritative world revolutionary organisation.

The WSL will continue to resist these moves to inhibit the necessary theoretical rearmament of Trotskyism.

That is why we have produced these articles which we hope both inside and outside the USFI will help to break the bounds within which the USFI leadership would like to confine the discussion.



Mandel



SWP leader Barnes

The purpose of the articles is not to lay down a final position on the questions it raises but to stimulate further discussion of them.

To this end the columns of *Socialist Press* are open to both members and non-members of the WSL. We wish to encourage readers to make written contributions which take up aspects of these articles or of the dispute within the USFI.

In our view the starting point for any theoretical development on the questions raised in the present dispute must remain Trotsky's analysis of the degeneration of the Soviet Union, set out in *The Revolution Betrayed*

and *In Defence of Marxism*.

But in the post-war epoch these documents, fundamental as they are, no longer remain sufficient for the understanding of Stalinism.

Trotsky himself regarded them as having something of a provisional character in terms of their conclusions.

In particular the post-war period has faced the Trotskyist movement with the challenge of understanding situations in which capitalist property relations were overthrown without the intervention of a proletarian revolutionary party—a problem which Trotsky had only begun to consider.

Open wars

More recently we have witnessed bitter conflicts between Stalinist-ruled states, now escalating into open wars—a problem which Trotsky, writing when the Soviet Union was the only non-capitalist state, did not, of course, have to deal with.

The emphasis of Trotsky's writing on the Soviet Union under Stalin was that, although a social counter-revolution had not taken place, the Stalinist bureaucracy was a vast material force which, despite its defence "by methods of its own" of the social conquests achieved, represented a profound threat to those conquests.

It is necessary to advance beyond those positions in order to understand the nature of Stalinism in the post-war period.

Its extent and power has grown vastly since Trotsky was writing.

"Orthodoxy"

Both sides in the current dispute within the USFI hold the view that they are defending Trotskyist "orthodoxy".

But when put to the test their "orthodoxies" turn out to be unequal to their task.

If orthodox Marxism involves following the footsteps of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, then one of its characteristics must surely be the capacity to extend and develop theoretical and political positions to cope honestly with new realities, rather than clinging forlornly and abstractly to inadequate past positions which are dignified by being attributed to the dead.

Concluded

Beginning in *Socialist Press* 167: a series of articles replying to the main texts before the USFI XIth World Congress this November.

the end of it as a serious revolutionary force.
 One can only assume that the phrase 'around 1950' is used because of Comrade Bull's impatience with a serious study of the actual process he so summarily dismisses.

Nor does he find it necessary to present any serious arguments for these most far-reaching conclusions:

The proven political bankruptcy of the leadership of all the main factions of the FI requires no further demonstration.

It is not good enough just to throw together a few historical points and then to declare that the process of degeneration can be ignored.

This rejection of a proper historical analysis is really a rejection of historical materialism itself.

Those who think they have pushed history aside are all too apt, as we shall see, to find themselves throttled by its logic.

Once again, this same bluff lack of concern for how we have got where we are makes it difficult to connect with the real world.

Thus we are glibly told (Bulletin p.5) that:
 "Stalinism no longer attracts nearly all the young revolutionary elements as it did in the 1920s and 30s. Exactly the opposite. Among such layers anti-Stalinism is now overwhelmingly predominant."

But what it happens that youth turn in their anti-Stalinism towards the USFI? Or towards the forces around the OCFI? Or even towards the various splits from these groupings, or possibly from the diminishing band of Healyites?

How are you going to explain Pabloism to these layers? You are surely not going to satisfy them with the trite argument that the degeneration of these bodies requires 'no further demonstration'!

To say this is to leave the anti-Stalinist youth in the hands of the Pabloites.

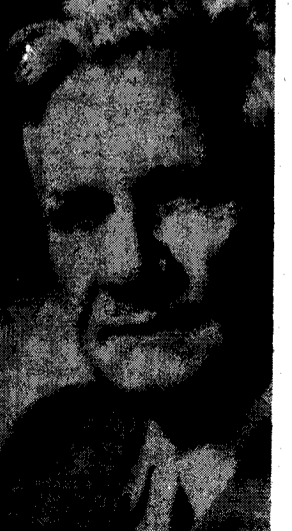
'Not one single substantial advance' we are told 'has been made in Marxism by the Fourth International—all sections' or indeed by anyone 'claiming to be Trotskyist or Marxist-Leninist'.

So the whole struggle against Pabloite liquidationism, however imperfect or ill-conceived is pushed aside.

The historic 'Open Letter' of 1953, which led to the split of the Fourth International and the setting up of the International Committee—from which the WP itself has emerged—is not seriously considered.

The issues which led to this split are forgotten.

The result is that the WP comrades fall into precisely the same errors and misconceptions as those of their predecessors that they so mindlessly dismiss.



James P Cannon

In 1951-3 Pablo, and his allies of the time like Gerry Healy and Mike Banda, fell down in worship of the accomplished 'fact' of the Yugoslav Revolution.

Banda was an enthusiastic convert to the bureaucratic regime of Marshall Tito and later a worshipper at the shrines of Ho Chi Minh, Colonel Gaddafi, Saddam Hussein, Ayatollah Khomeini and more.

Mr. Banda has, however, found some willing acolytes in the persons of Comrades

Bull and Johns.

Perhaps they are not yet 'worshipping' so many 'accomplished facts' as their mentor. But they could learn.

Thus we are told by Comrade Bull (in the same Bulletin) that:

'The workers and peasants of Vietnam were organised and inspired to an outstanding level of revolutionary achievement by a leadership which played a fully conscious and historical role in inflicting one of the greatest defeats imperialism has ever suffered.'

Comrade Bull describes this as an adaptation by the counter-revolutionary Stalinists to the "pressure of the masses", he does not consider it necessary to call for political revolution in Vietnam.

Truly, by failing to take account of the course of history, he is doomed to repeat all its crimes and shortcomings.

Colonialism

Amongst other subjects missed out by Comrade Bull is the fact that the Vietnamese Stalinists in 1945 fought to restore the rule of French colonialism, and that in order to do so they had to murder hundreds of members of the Vietnamese Trotskyist movement.

This was certainly a very 'conscious' act on the part of the Vietnamese Stalinists.

Comrade Bull also omits to mention that this same 'conscious' leadership, following the crushing defeat of the French colonialists at Dien Bien Phu, took part in the Geneva accords of 1954, which split their country in two and allowed the American imperialists to enter the South.

We in the WSL have never wavered in our admiration for the struggle of the Vietnamese masses against United States imperialism; nor have we underestimated the historic significance of their victory in 1975.

At the same time we have seen these developments as inextricably linked to the victory in Russia in 1917.

They are not the result of any revolutionary policies from the Stalinist leadership of the Vietnamese CP, but despite the betrayals of their leadership.

Overthrow

As Trotskyists we continue to call for their revolutionary overthrow through political revolution, and the independent mobilisation of the masses separated from the bureaucratic regime which the Stalinists inevitably impose upon them (see centre pages).

Alongside the refusal to take up such questions goes the same Healyite 'little Englands' on the question of the International.

Thus Comrade Bull tells us: 'If rummaging through the history of the post-war FI had in fact provided the key to understanding the last Labour Government's crisis it could have helped.'

To approach it from this point of view is to ignore the struggle for a genuinely international communist movement, a reconstructed Fourth International, as the only way in which the kind of leadership necessary for this epoch can be built.

Obviously our practice in the class struggle in Britain will be crucial in this, but it can in no way be separate from a genuinely international struggle.

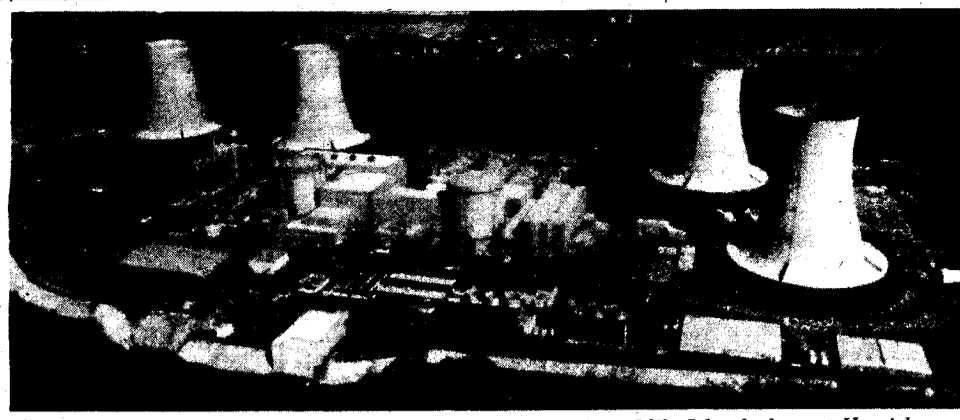
The re-construction of the Fourth International can only take place through an understanding of the weakness and inability to lead of the various faces in the world claiming to be Trotskyist.

This can only be done by a study of the splits and opportunist fusions of the past and an understanding of the political questions and method behind them.

If the comrades of the Workers Party do not take these questions seriously, then their practical intervention in the class struggle will become one-sided and incorrect.

Their own organisation will shrivel and degenerate, and they will simply be added to the long list of those they so easily condemn.

Concluded



The Three Mile Island plant at Harrisburg

THE CHINA SYNDROME

Of all the 'epic disasters' released by the film industry in recent years, the China Syndrome is by far the most gripping.

This is not just because the threat of a nuclear power plant disaster is more immediate than the prospect of being eaten by a shark or crushed in an earthquake.

The film's strength comes from its political content.

The struggle to prevent the disaster is seen clearly as a struggle against the capitalist power corporation with its control of the media and the state.

In 'Jaws' and 'Earthquake', the nasty capitalists and bureaucrats were just a side-issue, in the China Syndrome they are central.

Notorious

Much of the film is based around the notorious Westinghouse scandal. Workers at a Westinghouse plant discovered that the company was deliberately falsifying records to cover up faults in nuclear fuel pellets, and breaches of safety procedures.

As a result workers were suffering a very high cancer incidence and there was a danger of faulty fuel causing disaster at nuclear plants.

Karen Silkwood, a woman shop steward, set off by car to deliver documents proving these allegations to union officials and anti-nuclear experts. On the way she was killed in a mysterious road accident in which the document disappeared.

These events are mirrored in the China Syndrome but unfortunately at an individual level.

The element of struggle by the working class to control the nuclear process is completely

Godfrey Webster reviews THE CHINA SYNDROME, starring Jane Fonda and Jack Lemmon, which is now on general release.

removed. Indeed the workers in the plant appear as mere passive instruments of management.

But the forces making control of nuclear power impossible are shown up vividly.

The Chief Executive of the Corporation ignores his engineers' warnings that the plant is unsafe because of the prospect of huge losses if the plant is closed down.

The media are pressured by the Corporation to suppress knowledge of a near melt-down at the plant.

The construction firm which built the plant have falsified x-ray photographs of welded joints to save time and increase profits.

Catastrophe

They then attempt to murder the plant engineer and his associates who are trying to make public the danger of a catastrophe.

The suspense is heightened by the extraordinary similarity between the original accident at the plant in China Syndrome and the events at the Three Mile Island plant earlier this year.

In both a combination of human error and indicator failure led to the water cooling system to the reactor being cut off.

If this happens the reactor

core can overheat to such an extent that it will melt the foundations of the plant and release huge quantities of radioactivity.

At a technical level the film is well constructed. The scenes within the TV studios are full of sharp and amusing details.

The pervasive sexism of the media is brought out when the director attempts to restrict Jane Fonda's role to soft news, "tiger cubs birthday parties" etc.

The film also brings out how careerism is used to keep the professional layers loyal to capitalist authority.

Both Jane Fonda and Jack Lemmon hesitate before risking their careers by a confrontation with their bosses. Jack Lemmon's particularly fine portrayal of the plant engineer highlights the dilemma of technical workers in capitalist society.



Nuclear fuel store



(top) controls at Three Mile Island: above, Fonda and Lemmon

The film does not tackle the thorny questions which nuclear power poses for the socialist movement.

It stops short at liberal and individual protests against a society that daily risks all our lives in the search for profit.

But where is the energy to come from which a future socialist society will need. The "no growth syndrome" is as much of a danger to mankind as the China Syndrome.

It forgets that most of the world lives at starvation level primarily because of the inability to apply energy resources to transforming the world economy.

Fossil fuels are physically limited (which is not to deny that the present shortage is politically and not physically determined), and they are not the politically neutral and pollution-free resources which some anti-nuclearists would have us believe.

Middle Class

The middle class forces who oppose having nuclear power plants in their neighbourhood have never shed a tear for the tens of thousands of miners killed in extracting coal, or the tens of millions of people held in subjection to ensure a supply of Middle East oil.

The struggle to control the nuclear industry must be the beginning of the struggle for a safe and pollution-free energy supply, whether nuclear or otherwise. And that struggle can only be waged by the organised working class with a socialist leadership.

The China Syndrome pushes viewers towards these questions but leaves them without an answer. However it combines gripping entertainment with thought-provoking content. And while we should ask for more than that, we cannot expect it from commercial film companies.

Our science correspondent adds:

Although the film is based on a fictional screenplay, the events depicted bear a startling resemblance to events that have occurred in recent months in the USA.

Considerable care has been taken to ensure that the technical side of the film is both accurate and relatively detailed. I urge our readers to see this film as soon as possible.

The term "The China Syndrome" was coined to describe what could happen when the Uranium fuel of a Light Water nuclear reactor overheats as a result of failure in the reactor's cooling system.

In the film this occurs as a result of a combination of human error and instrument failure.

The combination of the heat produced by the chain reactions involved in nuclear fission and the heat given off by the radioactive waste products of the fission process may then result in the melting of the reactor core.

In theory, this mass of molten material would melt through the bottom of the reactor, melt the rocks on which the reactor was constructed and continue on its way towards China.

Hence, the term "The China Syndrome".

But in any real melt-down of a reactor core, as it is known, the molten mass would boil the water held in the soil and rocks of the reactor's foundation.

The steam generated would cause an explosion that could scatter radioactive materials over an enormous area.

When first released this film was strenuously attacked by the pro-nuclear lobby in America as depicting a preposterous series of events.

A few weeks after its release there occurred the disaster of the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant near Harrisburg in Pennsylvania.

This event silenced, at least for a while, the film's technical critics.

There is a remarkable coincidence in the film where a scientist is asked to comment on what would happen should the reactor undergo a melt-down.

He replies by saying that the resulting disaster could affect an area the size of Pennsylvania! This echoes the real-life fears of many Harrisburg residents.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Journalists throw out pay diversion: lodge 30% claim

The National Union of Journalists is to put in a claim for a 30% pay increase an extra week's holiday and a massive cut in the working week for provincial journalists.

Chapel representatives decided on the claim at Birmingham on Saturday after rejecting a move by the union's leadership to abandon a centralised claim.

This policy was put forward as supposedly taking a "principled stand" over the Nottingham journalists sacked during last winter's seven week pay strike.

"Unprincipled"

Members of the Provincial Journalists Industrial Council and full time official Mike Bower argued that since the Newspaper Society had not forced the employers, T. Bailey Forman, to reinstate the sacked NUJ members it would be "unprincipled" to negotiate with them.

In practice this policy could do nothing whatsoever to assist the sacked Nottingham journalists, while it would effectively abandon the pay demands of thousands of provincial journalists in smaller offices to the charity of their employers at local level.

Fake Lefts

It was little wonder that such a bankrupt policy was espoused by the fake lefts in the union and was backed most vociferously by those—including Bower—who had argued for a return to work last year with

the Nottingham members still sacked, and who ridicule the correct demand for strike action.

Hostility to these fakes was widespread: one delegate correctly accused Bower of 'mealy-mouthed hypocrisy'.

In drawing up the claim, delegates decisively rejected a demand tabled by Oxford Mail and Times journalists for full defence of wages against inflation with NUJ committees to compile a cost of living index.

But many motions called for the wage claim to include an amount to offset inflation, and the 30% figure itself had vague references to this effort.

It is clear that the fight waged for several years within the union for the sliding scale of wages has produced a response

in a distorted form.

But the result is a 'large' claim which has none of the uniting qualities of the sliding scale.

The claim includes a demand for a 35 hour week inclusive of meal breaks which is in effect a demand for a ten hour reduction in the working week.

It also includes demands for improved maternity pay, fully transferable pensions and the abolition of indentures.

For the second year running the FOCs embraced the ludicrous call for an 'independent' inquiry into the wages; one delegate backing the call summed up its content by making the remarkable statement: "If we really want a decent wage increase we've got to be prepared to stand up and wait for it."

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Lobby demands action against nursery cutbacks

36 hours after the leaked news that Oxfordshire's Tory County Council plans to close down all of its nursery provision, a lobby of angry parents and trade unionists had persuaded Oxford Trades Council to call an immediate demonstration against the cuts.

Veteran campaigner against the working class, Brigadier Streetfield, Education Committee Chairman, has drawn up a series of vicious plans to meet the £3m of cuts over the next 3 years as demanded by Environment Secretary Heseltine.

After being rapped over the knuckles by the government for imposing a supplementary rate on the Oxfordshire ratepayers instead of making immediate cuts in this financial year, the Brigadier and his extreme right wing cronies are anxious to prove their loyalty to Tory ideology by driving all mothers of under fives back into the home.

Grants axed

Not content with closing 12 nursery schools and 16 nursery classes, they plan to axe grants to playgroups, adventure play-grounds and holiday play-schemes.

Two secondary, 3 middle and ten primary schools also face the chop, one of these being the South Oxford Middle School—reopened from closure last year following the 6 week occupation of its nursery class.

A children's home and an old people's home will be closed and all old people forced to pay for home helps, whatever their financial situation.

School dinners will be reduced to snacks and free school transport reduced.

All these cuts will involve the loss of nearly 500 jobs and will decimate the social services in an area already cut completely to the bone by the previous energetic cuts programme under the Labour government.

But the battle has already begun and as Brigadier Streetfield has predicted "there will be a very nasty fight over the plan to cut out nursery educa-

tion." He is no doubt thinking of the determined campaign to save the South Oxford Nursery class which climaxed last spring in the 6 week occupation of the class by parents, teachers and trade unionists.

He knows full well that the occupation received immense public support and only remained an isolated struggle because of the refusal of the NUPE and NUT bureaucrats to call strike action in support of the occupation.

The Brigadier also welcomed the assistance of the NALGO vice chairman Alan Pearson who

masterminded the eviction of the occupiers.

This time NUPE, NUT and NALGO members have the memories of that campaign to assist them.

Union bureaucrats will, needless to say, again try every manoeuvre possible to evade a real fight, but there is no doubt that the demands of strike action, occupations and the opening of the books of the County Council and its profiteering private suppliers and bankers to the scrutiny of parent and trade union committees will be clear and forceful.



Lobbyers outside Oxford Trades Council

JOIN OUR FIGHT AGAINST TORIES!

Returned to office after five years of Labour betrayals, the Tory government has immediately begun wielding a sharpened axe on jobs, conditions and social services. Trade Union rights face imminent legal attack. Prices are already beginning to rocket upwards.

Plum sectors of state industry will be handed to the Tories' profiteering big business backers; and the pay rises to police and armed forces mark only the prelude to increased state violence against pickets and anti-fascists, and an intensified army crackdown in the occupied North of Ireland.

The Callaghan-Healey leadership has made it clear that it will oppose any perspective other than settling down and meekly accepting five years of Tory devastation.

And, though they have once more dusted off their near-forgotten "socialist" speeches, Labour's "left-wing" MPs have continued to duck away from any fight to remove Callaghan.

TUC leaders, too, have set out to establish a basis for collaboration with Thatcher and the Tory cabinet, paralleling their anti-working class alliance with Wilson and then Callaghan.

But the working class has experienced and overcome such betrayals before—to topple Heath's union-bashing government in 1974, and smash through Callaghan's reactionary Phase 4 of wage controls in a series of monumental pay battles last winter.

These experiences are not dead. They point to the way that jobs, social services and hard-won union rights can be defended against renewed Tory attacks.

But a principled, revolutionary leadership is needed if the Labour traitors, the TUC collaborators and their hangers-on in the Communist Party are to be exposed and pushed aside, and the mass struggles mobilised that can defeat and remove the Tory government.

Such a leadership must fight day in and day out for a programme of transitional demands which, starting from today's conditions and today's consciousness within the working class, lead workers to grasp the necessity for socialist revolution.

And in taking up democratic demands—such as an end to racial and sexual discrimination, it must show the crucial role that must be played by the working class as the only consistently revolutionary class capable of leading the struggle for the emancipation of mankind.

And it must fight on an international basis—mobilising solidarity for anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles—whether in Ireland, in Southern Africa or elsewhere throughout the world, and drawing strength and political lessons from revolutionary upheavals such as that which ousted the hated Shah in Iran.

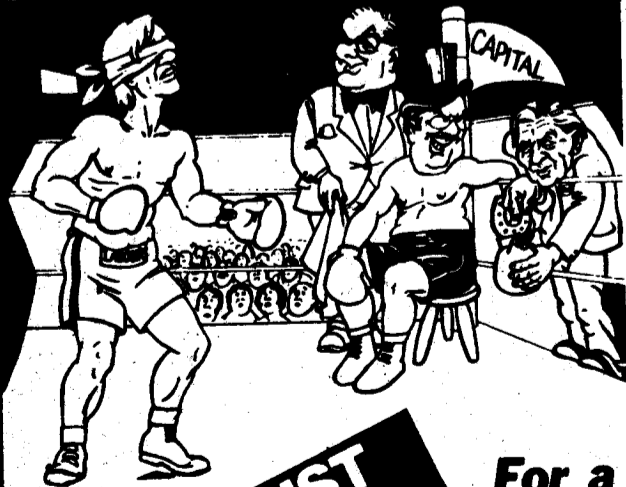
This means fighting for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

This method of approach, rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy, or concessions to any wing of the labour bureaucracy, is the method fought for by the Workers Socialist League.

The next period will see major class struggles in Britain. A principled, Marxist leadership is essential. Our movement though strong in programme remains small in numbers.

JOIN US and take forward the struggle for socialism!

DON'T GO INTO THE FIGHT BLINDFOLD!



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Ellesmere Port workers fight penalty clauses

Talbot strikers stand firm

The strike to regain living standards at Vauxhall's, Ellesmere Port, plant comes at a time when the company is suffering from a series of teething troubles over the 1980 model of the Chevette, which came into production after the summer vacation four weeks ago.

When the first cars came down the tracks new parts were missing and workers had been told to get on with working new operations without the necessary training period, using strange parts that needed complex sub-assembly in many cases.

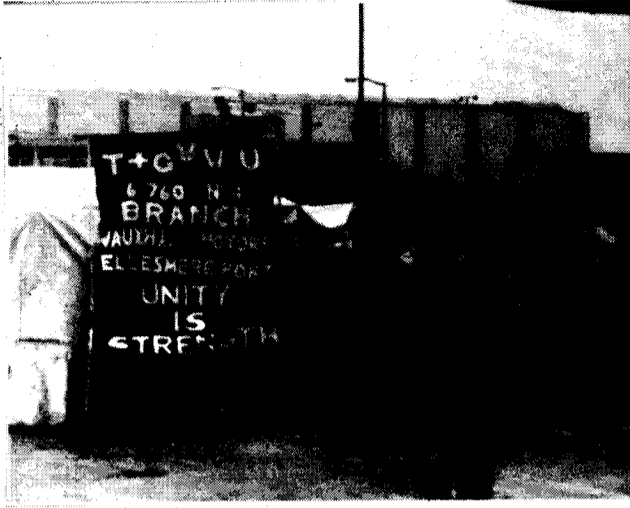
Bedevelled

Needless to say the track was stopping and starting throughout the shift and ended up stopping altogether for a sizeable part of the shift.

Since then the car seems to have been bedevilled by cock-ups, engineering snags and incompetent suppliers who have sent whole crates full of smashed headlamps resulting in a farcical production schedule. To compound this state of affairs there appears to be a shortage of certain vital components—possibly caused by the Confed. strikes.

There has been a predictable build-up of half-built derelicts shoved into the car-park, for an indefinite period, awaiting parts.

Against this background the claim for a 25% flat-rate increase—a notable improvement on last year's vague and woolly "substantial increase"—a cost of living clause; a "shorter" working week; time and a third for holidays and a half day (sic) at Christmas; was submitted with much militant bluster from the convenors.



Picketing at Ellesmere Port during an earlier dispute

The company's final offer of an increase of an average 13½% plus time and a third for holidays adds up to a supposed 17% average increase.

The strings attached to it, however, amount to an unprecedented attack on conditions and rights.

The company have demanded:

- (i) An increase in productivity to be accepted as desirable and necessary;
- (ii) Bell-to-bell working, with no unofficial breaks;
- (iii) Greater flexibility and easier transfer of workers to cover for shortages of labour, absenteeism etc.;
- and (iv) the right of management to deploy workers to scab on sections that are in unofficial dispute.

This final clause is only an

extension of the present state of affairs.

The TGWU shop steward constitution actually has a clause stating that any sections can be "manned-up", where an instruction to return to normal working, given by the senior stewards committee, is ignored!

Although it is doubtful whether this has ever been done in practice, the clause is there to be used and undoubtedly gives the right-wing dominated senior stewards committee and convenor an enormous potential for intimidating and brow-beating sections back into line.

The clause, therefore, merely seeks to strengthen and make explicit the already existing policy of the right-wing stewards committee, and give the management the power to twist the stewards arms into

implementing it in practice.

But the strike was not a principled response to this on the part of the convenors—rather it was forced on them by the determined strike by a handful of setters with are up in arms over being downgraded.

As their action brought the threat of lay-offs for the whole of the 8,500 hourly paid, a mass meeting of AUEW members voted on the recommendation of their convenor John Turnbull to reject the offer and take strike action. The recommendation to strike was carried almost unanimously by the 5,500 membership.

The TGWU convenor, John Farrel, however, went to the management and said that TGWU members wanted lay-off pay until the present agreement expired in a couple of weeks time.

Management turned round with their usual contempt and refused the slightest concession to the TGWU.

Meanwhile the AUEW has had problems with their skilled members who, enraged at having been witch-hunted by Turnbull last year during their fight to restore differentials, have scabbed on this year's action by unskilled members in a bloody-minded retaliation bid to even the score.

Despite these difficult conditions, Vauxhall workers have voted for action which places them, alongside Talbot (Chrysler) workers at the forefront of the pay struggles in the car industry.

A successful struggle in Vauxhall would set the pace for Fords and spur on BL car-workers. The Ellesmere Port strike must be fully supported with official blacking action and stoppages at Vauxhall's other plants.

A mass meeting of Talbot workers from the Stoke plant in Coventry last Friday showed once again their determination to continue their fight for increased wages.

Talbot management have been sending out personal letters to each striker giving the impression that money is on the table if only the convenors would negotiate.

But at the meeting the convenors spelt out the facts of management's fraudulent offer.

"They keep talking about £5 extra through an incentive scheme. But they won't tell us what the scheme includes!"

"They won't tell us what we'll have to do to get the £5, and we suspect we'll have to give up a lot."

"We're telling them we won't discuss incentive schemes until we sort out the base rate."

"And when we do discuss incentive schemes, we'll be discussing how the people who do the work will get the benefit from increased productivity."

"If their incentive scheme is worth £5 to us, how much is it worth to the people we negotiate with?"

Visits

The meeting heard a report of successful visits to a wide range of factories in order to raise financial support.

TGWU convenor Dave Edwards drew out the fact that the Talbot strikes are taking place at the same time as those in other firms.

"This strike is about paying the bills. We're not staying out for pride or principle. We're staying out so we can afford to pay those bills."

The meeting of 1,500 gave an overwhelming vote of support to the convenors' recommendation to continue the strike, with only about 50 votes against.

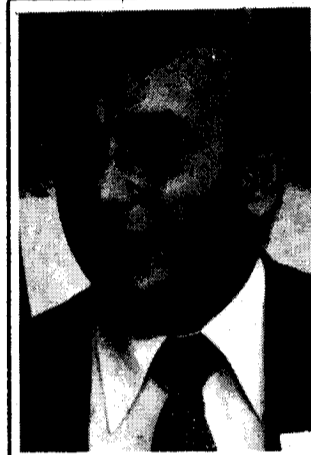
The strike at the nearby Ryton plant also continues, despite attempts through ACAS to find the basis for a deal.

Confed

Talbot strikers must take steps to link up with other workers in struggle—such as the Vauxhall workers at Ellesmere Port—and call on the national Confed leadership to call all-out strike action on the Confed claim and forge a united fight to defend living standards.

There must also be a determined effort to close the ports to Talbot cars coming in from France.

The rank and file have shown their willingness to fight a ruthless management. The strike leaders must build on this strength.



ACTT leader Alan Sapper: as we go to press, the signs are that the Independent television employers are digging in for a further prolongation of the pay battle that has blacked out screens, as they press for job-slashing new technology and speed-up.

Shipyards—the first casualty

(continued)

and Cartsdyke on the Clyde on a "care and maintenance" basis in the hope of an upswing in 1981 is no more than a cynical fraud.

The crisis in shipbuilding is one aspect of the recession in world trade with 9% of the world's fleet laid up this time last year and few indications of an upturn in sight. As the recession deepens, so will further decimation of the industry.

The men at Robb Caledon are well aware that talk of oil-related work and "possibly some ship repairing" will not create the 550 jobs promised and, even if it did, that would still mean the loss of another 550 existing jobs.

The so-called "promise" of British Shipbuilders that there will be no compulsory redundancies is completely worthless.

That the management and union leaders are aiming at a policy of divide and rule is clear from the announcement on the same day as the delegate conference of a new order worth £18 millions which will go to Sunderland Shipbuilder, one of the few yards to make a profit last year.

The obvious intention of giving the order to Sunderland rather than to one of the yards more seriously in need of orders is to split the shipyard workers and so head off a united struggle.

Yet this latest capitulation

should not be seen in isolation from the U.C.S. crisis in 1972.

Then, as now, the options were either to accept the cuts or to go forward in a defence of jobs which would become a rallying point in the struggle to oust the Tories.

In 1972 the Communist Party leadership of Reid, Airlie and Barr in U.C.S. consciously avoided that struggle by their spurious tactic of the "work in" instead of a straightforward occupation and a challenge to Tory rule.

Whilst the Tories proceeded to implement the terms of the Ridley Report to decimate the U.C.S. workforce, Reid, Airlie, and Barr manoeuvred to sell off John Browns (Clydebank) at a bargain price to Marathon, the Texas-based oil rig construction

company.

Since then the Clydebank men have faced a very uncertain future every year and are saddled with an agreement containing a no strike pledge.

Meanwhile the reduced labour force at Govan and Scotstoun were screwed down through the removal of demarcation lines.

A section of the workforce at Govan were even persuaded recently—to work during their Glasgow Fair Holiday to help complete an order.

The betrayals and misleadership of 1972 prepared the way for that capitulation, and also for the scandalous vote last week to lift sanctions and leave the Robb Caledon workers isolated in their struggle for jobs.

From front page

An important difference this time round is that the Stalinists have been unable to create the 'left' smokescreen in the way that they did in 1972.

Reid has left the Communist Party and unsuccessfully ran as a Labour Party candidate in Dundee East at the recent General Election. Airlie has become a full time official in the engineering union.

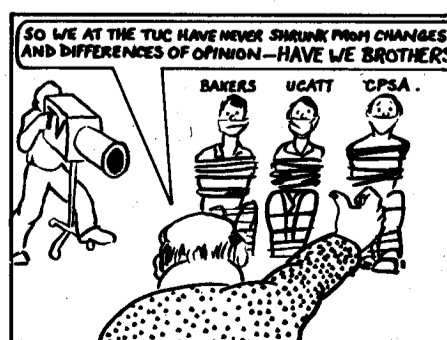
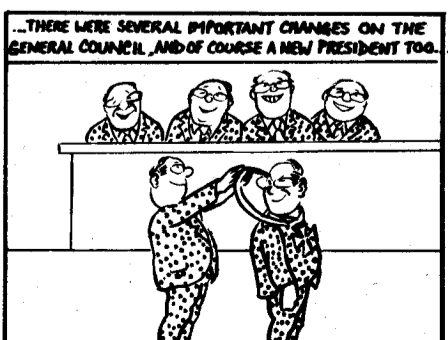
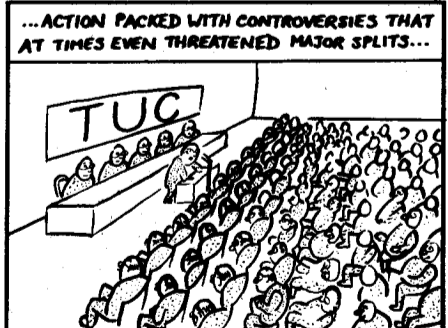
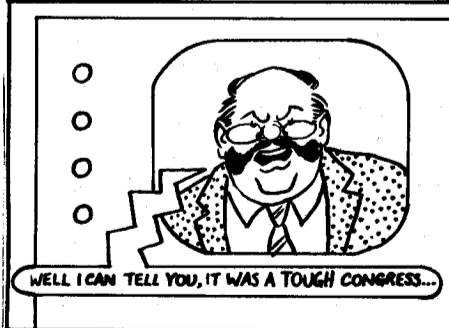
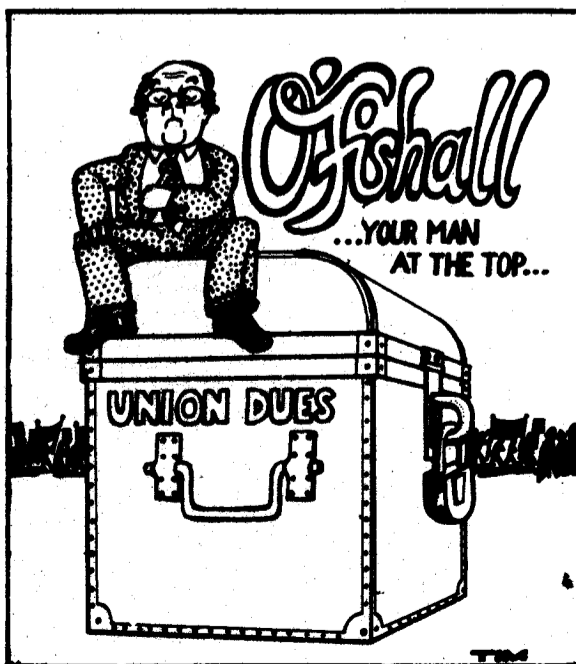
As for Barr, despite being convenor at Scotstoun Marine, he has prudently kept a very low profile throughout the recent campaign.

The fight in the yards is far from over, but to be successful, it must be led by revolutionary leadership which has grasped the lessons of these struggles.



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Chalmers



SOCIALIST PRESS



Repression as usual in Ireland

CONFED DIGS IN ON SHORTER HOURS

The shorter working week is now at the centre of the engineering wage claim.

Negotiations were reopened by the employers last Friday, after being faced with over 90% soli-

darity of engineering workers in the first of the two day strikes.

The EEF was prepared to make an improved cash offer—providing the unions were prepared to drop their demands for shorter hours and longer holidays.

But also reflecting the solidarity of the action, AUEW President Terry Duffy told them that the Confederation were not interested in a simple cash settlement.

A commitment by the employers to reduce the working week was, he said, a precondition to the unions entering a new round of negotiations.

This uncharacteristic hard line by right-winger Duffy has brought a new dimension to the claim.

'Shopping list'

For too long the 35 hour week has been seen as simply a part of a 'shopping list', to be quickly dropped with a cash compromise.

Now a strike of nearly 2m workers confronts the EEF with a shorter working week as the number one demand.

It is true that the demand has been watered down to "a move towards" the 35 hours; but after no change in the working week in the engineering industry for 15 years a break through the 40 hour barrier would

be a major advance.

The pressure is on the employer. They are clinging on because they are able to keep some production going under conditions of depressed order books due to the economic crisis.

"Inundated"

Duffy has said it is "a fight to the finish". Alex Ferry, the Secretary of the Confederation, has said the action "may well be stepped up further".

Duffy has also said that the Confed has been "inundated" with demands for all-out strike action.

The Confed leadership should stop forcing workers to fight with one hand behind their backs.

All-out

Call an all-out strike now! The claim could now be won in full and a heavy blow dealt against the EEF and their backers Thatcher and Joseph.



Birmingham engineers

Turkey campaign

About 100 people attended the first WSL public meeting in London on the campaign "Don't Let Turkey become another Chile!"

The meeting strongly pressed home the message of the imminent danger of military-fascist take over in Turkey.

The WSL platform speaker and a number of speakers from the floor explained why Turkey has now become a key strategic country for imperialism in the face of the blows it has suffered from the struggles of the masses in Iran and the Middle East.

Crises

In the face of acute economic and political crises, the Turkish bourgeoisie has been forced to abandon any type of "democratic" forms of rule and instead to look desperately for means to suppress the workers and peasants.

Already in 19 cities martial

law is in force to suppress the workers movement and the Kurdish movement, which has been deeply influenced by the struggles of Kurds in Iran.

Speakers explained further how the fascist danger has developed in Turkey as a result of popular front betrayals of Stalinist and reformist leaders in Turkey who uncritically support the ruling bourgeois party Ecevit's RPP. Portraying the RPP as the "democratic" alternative to fascism, they subordinate the independence of the working class behind it and thus disarm the masses in the face of great historical danger.

The WSL campaign on Turkey centres on the demand that the Turkish workers' organisations break from Ecevit and his generals and fight for the independence of the working class through the united front of workers organisations and armed workers defence against fascist attacks.

Defend Iran socialists!

As we go to press there is still no further news of the fourteen members of the Iranian HKS (Socialist Workers Party) currently facing a retrial in Ahwaz at the hands of the Islamic regime.

At the first trial—at which no defence lawyers were allowed—twelve of the defen-

dants were sentenced to death, and two to life imprisonment on charges arising from the HKS's support for the struggles of Iranian women and national minorities for democratic rights.

An energetic campaign of pickets and protests to Iranian embassies appears to have pressured the regime into a temporary retreat from implementing these savage sentences, but they remain in acute danger.

Trade union branches and other Labour and student movement bodies must immediately take up this fight and send telegrams to the Iranian embassy in London demanding the immediate release of the HKS members and an end to the repression of Kurdish and other national minorities in Iran.

Among the organisations to have done so last week was Oxford NUJ branch, which sent a telegram calling for the release of the HKS prisoners and an end to press censorship in Iran.

Picket Iranian Embassy Saturday Sept. 15 12 am-1pm called by Association of Kurdish Students Abroad

Workers Socialist League MANIFESTO

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FUND

With the absence of our treasurer on a well-earned holiday, this is your Editor making a special appeal for action on our September FUND — which is our first attempt at the new, ambitious, but vital £750 target. Recent weeks have seen a number of postal subscribers sending us small but welcome donations with their renewals. Perhaps some other regular readers could help out with a donation each month to raise the cash needed for us to survive the current round of inflation?

Every little helps, as the old lady said. The total so far is only £73.00. There is a long way to go. Hand your donation to your friendly Socialist Press seller, or post it to:

Socialist Press, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR, where we promise to find it a good home!



Edwardes

25,000 BL jobs to go

After weeks of rumblings and rumours BL chairman Michael Edwardes has spelled out some of the firm's plans for closures and mass sackings.

13 plants are to be affected, with plants at Canley, Park Royal and "major parts of Castle Bromwich" to be closed at a total cost of 25,000 jobs over the next two years.

But as union leaders have pointed out every 1 job in the car industry carries with it up to 5 jobs in supply, transport and other industries. BL's cut-backs are therefore a bombshell—and must be resisted.

Last weekend Moss Evans noisily declared that to cut 50,000 BL jobs would prompt "bloody revolution".

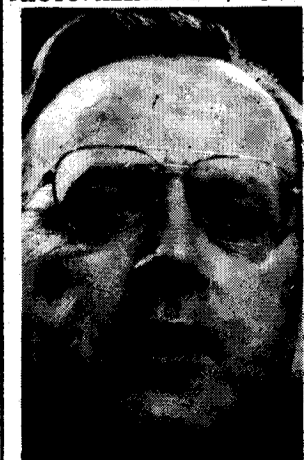


Now that 25,000 jobs are to go BL workers must demand to know just what action Evans and his fellow union bureaucrats intend to take.

Certainly, asking union officials to lead the necessary "bloody revolution" is a bit optimistic.

But as a first step threatened plants must adopt an immediate policy of occupation, and national supporting action must be called.

PHOTO: Andrew Wiard, Report



Evans

As Irish Prime Minister Lynch grovelled to Thatcher, and the British media screwed the final crocodile tears out of the Mountbatten assassination last week, the forces of British repression got back into the swing of things by arresting an American television crew and three members of Sinn Fein.

Journalist Pierre Salinger, a former US Presidential aide, was held for 12 hours at the RUC's notorious Castlereagh interrogation centre in Belfast—though he was spared the routine beating and torture meted out to republican suspects.

Violent

Republican News editor Danny Morrison and Sinn Fein members Joe Austin and Richard McAuley were not so lucky, however: they can be held for up to 72 hours without charge under the so-called "Prevention of Terrorism" Act.

The underlying background of violent repression by British imperialism in the six counties is well illustrated by a press release from the Irish Republican Information Service dated August 25—the week of the Mountbatten assassination.

It lists three recent instances of extreme violence by the British army against Catholic youth—none of which have been reported in the British press.

Bullets

One casualty, a sixteen year-old Belfast boy Stephen Montague, still had not recovered from a coma two weeks after being downed by a plastic bullet at a range of four feet, and then kicked in the head and beaten by soldiers before being left for dead in a Loyalist area.

He has a fractured skull, severe bruising and lacerations, and a tracheotomy had to be performed in hospital to keep him breathing.

Another plastic bullet victim was 18 year old John Mulvenna, hit by one on the forehead at point blank range while standing in the hallway of his own home.

He suffered a "depressed fracture of the skull" which required over 100 stitches.

And Andrew McCrudden, a young married man from Tuff Lodge who suffers from heart trouble, was grabbed by a baton wielding group of soldiers from the Kings Own Scottish Borderers, and beaten unconscious before waking up in RUC detention and finding himself charged with 'riotous behaviour'.

Careerists

Such violence is an everyday threat faced by the nationalist population in the occupied six counties.

Yet the careerist touts of the SDLP who claim to speak for the Catholic minority have just issued a further vicious attack not on the army but on the IRA which—for all its political weaknesses—has spearheaded the struggle against British imperialist rule. Alluding to the Mountbatten assassination, the SDLP asks:

"Who would want to live in an Ireland created by people engaged in such acts?"

Humiliating

The SDLP's answer is clear: they prefer to live in an Ireland governed by foreign capitalist exploitation, brutally imposed by the boots, batons and bullets of the British imperialist army. How many British workers would meekly accept similar humiliating conditions if the situation were reversed?

The fight must be redoubled to force the British troops out of Ireland!