

SOCIALIST PRESS



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USFI and Portugal Centre pages

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Fight betrayal by Patriotic Front

Prostituting political principle is not on any written agenda of the Tories conference on Zimbabwe.

But it has been one of the main activities of the principal delegates.

The leaders of the Patriotic Front and the Smith-Muzorewa regime have skipped over previously 'insurmountable' obstacles with an agility amazing even from such well-trained politicians.

Progress towards compromise seems in fact to have outstripped the most optimistic Tory timetable for the talks.

This haste to reach a settlement of the war is the product of the increasingly oppressive economic and political forces bearing down on both the guerrilla leaders and the racist Salisbury government.

Protracted war and continuing sanctions on trade are dragging the economy of Zimbabwe closer and closer to a total breakdown.

Sanctions

For the white bourgeoisie, and its smaller black counterpart, the lifting of sanctions is imperative, and this necessity increasingly dominates their political arguments.

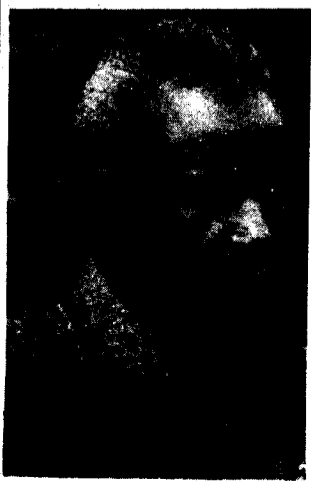
But the effects of the war are not confined to Zimbabwe.

The 'front-line' states—in particular Zambia—have suffered severe economic consequences.

The bourgeois nationalist leaders of these states are putting their best efforts into forcing the Patriotic Front leaders to agree a peaceful settlement.

Kaunda and his colleagues are also goaded on by fears that their own regimes may come under threat from any further escalation of the war in Zimbabwe to involve the masses more deeply in the struggle—especially when the armed militants of the Patriotic Front

Continued page 2



Kaunda

Engineering employers split

ALL-OUT STRIKE

CAN WIN CONFED

CLAIM



About 500 engineering firms, including 60 members of the Engineering Employers Federation, are now said to have conceded the national pay claim being fought for by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

And the giant GEC combine is planning to leave the EEF after the present dispute, with its succession of damaging one day and two day strikes, is over.

So while the early efforts of the press to foment splits and divisions amongst engineering workers have almost completely failed, the solidarity and cumulative impact of the strikes and overtime ban are clearly splitting the employers.

Profit-hungry

In a clear indication of the divisions now emerging among this, the most profit-hungry and viciously anti-union employers' body—which forms the very backbone of British capitalism—one defecting employer told the *Financial Times*:

"We can admire employers' solidarity, but our business and our customers must come first".

And though most employers are still holding out, it is this same instinct for self-preservation amongst whole sections of engineering employers

which has meant that the Rolls Royce-led attempts by the EEF to spread a national lock-out throughout the industry have failed so miserably.

Interest rates

Smaller employers, already struggling under the Tories' sky-high interest rates and the effects of the soaring value of the pound on export prospects and imported goods, have shown no inclination to join Rolls Royce in shutting down production altogether.

Though Rolls management appear to have negotiated arrangements with certain customers to allow them leeway for late delivery of aero engines, they too face possible loss of orders and huge costs from the shutdown, including the full pay being given to laid off white collar staff.

Other, weaker, employers, though no less eager to defeat the strikes clearly feel unable to take such an expensive, and so far unsuccessful gamble in the face of a determined working class.

Faltering

This faltering position of the employers and clear signs of divisions in their ranks points to the necessity for the unions to step up the action.

If the employers, despite obvious encouragement from the Tory government, now visibly shrink from a total shutdown of the indus-

try, then a total shutdown is precisely the move necessary to force them to settle the full £80/39 hour week claim.

Terry Duffy and the other Confed leaders who have deliberately restricted the scope of the strikes must be opposed on this at every level in the unions with demands that they call all-out action.

To inflict a defeat on the EEF, or to precipitate a major split in its ranks,

would strike a dramatic weakening blow at the Tory government, whose policy of confrontation has so far been energetically adopted by engineering employers, alongside management of ITV, Chrysler/Talbot and Vauxhalls.

And in strengthening the massive forward movement of the working class, (which has already made 1979 the biggest year for strikes since Heath was toppled in 1974) a victory in engineering can create favourable conditions in which to challenge and replace Duffy and other right wing union leaders, whose policies of class collaboration stand fundamentally opposed to the necessary mass action to

bring down the Tory government.

A revolutionary leadership, capable of matching up to the tasks and possibilities of today's situation, and fighting to mobilise the working class in defence of its class interests, must be built.

Conference

The Workers Socialist League is supporting the 3 November Conference of the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement (details p.11) which offers workers from engineering and other industries the opportunity to discuss the political programme and perspective on which this fight can be taken forward.

Fighting the cuts—pull-out supplement inside



Oxford parents in picket at rail station protest to Tory Minister Carlisle at the complete closure of nursery facilities by Oxfordshire's Tory council.

INTERNATIONAL



Iran oil chief sacked

The Ayatollah Khomeini declared last week how pained he had been by the 'unjust and inhuman' accusations that he was a dictator.

But, heroically, he is subduing these touching signs of human weakness in the drive to assert the supremacy of Islamic reaction in Iran.

The latest victim of this offensive has been Hassan Nazih, head of the National Iranian Oil Company.

Conflict between Nazih and the religious leaders reached a climax at the end of last week, with his dismissal and the certainty that he would be charged with treason.

Nazih's "crime" lay in not moving to purge the employees of the oil industry to the extent demanded by Khomeini's revolutionary council.

Khomeini and his fellow bigots are seeking the mass sacking of all 'communists' in the industry—a category that probably includes every element of democratic opposition to the Islamic regime.

Nazih himself is no friend to communism, but knew far more accurately than the ayatollahs how deep would be the workers' reaction against moves to purge all their leaders and militants.

For this 'traitor', the interests of capital stand unequivocally before those of Islam.

Anxious to restore capitalism to its former glory in Iran, he had frequently urged the regime to reach economic deals with imperialism at a far more rapid rate than the one prevailing.

Nazih's calls for the re-establishment of private capital, fully protected by the state, were accompanied by a firm resolve to avoid provoking the development of proletarian struggle by unnecessary and impractical attacks on the organisations of the working class.

With Nazih now on the run from the powers of Islamic reaction, Khomeini has installed a new and more pliable functionary to direct the crucial sector of the Iranian economy.

Car workers—first victims of US "social contract"?

A much needed boost for President Carter's flagging credibility has been provided by the agreement of top US union bureaucrats to collaborate in an American version of the "social contract".

Reactionary leaders of the AFL-CIO (American TUC) along with the gangster bosses of the non-affiliated Teamsters Union and the United Auto Workers, have pledged to assist Carter to impose "voluntary" pay restraint on their members in exchange for a few empty promises of White House action on unemployment benefit, the energy programme and trade protection.

Unanimous

The "national accord" was passed unanimously by a meeting of 23 of the 35 members of the AFL-CIO executive board.

It is a farewell kick in the teeth for the US working class from retiring AFL-CIO President George Meany, who at 85 is finally ending a 24-year period of office marked by proud and open class collaboration and vicious anti-communism.

And it is testimony to the continuing reactionary alliance between top US union leaders and the capitalist Democratic Party.

Foretaste

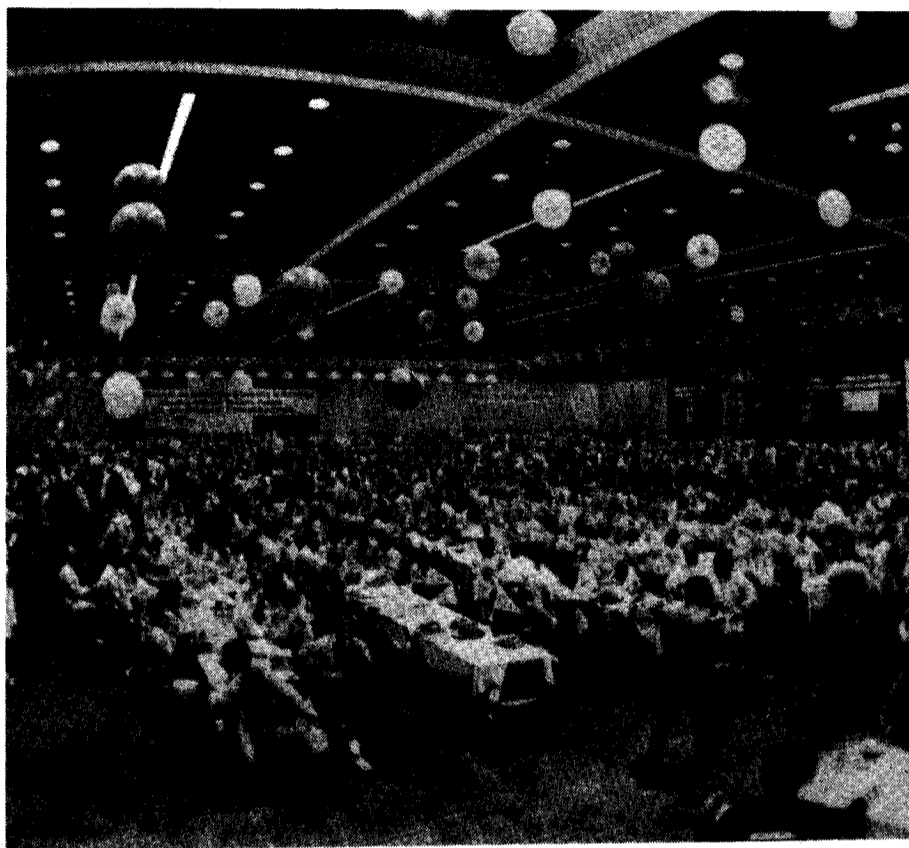
A bitter foretaste of the kind of consequences that the "accord" will have for US trade unionists has been given in the moves now underway to sell-out the pay review for the giant General Motors work-force.

The expected strike over the pay claim was postponed from September 15—and now

seems likely to be avoided altogether.

The strike would have been against the proposals of the GM management for a three year no-strike agreement with 9% pay rises and a few fringe benefits.

This proposed agreement, if accepted, will set the standard for the other pay negotiations throughout the rest of the US car industry which are due shortly.



Balloons, beer and banqueting—the UAW Convention, 1977

With current US inflation recently announced at over 14%, and with large-scale redundancy throughout the industry this proposed deal represents a real wage cut for the workers.

Yet the bureaucrats of the United Automobile Workers have called off industrial action on the basis of the most minimal gains which they are currently trying to force on the workers throughout the company.

Extraordinary methods

Their methods of doing this are extraordinary by British standards.

First of all they flew the convenors of the largest plants to the UAW headquarters at Detroit and persuaded them to vote unanimously for the deal on Thursday 21 September.

Next they took out the committeemen—senior stewards—of all the big branches in GM to big hotels in Texas. During this all-expenses-paid trip they

persuaded them to support the deal also.

Finally, they are running members' meetings to 'explain' the deal before running a secret ballot to get acceptance.

On what basis are the UAW bureaucracy trying to sell this deal?

In a report published by the union on 18 September they claim 'substantial increases' involved in the proposed settlement.

They state that the hourly rate of an assembly line worker will rise under the deal from \$7.30 per hour to \$9.13, and that for skilled men from \$9.30 to \$11.19.

These rates however are only worked out on the basis of a number of cost of living increases and other elements which were due in any case.

And they cannot hide the fact that very little indeed is promised in the last two years up to 14 September 1981, when no-strike clauses will operate with all their rigour and by

which time the assembly line base rate will only have gone up to \$9.60.

One major retreat which the negotiators have made is to allow the management to deduct 14 cents per hour from the cost of living entitlement to pay for the company pension scheme—this had formerly been paid by the company!

Travel expenses

This is despite the fact that the negotiators claim to have defeated proposed company 'takeaways' such as taking money for travel expenses out of the cost of living increases.

It can only be said that such ludicrous notions must have been deliberately set up by the employers to give the bureaucrats something to boast about after they were rejected.

That the only way the paltry concessions on pay can be sold is by some improvements on other matters.

The number of 'paid personal holidays' are increased in the new contract from six per year to twelve and thirteen.

This is in addition to the normal specified Christmas and other public holidays.

Recognition

Another important concession is that the company has agreed to give recognition to UAW members moved from old or closed plants to the new ones they are in the process of setting up in the south and elsewhere.

Though these concessions come together with the real cuts in wages which are being proposed, they are clearly designed to make it more difficult to secure rejection from the rank and file.

Socialist League members at the Fremont General Motors plant near San Francisco are campaigning for rejection of the terms in the forthcoming ballot.

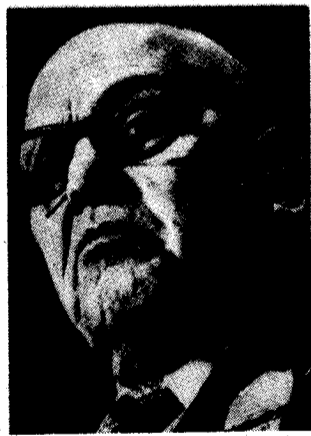
Weakness

They point out that the extraordinary lengths to which the bureaucracy has been compelled to go to sell it shows their weakness and lack of confidence rather than any real strength.

However, though the contract may well be thrown out at Fremont, in the absence of a national and conscious campaign, it is difficult to see how an overall rejection can be obtained.



Carter



Meany

Zimbabwe ... from front page

have their bases inside the front line states.

Parallel fears ensure that the South African apartheid-capitalists join with the British Tories in maintaining pressure on Smith to negotiate a pro-imperialist settlement.

Bowing to this pressure, Smith has now conceded defeat on the question of a white veto bloc in any new parliament. But his effective rejection of the principles of UDI finds its reflection in the concessions made by the Patriotic Front.

Defying years of fierce and uncompromising rhetoric, Josiah Tongogara (military commander of the Mugabe-led Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army) declared his complete willingness to work alongside Lt.-Gen. Walls and the army of the Smith-Muzorewa regime in the transitional period towards implementing a new constitution and electing a new government for an indepen-

dent Zimbabwe.

This breathtaking 180-degree turn must have sent shock waves jarring throughout the rank-and-file of the Patriotic Front.

Nkomo and Mugabe have a rich experience of dealing brutally with political opposition to their leadership. But now the stakes are far higher than ever before.

The heads of the Patriotic Front are uncomfortably aware that a failure at this stage to end the war diplomatically will produce a crisis in the ranks of the Front which may well throw up a radical or even consistently revolutionary alternative to their left nationalist leadership.

And the war, of course, continues to develop as a back-ground to the manoeuvres and deals in London.

ZANLA guerrillas last week attacked one of the major camps in Salisbury's northern defences, in what was their major operation of this type so

far.

On the same day, a new raid into Mozambique was launched by the Smith-Muzorewa army, with which Tongogara is so accommodatingly willing to work in the near future.

The London conference has already shown with shocking clarity the murky depths to which Nkomo and Mugabe are prepared to sink in order to advance their self-interest as against the needs of the masses in Zimbabwe.

Censure and cynicism cannot counter such betrayals.

They must be overcome in the historic struggle to build a Trotskyist party in Zimbabwe which can lead the proletariat at the head of its allies to develop and transform the war against the Smith-Muzorewa regime into a revolutionary struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the advance of the international socialist revolution.

Turkey: coup threat grows

A new governmental crisis is certain to emerge in Turkey following the resignation of one of the independent members of Prime Minister Ecevit's bourgeois cabinet.

The leaders of the right wing opposition Justice Party are claiming that two more will soon resign, and state that they will bring down Ecevit's minority RPP government after October 14.

That day will see by-elections in five constituencies and the re-election of one third of the Senate, and could prove the final turning point for Ecevit's unstable "democratic" regime, which clings to office in a fragile alliance with army generals and through the operation of martial law restrictions on the labour movement throughout much of the country.

There are now widespread reports that right wing and military leaders are preparing to impose a "transitional regime" based on an amended 1961 constitution. This has long been the demand of the Justice Party. Ecevit himself described the

resignation from his cabinet as a move "planned by dark circles" as part of a bid to impose such a breach in the constitution.

But he claimed his government would survive. In any event, he declared vaguely, "the people will not tolerate such a move by certain ruling cliques".

But he refused to answer an interviewer who asked if the RPP would mobilise its mass support against the threat of a fascist takeover.

Instead he stressed the need for what he called a "strong democratic state" to resist the right wing moves. Yet in reality such a "strong state" already exists, and embodies many of the repressive steps against the left demanded by the fascists.

Yet the leaders of both main trade union confederations remain committed to supporting the RPP, advocating no policies whatever to satisfy the independent needs of the working class.

And though three left wing parties and sections of the divided Turkish Communist Party are this time running candidates independent of the RPP, they offer little other than vague talk of "defending democracy" and calls on Ecevit to act against the fascists.

Imminent

The danger of a military fascist takeover is imminent. It is vital that the workers' movement make a decisive break from Ecevit and form a united front in the struggle against fascist violence and military repression.

Workers defence squads must be formed. The fight must be not for the preservation of fake "democrat" Ecevit, but for a workers' and peasants' government, which must be driven to carry out the necessary socialist policies to defend the Turkish masses.

INTERNATIONAL

S. E. Asia: Part 3

Who are the
'boat people'?

Who are the "boat people", and what do they reveal about the nature and policies of the Vietnamese Communist Party which since the defeat of the American imperialists in 1975 has ruled both the North and South of Vietnam?

The great majority of the 'boat people' have come from South Vietnam, especially from Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon).

Mass emigration from South Vietnam predates the defeat of the imperialists. It accelerated during the last days of the imperialist retreat, as imperialism's collaborators and agents fled from the vengeance they deserved and expected.

After that a steady stream of refugees continued to leave Vietnam until the present enormous upsurge of emigration began in the early months of 1978.

Sudden change

It coincided with and was very much affected by a sudden change in the policy of the Vietnamese CP.

After the collapse of the pro-imperialist regime and the US army Hanoi moved very cautiously in relation to capitalist property in the South.

In particular a sizeable private sector remained in the area of distribution.

In May 1978, however, the leadership moved towards a rapid political and economic integration of North and South.

This included expropriation of virtually all private property in the South, down to small-scale wholesalers and retailers, very many of whom were Chinese by national origin.

It was that measure, and the way it was evidently carried out, which set in train the flight to sea of the boat people.

At first almost all the boat people were of Chinese origin (traders and their families) and as recently as two months ago observers were saying that 80% were still Chinese, though the Vietnamese component is continuing to rise.

One million

How many refugees have there been up till now?

The estimate made by the UN High Commission for Refugees is that since 1975 one million refugees have left Vietnam.

About 250,000 of these have gone, often by land, to China, and some of those probably did not regard themselves as permanent residents of Vietnam in the first place.

Most of the rest have left the country by sea—often in small, unsafe and invariably overcrowded boats.

250,000 of these have been admitted to countries outside Asia, mostly to the USA.

At least 350,000 are now in "transit camps", sometimes in appalling conditions, in the countries of ASEAN or in Hong Kong.

Tens of thousands have probably died at sea from disease, starvation and drowning.

Conference

The Vietnamese government at the July Geneva conference on the boat people (a conference which it began by denouncing and ended up by



Vietnamese bureaucrats received in Moscow

collaborating with fully) said that it expected the eventual total of emigrants would be 3 million, of whom 1½ million would be of Chinese origin.

The Vietnamese government also says that of those who have left so far only 40,000 have done so legally and that, despite their efforts, they have been unable to control the rest.

Their implication is that the rest have left illegally in order to avoid paying the taxes on emigrants imposed by the government.

Some emigrants, however, present a different story.

Semi-legal

They say that most refugees leave semi-legally in the sense that they "fix" their departure with a member of the bureaucracy who personally pockets some or all of the money the refugee pays.

That Long, a former mathematics teacher, quoted recently in *Le Monde* claims that he had to pay \$3,000 to be allowed to leave.

He also claimed that in total \$3 billion had been taken from emigrants in this way in the first six months of 1979.

The Vietnamese bureaucracy and its allies claim that the refugees are almost entirely former capitalists and traders disgruntled at the socialism of a regime which has nationalised their property.

Others they allege are elements which have collaborated with the imperialists and who represent a permanent block on the revolution and whose fate (by implication) should be no serious concern of socialists.

No answer

The problem with this explanation is that it doesn't answer why one million people are prepared to embark in conditions of obvious danger with no guarantee of any destination other than a refugee camp or worse.

According to the Hanoi bureaucracy all this is "independent of our will".

Yet it has waged a consistent campaign against Chinese residents which is driving many of them through fear to pay large sums to leave the country in the most dangerous conditions.

It is beyond the bounds of belief that as many as 1½ million Chinese and the same number of Vietnamese are irredeemable exploiters or imperialist collaborators.

Yet this is the gist of the Vietnamese bureaucracy's version of events.

Fifteen percent

The three million they expect to leave amount to 15% of the population of the South and 75% of the population of

Ho Chi Minh City where they mostly come from.

Of course, that is not to deny the fact that the social environment created, particularly in Saigon, by imperialism was one extremely hostile to any kind of progressive social transformation.

To hundreds of thousands, corruption and collaboration had become a way of life.

There were one million soldiers in the ranks of the old



Heng Samrin



South Vietnamese puppet army and economic life was in ruins.

3½ million were unemployed in the South and corruption was rife.

The North Vietnamese Stalinist bureaucracy, faced with this situation, held back on the integration of North and South, attempted to remove 1½ million of Saigon's 4 million inhabitants to useful work in the countryside and rounded up tens of thousands of South Vietnamese into reeducation centres.

Bureaucratic rule

But in carrying out these policies the bureaucracy did not base itself on the triumphant mobilisations of the masses which had helped defeat the imperialists; it attempted to impose in the South an extension of the bureaucratic Stalinist rule in the North.

As a result, repressive measures have been applied not only to reactionary elements of the old South Vietnamese society but also against any action of the masses aspiring to independence of the bureaucracy.

Even though everything has been complicated by the imperialist economic blockade and the Chinese invasion, the policies of the bureaucracy are to a great extent responsible for the fact that the basic material problems of the masses are not being solved.

One reason that the supply of basic foods and other goods is becoming even tighter is the problems of maintaining the vast Vietnamese armies of occupation in Laos (50,000 troops) and in Kampuchea, where it was reported last week that Vietnamese forces would be expanded to a staggering 200,000—half the number of US troops in Indo-China at the peak of the war!

200,000 occupying troops to police a Kampuchean population of 4 million is hardly evidence of the alleged 'popularity' of the invaders and the puppet government under Heng Samrin.

In Vietnam itself the question of the refugees and potential refugees is something which the bureaucracy is using to answer its unpopularity and its material problems at home.

First, they can be set up as a mass "foreign" presence on which blame can be deflected.

Second, their property can be confiscated, thus easing the personal material problems of sections of the bureaucracy as well as the more general material problems of the country.

Third, the bureaucracy at the Geneva conference made a deal with the imperialists that prospective emigrants (and there are still two million of them) would be placed in "departure camps" in Vietnam itself under joint United Nations and Vietnamese supervision to await transport.

In this way the advantages which the bureaucracy derives from its treatment of the refugees can continue, but without the international opprobrium.

This way the imperialists, too, solve a major problem.

Embarrassed

Because although they have systematically exploited the plight of the boat people for anti-communist propaganda purposes, they have also been embarrassed by the presence of hundreds of thousands of refugees whom they "support" but are not prepared to take in.

Since the Geneva conference the flow of emigrants has been reduced due to preventive measures taken by the Vietnamese.

Severe sentences, including one death sentence, have been imposed on illegal emigrants in the last few weeks.

It is very hard to escape the conclusion that the present treatment of the refugees has nothing to do with the preservation of socialism, but everything to do with the preservation of the power of the counter-revolutionary Vietnamese Stalinist bureaucracy.

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Liberals 'troops out' fraud exposed

All sides were united on one thing in last week's Liberal Party conference: whether or not they favoured the eventual withdrawal of British troops, they all opposed the war of liberation being waged by the republican movement.

The "debate" on the issue of troops in Ireland was purely a haggle over which tactic offered the best means of preserving capitalist stability in Ireland

and minimising the tax burden on the British middle class.

Set date

The "troops out" amendment sought simply for a "date to be set" for a British withdrawal, and proposed that the British army of occupation should be replaced by a "peace-keeping force" from that age-old imperialist thieves kitchen—the United Nations.

The task of such a UN force would of course be the same as that undertaken

by the British troops—the repression of the national liberation struggle and the preservation of capitalist stability North and South of the imperialist-drawn border.

The fundamentally reactionary politics of the Liberal "troops out" contingent was demonstrated by the fact that their most influential spokesman, Cyril Smith, later went out on a limb to support the Tories' anti-picketing proposals in defiance of conference policy.

Smith's main gripe was that Enoch Powell and "people like him" are "clinging to power and privilege under the protection of the gun and at the expense of the taxpayer."

"Murderers"

And Liverpool Edge Hill MP David Alton, another "troops out" speaker, went out of his way both in the conference and in subsequent TV interviews to attack what he called the "murderers" in the IRA—who are currently waging the struggle to force British troops out of Ireland.

Other Liberals of course stuck to the more orthodox imperialist rhetoric—with talk of "bloodbaths", "cata-

strophic consequences" and "encouraging the Provisionals" if the motion were carried and troops withdrawn.

Liberty

One luckless speaker who took the Liberals' talk of "individual liberty" seriously and moved a call for the repeal of emergency powers in Ulster, was answered by the argument that the "alleged brutalities" of the army and the RUC had nothing to do with emergency powers!

Last week's *Daily Telegraph* described the Liberal Party as a party for people who don't like politics.

The debate on Ireland proved beyond doubt that the much-vaunted "troops out" position argued by Smith and the Young Liberals is a troops out position for people who do like British imperialism.

Respectable

Any elements in the workers movement who had hoped that the Liberals would provide a "respectable" platform behind which they could voice mild disapproval of British army tactics while opposing the national struggle in Ireland



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Young Liberals on August 12 Troops Out demonstration

must have been rudely disappointed.

The task remains the hard, unavoidable one of fighting to mobilise the British working class in the struggle to force the immediate withdrawal of British troops from the six counties of Ireland, and create

conditions for the Irish people as a whole to determine their own future.

Crucial to this is the fight for labour movement support to the Sinn Fein national demonstration in support of the 'H' Block blanket men, to be held in Oxford on Saturday 20 October.

Letters

Send us a letter, putting your views on the articles in *Socialist Press*, on the struggles in your union or district, or on any topic you feel is important. Write to: *Socialist Press*, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

Labour 'lefts' back rate rises

Dear *Socialist Press*,

As a member of Holborn and St. Pancras South Labour Party and a supporter of *Socialist Press*, I would like to relay some of my recent experiences in Camden Council's fight against the proposed Tory cuts in local government expenditure.

Camden Labour Group, who control the council, are formally pledged to fight any cuts in existing public services or staffing.

In a recent statement to Holborn and St. Pancras South GMC, Councillor John Mills declared that the Labour Group had decided to "avoid cutting back if possible".

But such a stand would have to be backed up by an immense rate increase of at least 35%.

It is useful to remember that Camden Council tenants already pay the highest rates in the country.

In practice the rate increase would mean that Camden tenants would be paying a minimum of a £2 rate increase on top of existing rates of between £5 and £8 a week.

In April 1980 rents will also be increased by approximately £2.

It is of interest that the chairman of the Housing Committee in Camden is that well known 'left' and sometime champion of the under-privileged Ken Livingstone.

He backs these proposals 100%.

In his capacity as Chairman of the Housing (Development) sub-committee Councillor Livingstone has already quickly capitulated to Tory pressure to revise Camden's housing programme.

This decision to revise the housing policy was taken by the Labour Group without any con-

sultation within the local party let alone any public debate.

In practice it means:

- Camden's building proposals will be cut by 50%.
- Council-owned sites will be sold off to Housing Associations.

c) The municipalisation programme will be drastically cut.

These are just the first steps to be taken by Camden's Labour Group 'left' and right in the face of an all-out attack by Thatcher's government on the working class.

Camden's local government

committee has set up a sub-committee against Tory cuts.

But at its first meeting it was made clear what this body's role is to be.

The majority of delegates present thought it could be used to defend the proposed rate increases, publicising the argument that if the Tories had not got in to office this would never have happened.

A *Socialist Press* supporter on this sub-committee made it clear that she opposed both cuts and rate increases. Camden Councillors should follow the example of Clay Cross and defy the Tory government, she said.

But it was made quite clear that at the present time Camden's 'left' and right alike

are unwilling to mobilise the working class behind them in a fight against the Tories.

The argument goes that rate increases are made to defend existing public services.

Unfortunately this will mean further financial hardship for the working class.

Removed

Labour councillors who refuse to mobilise and resist Tory cuts directly or indirectly by massive rate increases must be removed by their local ward parties.

It is not enough for Labour councillors to formally oppose the Tory cuts, but their duty to challenge the Tories' right to

govern.

Camden Trades Council are shortly holding a conference on how to fight the Tory cuts in public spending. Delegates at this conference must demand:

a) Camden Labour Group must refuse to raise rates in order to subsidise the Tory cuts.

b) Tenants' Associations should mount a campaign to boycott proposed rate, rent and heating increases.

c) A council of action must be elected from the conference to co-ordinate mobilisations against this Tory government and monitor the actions of Camden-council.

Yours,
SP
Camden



All-out strike by Camden workers set the pace in low pay struggle. Labour councillors refused to mobilise this strength in fight against the cuts

Rome victim complains

The Wild Life Park
Bahrain

Dear Comrades,

After last week's ordeal suffered by myself and my companions at Rome airport I am writing to draw your attention to the way that we animals—including endangered species—are suffering the consequences of the crisis of proletarian leadership.

It was bad enough earlier this year when the British Labour 'lefts' capitulated miserably to Callaghan and allowed him to drop a promise of an animal welfare bill from the Manifesto—thus paving the way for electoral defeat.

But then we suffered the result of the refusal of the reformist and Stalinist trade union bureaucracies in the capitalist countries to black trade

with South Africa—as we were bundled aboard a *British* aircraft to be shipped to Italy.

The governmental crisis—an outcome of the class collaborationist line of the mass Italian Communist Party in their reactionary "historic compromise" with the Christian Democrats—was clearly a major factor in the airport fiasco.

And we should note that the Stalinist leaders lifted not a finger to defend our interests—indeed they characteristically sided with the repressive forces of the State when two of us momentarily broke loose (and would easily have eluded the police if one had not broken a leg and the other had rather rusty Italian).

Now after these betrayals we find ourselves dumped in this stronghold of feudal reac-

tion where the Emir plainly feels a kindred spirit with us endangered species.

Bahrain would be boring enough, even without the compulsory evening showings of Vanessa Redgrave films. But to make matters worse, there is now talk of a state visit by Gerry Healy and other leaders of the British so-called Workers Revolutionary Party.

Need it be said that, having thus seen the reformist, Stalinist and even fake Trotskyist leaders exposed in practice, I wish to endorse your struggle to build a revolutionary party and for the reconstruction of the Fourth International?

Yours in sisterhood,
Ann. T. Lope

Gloomy bankers meet as crisis deepens

The financial leaders of the capitalist world are meeting at the conference of the International Monetary Fund this week.

They may derive some satisfaction from the fact that their meeting takes place in one "communist" country (Yugoslavia), and from knowledge that a membership application from another (China) is in the post.

Sluggish

But, beyond that, there is virtually unanimous gloom among finance ministers. In the words of the *Financial Times* economics correspondent they all think that:

"The world is condemned to another few years of rapid inflation, sluggish output and high unemployment and there is little that any government or policy maker can do about it."

These entirely justified expectations result from the fact that capitalism is a system based on the thirst for profit rather than the direct meeting of human needs.

Faced with a universal decline in its profitability in the last decade, capitalism itself produces which help to generate more unemployment and the destruction of the weaker sections of capital.

Symptoms

These classic symptoms of world economic crisis are visible all over the capitalist world.

Last week, for instance, it was announced that in the last three months unemployment in Italy, one of the weaker capitalist economies, has risen by 300,000 to 8.3% of the workforce.

In Britain, too, the latest figures suggested that the

already enormous unemployment rate was on the way up again.

Spending cuts

These classic features of slump are today becoming everywhere more evident as all governments try to deal with public sector deficits through austerity programmes involving huge spending cuts.

This particular problem has itself arisen because of the way in which capitalist governments up to now have felt obliged to alleviate the classic tendencies towards slump in order to avoid head-on confrontations with the organised working class and also to protect the weaker sections of capital.

Both within the main capitalist nations and between them there is now some tendency for the stronger sections of the capitalist class to force an end



Toyota cars awaiting export to USA

to these interventionist policies and drive weaker capitalists to the wall.

One effect of that on a world scale is that some countries—such as the US—have been

able to remain competitive only by constant devaluation of their currencies.

This fact led in 1971 to an international monetary crisis which has brought eight years of continuous monetary chaos.

Yet another sharp realignment of currencies took place last week.

The German Deutschmark was upvalued (and the Danish Krone devalued) in relation to the other currencies of the European Monetary System; and the US dollar again fell sharply in relation to other currencies.

This fall prompted a new "rescue" agreement between the US and West Germany to hold up the value of the dollar.

Should it continue to fall, it threatens to magnify the USA's rapidly increasing inflation rate (now heading for 12%) and will help to send Carter's popularity rating further down at the same speed.

But a positive effect on inflation must be at the cost of a worsening in US capital's competitive position in world markets.

More fundamentally, this currency crisis shows, each time it breaks out, that it is much



Carter

more than a question of the relative values of currencies.

It is increasingly a question of a flight from paper money itself—from the Deutschmark as well as the dollar.

That tendency has been very sharply illustrated in the last few weeks by the soaring price of first gold and then of all other precious metals (along with some not so precious ones, like copper).

Thus the growing instability produced by the capitalist crisis and the vain efforts to resolve it becomes expressed in a search for a material store of value other than paper money—a reminder of the insubstantial foundation on which capitalism rests.

S. African bosses change tactics to extend control

The capitalist-apartheid state of South Africa has recently produced a series of governmental moves, of which there was another spattering last week, warmly welcomed by the bourgeois press abroad and by 'progressive' sections of capital and their mouthpieces at home.

These reforms promised,

amongst other things, the abolition of statutory job reservation (affecting only a tiny percentage of jobs reserved for whites, the rest being the subject of agreements between employers and white unions as well as a plethora of other repressive controls over black workers).

Limited residential and ownership rights in white urban areas for a sector of blacks were also planned.

And the Wiehahn parliament

ary Commission recommended allowing black trade unions to be registered—subject to stringent conditions and limitations.

Tactic

Socialist Press has shown that these moves are, in fact, a tactic to defend the capitalist apartheid state against the challenges posed to it by the black working class.

Generally, they are a part of a rigidly controlled and limited programme of reforms through which the ruling class aims to co-opt a larger layer of black allies, drawn from the small but politically significant black petty bourgeoisie and an upper layer of skilled black workers and union bureaucrats.

Workforce

In a world system of decaying capitalism and a crisis of profits, South African capitalists have been led to turn to increased mechanisation.

The formation of a large and cheap skilled and semi-skilled workforce is thus increasingly necessary.

Together with its political implications, the government's programme of reforms has this aim too.

In the case of the registration of black industrial organisations, what appeared to bourgeois commentators to be the extension of trade union rights was rather designed as an extension of control over the



Botha

organisation of black workers.

Fanie Botha, Minister of Manpower Utilisation, announced last week that these ambiguous 'rights' are now to cover all black workers, including migrants (though not those from foreign countries).

Legislation

When legislation was published in June on the basis of the Wiehahn report, only those black workers permanently resident in the urban areas were affected—contrary to Wiehahn's recommendations.

However, this latest amendment—possibly made easier now by the absence over the past months of any really meaningful and strong right-wing threat to the government's reforms from the privileged white workers who have formed such an essential part of its social base—is merely a development of the same project.

Stringent

By imposing extremely stringent conditions for registration, any legislation on labour control will aim to destroy those few black unions, now unregistered, through which some workers have sought to build an independent trade union movement.

The Draconian rules will most likely outlaw all but the most docile and firmly controlled black unions. Alternatively black workers will be forced into unions totally controlled by whites.

Last week also heard Prime Minister Botha stating his readiness to consider changes in the laws which prohibit sex and marriage across racial lines.

About 10,000 people have been prosecuted under the Immorality Act in its 30 year history.

While Botha also said that mixed marriages were always 'undesirable', it is certain that the government is very willing to modify legislation as part of its reform programme—as long as such modifications further the threatened stability of the ruling class, and improve the political and economic conditions for capital's extraction of profits from black proletarian labour.

Restaurants

Another announcement last week concerned the opening of all South African restaurants to blacks.

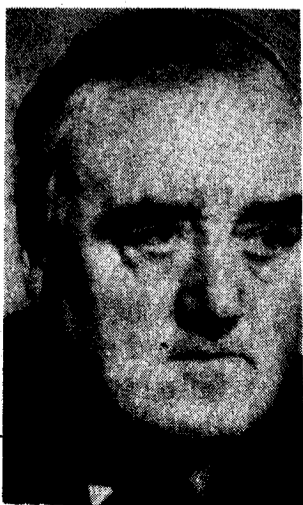
While black businessmen will now dine (to the admiring glances of white liberals) and while the government's programme of reforms is carried through, the repression, control and exploitation of the mass of workers is extended and even more oppressively enforced.

The only real defence of the black working class against that is the building of the organisations and the development of the political programme which embody their independent interests.



South African state forces at work

Tories step up racist laws



Home Secretary Whitelaw

While work proceeds on additional legislation to further curb immigration, the Tories have wasted no time in showing their determination to enforce the existing racist laws with even more ruthless efficiency than their Labour predecessors.

All over the country, Asians have been harassed by police, thrown into detention centres, intimidated by immigration officials and deported.

In Oxford over recent weeks three men have been dubbed 'illegal' immigrants

and thrown out of Britain by the state.

But after an extensive local campaign a fourth—eight-year old Akram Dogar—has now been allowed to stay.

The strength of the local campaign not only forced Tory MP Patten to support Dogar's case, but also drove the Home Office to hove back from breaking the 'genuine bond' between the boy and his 'adoptive parents' in Oxford.

But this victory stands in obvious contrast to the nationally-publicised case of Manju Patel and her three sons.

Driven back to India, Manju Patel now faces a

new bout of attacks from the Home Office bureaucracy.

The Bombay High Commission has now reported its findings on the Patel case, and recommended that the children be refused entry into Britain to live with their mother.

The reason given is apparently that Manju Patel's divorce from her husband was one of 'convenience'.

Met ex-husband

Despite her statements that they have been separated for eight years, the High Commission now claims to have evidence that Manju Patel may actually have met

her ex-husband, and that her children stayed with him.

Flimsy

Armed with this flimsy argument, the Home Office will no doubt feel secure in pressing ahead with the Tories campaign of intimidation against the Asian community in Britain.

It is essential that such attacks are fought by the labour movement, and coupled to struggles for an end to all immigration laws, and for the right of any worker to travel, live and work in the country of his or her choice.

USFI XIth WORLD CONGRESS

PART TWO

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USFI) is undoubtedly the largest and most widely known of the currents that have emerged from the post-war crisis of the Trotskyist movement.

With thousands of members and sections or sympathising sections in dozens of countries, it is viewed by many militants as "the" Trotskyist Fourth International.

The Workers Socialist League does not share this view. We see the USFI as a movement that has departed on numerous key questions from the positions and method put forward in the Transitional Programme on which the Fourth International was founded in 1938.

We know, of course, that the two other main groupings that lay claim to the title of "Fourth International" are both now substantially smaller than the USFI.

Both of them—the Healyite "International Committee" (run by the British WRP) and the "Organising Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International" (run by the French OCI)—certainly hold political positions as bad or far worse than the USFI on many questions and are themselves (like the USFI) wracked by internal crisis.

Disorientation

But the bankruptcy of their rivals is in our view no argument for recognising in the USFI the exclusive continuity of the Trotskyist movement,

How the USFI failed the test of Portugal



May Day demonstration, Lisbon 1975, Caetano had been overthrown

Portugal after April 1974 constituted the most acute and sustained social and economic crisis of the European bourgeoisie since the immediate post-war years.

It has thus been a severe test of all political currents claiming to be revolutionary socialist.

Every aspect of method and tactics has been on trial. How have these parties analysed the overall political situation and the major forces involved—the Armed Forces Movement, the Socialist Party, the Communist Party?

How did they adjust their tactics to fight for the independence of the working class through the Transitional Programme?

Can these organisations and their international centres be held responsible for the fact that the pre-revolutionary crisis which opened in 1974 has not been marked by the growth of a mass Trotskyist party able to make a significant challenge for the leadership of the working class?

Overthrow

The coup of April 1974 ended 50 years of ruthless suppression of all democratic rights in Portugal.

The overthrow of the Caetano regime was in an immediate sense the work of a section of the armed forces. The consequence of these facts was that at the time of the anti-Caetano coup the mass organisations of the working class and their political parties were tiny.

Only the Communist Party, which had maintained a clandestine organisation, had significant numbers of trained members.

The most organised political force in the country was the Armed Forces Movement (MFA).

The initial test of Trotskyist intervention, therefore, was a correct assessment of these political forces—the CP and the MFA—and their relations with each other, and later of the strengthening Socialist Party.

The verbiage of the Portuguese CP was different from that of most of the other mass



1975 march calls for workers' councils

CPs of Western Europe.

The Portuguese CP leadership, however, was to pursue a strategy of class-collaboration which was not qualitatively distinct from those practiced by all other Western European CPs. Its tactics were different because of the differences in the objective political situation in Portugal.

The common feature of the counter-revolutionary stance of all the Western European CPs is the forging of strategic political alliances with sections of the bourgeoisie.

The political form which this takes varies according to the forms of bourgeois rule itself and the relative strengths of the various sections of the bourgeoisie.

Thus in Italy, in the absence of any sizeable political layer between the CP and the main right-wing party of the bourgeoisie, the Italian CP proposes the bi-partisan 'historic compromise' with the Christian Democrats.

Indirect

In France the CP approaches the question more indirectly by its popular frontist Union of the Left alliance with the large, intervening Socialist Party and the small 'dissident' bourgeois

parties.

In Spain the CP tried, unsuccessfully, to avoid the rebirth of a large reformist party by proposing a broad alliance between the 'democratic opposition', in which it had hegemony up to 1977, and the 'reforming' Francoists.

In Portugal the destruction of the fascist state in April 1974 found the bourgeoisie without any mass civilian political organisation.

And the Socialist Party was then still little more than a figment of Mario Soares' imagination.

The Stalinists' route to class collaboration was therefore clear—an alliance with the 'progressive' sections of the bourgeois armed forces, the MFA, and especially its left-talking elements.

What was the nature of the MFA?

It must be characterised as a bourgeois political formation, though one which showed itself increasingly split between the right, which aimed at full-scale counter-revolution; an anti-communist centre which looked to a 'benevolent' bonapartism with perhaps the longer term aim to establish some sort of bourgeois democracy to head off the revolutionary potential and a 'left' whose aims were not much different from those of

the centre but which saw the most effective way of securing them to be through an alliance with the CP, the only party, to begin with, in any position to control the working class.

What was the nature of the state in the period after April 1974?

The fascist/bonapartist dictatorship had been overthrown, though Spínolista forces still made two attempts to restore it (September 1974 and March 1975).

Dictatorship

In a formal sense what existed was a military dictatorship of the MFA, that is, a new form of bonapartism without fascist colouring.

The provisional governments were formally creations of the army and led by army personnel.

But the unqualified label 'military dictatorship' is insufficient to describe the nature of the state.

It leaves out of account the inability of the regime to impose its rule uncontested. In other words, there existed in a few areas an embryonic dual power situation, though in general the organs of workers' power remained weak.

The formal nature of the state, nonetheless, concealed the fact that power in Portugal was increasingly in question. In the absence of strong political parties of the bourgeoisie, and with the military regime only able to impose a modicum of discipline with the help of the CP, this was without question a pre-revolutionary situation.

Organs of power

The main task which remained to be undertaken was the building of an alternative revolutionary leadership and the organs of workers' power.

This could have been done on a programme which contained the clearest possible opposition to the class collaboration of the CP and later of the Socialist Party as it grew in importance.

Such a programme would have contained not only a com-

plete rejection of military government, but also the demand for the dissolution of the armed forces and the establishment of a workers' militia; at the same time the demand should have been made for completely free elections to a constituent assembly and the formation of a government of workers' organisations which would have been dominated by the CP and the SP.

Trotskyists should also have fought for the setting up of workers' councils (soviets) to coordinate the fight for the rights and conditions of workers and peasants and defend the gains which were made.

The workers' militias and the provisional government would be responsible to these councils which would be independent of the bourgeois state or army and would form the basis for the alternative state power to the bourgeois state.



Attack against the CP in the north. Some Maoists saw this as a 'peasant uprising' against 'social fascists'.

Attack on CP headquarters

In all the workers' organisations—workers' councils, trade unions, political parties, strike and occupation committees—Trotskyists should have fought for a programme of demands which expressed the independence and material needs of the working class—the sliding scale of wages, an end to business

secrets, work sharing without loss of pay, nationalisation without compensation of major industries and banks under workers' management; and in the agricultural sector for a full-scale land reform.

At the same time Trotskyists should have fought vigorously for democratic demands—freedom of expression for all workers' parties and organisations, democratic demands in the army and within the workers' parties, and the rights of women, youth, homosexuals and other groups denied rights.

These democratic demands would in numerous instances have brought those fighting for them into conflict with the military government and its allies.

But the difference between the Trotskyist manner of presenting democratic demands and that of the reformist and other groups is that these demands are never presented separately but as part of a programme which expresses the objective truth that, in the imperialist epoch, democratic demands can never be fully met except with the overthrow of bourgeois rule.

The capitalist system, even when as in Portugal in 1974 and 1975 it is compelled to grant certain freedoms, does not do so willingly, and will at an opportune moment withdraw these freedoms.

Essence

This combination of democratic and transitional demands at all levels expressed the essence of the Trotskyist programme in the circumstances of Portugal.

It is a programme which fights tenaciously for every reform however meagre, to protect every gain however limited, but also places before the working class an uncompromising goal—the seizure of state power by the working class.

Within this programme there are numerous opportunities for common actions with other political forces in the working class, but there is no room for any compromise with the political representatives of the bourgeoisie.

whose post-war period has been characterised by profound political disorientation and a continuing series of incomplete and opportunist splits and fusions.

The forthcoming XIth World Congress of the USFI is however an important event. It offers Marxists the opportunity of assessing in more detail the stage of development of the political crisis which has characterised the USFI's existence since its formation in 1963.

Such an assessment is no easy task. Unlike the IC and the OCRFI, the USFI is the very opposite of a politically monolithic grouping consisting of satellite "sections" grouped round a national-based party.

Rather the USFI is a deliberately heterogeneous body, a consciously created hodge-podge of widely varying positions, analysis and practice,

straddled by a leadership which—for all its weaknesses and divisions—is definitely internationally based.

The USFI makes a virtue of the fact that within its ranks currents holding completely opposing political views on issues of programme and practice can exist side-by-side—even when such differences on topics such as strategy and tactics in Portugal 1974-6, the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea and the analysis of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua reach a level where rival USFI factions find themselves potentially or actually on opposite sides of barricades, publicly denouncing the line adopted by their own "comrades".

The USFI therefore is no fixed entity: it is a sum total of divergent factional currents which continually shift and

switch position in response to the surface developments in the class struggle.

Untenable

At its Tenth World Congress in 1974 the main factions were the Leninist Trotskyist Faction, politically supporting the formally "orthodox", opportunist positions of the US Socialist Workers Party, and the International Majority Tendency, clinging on to the ultra-leftist and guerrillaist schemas of the USFI's European Secretariat.

But the untenable positions taken by both the LTF and the IMT during the Portuguese events of 1974-6 and the Angolan war led to a sharp realignment of forces which now shapes the coming XIth World Congress.

The bulk of the USFI's

Latin American member sections and sympathising sections broke with the line of the SWP and the LTF and, led by Nahuel Moreno's Argentinian PST, formed the 'Bolshevik Tendency'.

The growing challenge from these forces, combined with the complete collapse in the credibility of the IMT's guerrillaist perspectives of 1969 and 1974, pressured both the European and SWP leaders into a hasty dissolution of factions and the formation of a new, "united" leadership prior to the XIth Congress.

Omissions

It was this new majority leadership that drafted the five main documents tabled for the Congress. But their manifest

failure to reconcile past political disagreements is demonstrated by the pattern of conspicuous diplomatic omissions and evasions in the documents.

The Bolshevik Tendency has in the meantime declared itself a Faction dedicated to the removal of what it calls a 'Castroist current' and an "unprincipled bloc" at the head of the USFI and the restoration of "orthodox" Trotskyism.

The USFI leaders for their part have mounted vicious public attacks on the Simon Bolivar Brigade organised by parties of the Bolshevik Faction for intervention in the Nicaraguan revolution.

These attacks go so far as to endorse the action of the FSLN leaders in expelling members of the Brigade from the country!

Increasingly the language used in these attacks is that

appropriate to a split rather than an internal debate on politics.

A much lesser threat is seen in the statements produced by a new, 'Leninist Trotskyist Tendency' which has also emerged, with forces in a number of sections, pledged to "correct the errors" of the existing USFI leadership.

The USFI in short is a movement wracked by the most profound internal crisis and contradictions.

In assessing its development and its problems we can not only better grasp the political problems within it but also pinpoint central issues on which clarity is essential in the struggle to reconstruct the Fourth International as an authoritative international centre for the necessary Trotskyist world party of socialist revolution.



thrown but bourgeoisie retained power through AFM.



Soares—tail-ended by SWP

ever the existing state of the class struggle—presents a way forward representing the independence of the working class, the programme represents the alternative to adaptation to the existing leadership.

Neither main faction of the USFI avoided that adaptation in the case of Portugal.

From the side of the SWP (and also incidentally of the French OCI) this adaptation, especially in the crucial middle months of 1975, was predominantly towards the Socialist Party.

At this time the SWP, along with the OCI, presented the Stalinists' and centrists' 'campaign against the Socialist Party' as being the central question of the Portuguese revolution—and their criticism of the SP leadership was reduced to a formality with no cutting edge.

So in ICP G. Foley argued: "While it remained no less reformist, no less pro-capitalist and thus unable to break with the MFA and move towards a workers' government, the embattled SP at this point did not rely on military saviours or bureaucratic positions.

"Nor did it appeal to the still unrepresentative and marginal 'people's committees' that so fitted in with what the ultra-leftists thought the masses should be or would be... The SP turned to the masses. And for this it came under a frenzied wave of demagogic attacks from the Communist Party which accused the Social Democrats of organising "fascist" marches... "What is certain is that the real vanguard of the Portuguese working class at the present time participated in the SP demonstrations. That proletarian vanguard is not to be found among the ultra-leftists who followed a shadow of "people's power" into isolation and even allowed themselves to be used by military demagogues as pawns in a campaign to rob the masses of their democratic rights.

"Nor were the most intelli-



SWP leader Barnes

gent, class conscious and courageous sections of the proletariat with the Stalinist myrmidons who were mobilised to sing the praises of military rulers and help deny the majority of the working class the right to demonstrate".

This approach to the SP was a wholesale adaptation to its leaders and its policies, and amounted to a wilful rejection of the method of the Transitional Programme.

It virtually erases all distinction between the working class and its leadership, the distinction which, above all else, it must be the purpose of Trotskyists to expand.

Instead Foley and the SWP emphasize the vertical divisions in the working class created and exploited by both Stalinist and reformist leaders alike.

So all supporters of the SP

(leaders and rank and file) are distinguished in the SWP's eyes from all supporters of the CP and all the so-called 'ultra-left' (which presumably includes the IMT's supporters!)

Foley writes that: "Once it got the upper hand, the SP would prove to be no more democratic-minded than the CP. But at the decisive moment it led the masses in defending their rights and their right to decide what kind of government they wanted against a frenzied defence of totalitarian schemes by the MFA, the CP and deluded ultra-leftists."

It is ludicrous to say that the SP leaders were defending the 'rights of the masses' or asserting the masses' 'right to decide what kind of government they wanted'.

By deepening the division between SP and CP rank and file members, the SP leaders were in fact guarding against being forced into a government of workers' parties.

They were also defending themselves against an attempt to outmanoeuvre them by the CP and its allies. In fighting that attempt, then, the SP was forced into an opportunistic limited mobilisation of the masses.

Coincidental

And they were in the case of the demonstrations of July 1975 coincidentally defending democratic rights. But behind such a coincidental defence of its right to self-expression the SP leadership also drew in every element of reaction which remained in Portugal.

Although the SP leaders disowned the worst excesses of this wave of reaction (such as the beating up of CP members and the burning of CP headquarters) it is impossible to deny that their campaign encouraged these reactionary forces and did so consciously.

Trotskyists in these circumstances have defended the right of the SP to call demonstrations without harassment and to be able to express its position in newspapers.

But that support should have been part of a programme which included support for both democratic and transitional demands rather than part of a method which, because it had no such firm foundation in the Transitional Programme, clutched empirically to whichever section of the existing leadership appeared to be most 'democratic' at any given moment.

Programme

Such a method could not have led to the building of an independent working class programme; it could only have led to the creation of illusions in a reactionary leadership.

These criticisms of the SWP's positions in 1975 do not imply that we support the very different positions taken by the IMT and summarised in the document 'In Defence of the Portuguese Revolution' by E. Mandel, P. Frank and L. Maitan.

This document, and the other positions of the IMT in Portugal, are as far away from the Transitional Programme as those of the SWP.

While the SWP saw the existing reformist leaders as the 'defenders of the rights of the masses', the IMT sought and thought they had found acceptable 'leaders' within the officer's corps of the bourgeois army!

Continued next week

While the revolutionary party must present an all-sided programme on the basis of which it can give a lead to all sections of the working class, there are two over-riding principles which must govern the programme of demands: the fight for the unity and the independence of the working class.

Independence

This fight for independence is threefold: it involves the building of workers' organisations, both traditional mass organisations, especially trade unions, and soviet-type organs; it involves a fight for the organisational independence of the working class, including the fight for a government based on organisations of the working class without representatives of the bourgeoisie; and thirdly the fight for programmatic independence.

The independence of the working class is continually threatened both by the bourgeoisie and by its agents in the leadership of the working class.

A successful application of the Transitional Programme, therefore, implies a fight mercilessly to expose and replace all sections of the existing purported leadership of the class.

The building of an alternative, revolutionary leadership can never be an easy task; but conditions in Portugal in 1974 and 1975 were more favourable to the construction of a revolutionary leadership than anywhere in Europe since 1950.

Bourgeois rule was suddenly weakened and its leading agents confused and divided. The masses were showing their readiness to struggle against the remnants of fascism and in defence of their interests—struggles which rapidly brought them into successful clashes with capitalist property relations.

Not entrenched

And the leadership of the main workers' parties was not yet so entrenched as in other Western European countries.

All the obstacles to the development of the revolution

in Portugal were insignificant compared with the question of leadership.

Yet the USFI revealed its complete incapacity to understand things in this way.

The blame for the non-existence of a revolutionary leadership was placed precisely where it did not belong—on the working masses!

The view of the ex-IMT, epitomised by Mandel's 25 Theses, is well known—that the present period is characterized by 'a crisis of leadership and working class consciousness'.

But the SWP, too, despite its formal protestations, adopted the same approach in relation to Portugal. For instance, G. Foley wrote in *Intercontinental Press*: "Capitalist rule was left hanging on a thread. Nothing held the masses back but their own illusions in the demagogy of the MFA and the reformist parties. Thus [!!!] in 1975, the problem of political leadership assumed a new acuteness."

Illusions

We do not of course argue that illusions (in bourgeois democracy or in reformist and Stalinist leaders) do not exist in the working class.

But those illusions are not autonomous determinants of the class struggle; they are constantly created and replenished by the opportunistic words (and occasionally deeds) of the reformist and Stalinist leaders themselves.

And as soon as these leaders are unable to control the working class through building and rebuilding such illusions then they are prepared to go to any lengths of treachery to sabotage the revolutionary mobilisation of the working class.

Revolutionaries cannot begin with the assumption that the working class 'has the leadership it deserves'. In reality, as Trotsky said:

"Leadership is not at all a mere 'reflection' of a class or the product of its own free creativeness. A leadership is shaped in the process of clashes between the different classes or friction between the different layers within a given class.

Having once arisen, the leadership invariably rises above its class and thereby becomes predisposed to the pressure and influence of other classes." (*The Class, the Party and the Leadership*, 1940).

The statement that the masses "have illusions" or are "dominated by their leadership" advances us no distance at all along the road of building a revolutionary leadership.

As Trotsky says in the article quoted above:

"One must understand exactly nothing in the sphere of the interrelationships between the class and the party, between the masses and the leaders, in order to repeat the hollow statement that the (Spanish) masses merely followed their leaders."

It is inevitable that blaming the masses for their leaders goes hand in glove with adaptation towards that leadership rather than a policy for the independent mobilisation of the masses. Both main sections of the USFI adapted to Stalinist or reformist leaders.

The question, however, is how can the existing leadership be exposed and overthrown?

To find a solution in practice to this question it is necessary to begin from an understanding that both reformist and Stalinist leaderships are thoroughly counter-revolutionary.

In that respect there is no qualitative difference between Stalinists and reformists even though their overall tactics may differ and they may appear to be to the 'left' or 'right' of each other by turns.

Opportunism

We do not accept that, in Portugal or anywhere else, in the long run either the CP or the SP can be regarded as consistently to the 'left' or 'right' of each other.

Given their unambiguous long-term objectives, the occasional adoption of 'left' positions by the CP or SP leaders must not be interpreted as a stage in their conversion under mass pressure to consistent socialism, but rather as a part of the unprincipled opportunism which is the characteris-

tic of both Stalinist and reformist leaders.

This analysis has little in common with that which we observe in Portugal (and elsewhere) of the USFI.

The former USFI majority (IMT), in the footsteps of Pablo, has consistently maintained a position that there is a potential difference between the Stalinist and social democratic leaders; in particular they cherish the illusion that the Stalinist leaders can adopt revolutionary positions—albeit in 'exceptional' circumstances and 'under pressure' from the masses.

The origins of this false analysis and its history in the Trotskyist movement are analysed in our document *The Poisoned Well*. In this analysis we will concentrate on its impact on the practice of the USFI.

Despite the internal 'dispute' in the USFI over Portugal, this pernicious view has not been the exclusive property of the USFI majority.

In summarizing the political situation in Portugal in 1975, G. Foley wrote:

"There was no revolutionary party that could force the CP to abandon the bureaucratic and sectarian "peoples power" schemes and induce it to fight together with the SP workers for the interests of the class as a whole."

The refusal of either wing of the USFI to characterise the crisis in Portugal, and throughout Western Europe, as one of the bankruptcy of the existing leadership of the working class was at the root of its failure to develop an independent revolutionary programme in Portugal, and led it in theory and in practice to tail-ending the mass workers' parties.

The Transitional Programme, if correctly employed, is a programme of linked demands through which the Trotskyist party can expose before the masses the true nature of every section of its current leadership—'left' or 'right', Stalinist, reformist or centrist.

As a programme which expresses the objective unity of the working class, which—what-

TROTSKY STRESSES NEED TO STUDY HISTORY

LYNN GREGORY considers the current relevance of Leon Trotsky's small book 'Lessons of October' in this, the centenary year of Trotsky's birth. 'Lessons of October' is available in the collection published by Pathfinder Press entitled 'The Challenge of the Left Opposition' or on its own in an edition published by New Park Publications.

The political richness of *Lessons of October* for revolutionaries today is inestimable.

The book raises a multitude of questions about strategy and tactics in a revolutionary crisis: the dangers of conservatism; and the sway of petty bourgeois forces pulling the revolutionary party towards social democracy.

The 'Lessons' that Trotsky was trying to impart were of a far broader nature than just a study of the course of the October revolution.

Disastrous

Written in October 1924, after a disastrous attempt by the German Communist Party to take power in Saxony it was a warning to the international Communist movement that ignorance of its own history could mean a failure to grasp revolutionary opportunities.

A massive economic crisis occurred in 1921 in Germany with the occupation of the Ruhr by French troops, in order to force reparation payments.

Prices shot up in Germany and so too did support for the Communist Party.

Vast numbers of workers were grouped around factory committees under Communist leadership. The CP vote even after their 1923 defeat, reached 3.7 million.

Despite these favourable opportunities for revolutionaries the Communists persisted in their alliance with the 'left' social democratic government of Saxony.

Underestimated

Placing the entire situation, and the fate of the working class, in the hands of the parliamentarians, they underestimated the insurrectionary situation.

Brandler, the leader of



Russian workers demonstrate for All Power to the Soviets in 1917

the Communists, belatedly tried to bring about an uprising after the situation had matured and the working class had passed onto the defensive.

As a result the German army intervened, ejected the 'Red' Saxony government and proscribed the Communists.

By 1924 the government was able to stabilise itself with American aid.

For Trotsky this situation illustrated only too well how the 'Lessons of October' had been ignored. He compared the situation to a commander in chief who in preparation for new wars failed to study the strategic and technical experience of the last imperialist war.

Such a commander would inevitably be doomed to defeat. He went on to

warn: "The party which does not keep step with the historical tasks of its own class becomes, or runs the risk of becoming the indirect tool of other classes."

Brandler's policy in 1923 had been confined to the party's relationship with the government rather than with the working class and therefore had completely subordinated the class independence of the proletariat to the parliamentary system.

Sneering

The appearance of the book in 1924 brought forth sneering comments from the party leadership now being consolidated under Stalin's control.

The debate was referred to as 'the literary discussion' and the events of 1923 as

'only an episode' in the struggle of the working class for power.

Pessimism

This glossing over of the German events revealed the pessimism of certain sections of the party about the chances of the working class overthrowing the armed might of the state (except in alliance with petty bourgeois forces).

Such pessimism had been expressed in 1917 in the initial support given by Stalin and Kamenev to the bourgeois Provisional Government, set up after the February revolution under the now clearly misleading slogan of "the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry".

Indeed whole sections of the Bolshevik party, unable to believe in the ability of an underdeveloped country to take the road of socialist revolution, had shown themselves to be tied to the notion that the working class could only help in building the bourgeois democratic state.

Only when the working class had done this, they argued, would there be possibilities of revolution.

Impossible

In contrast to this Trotsky argued that because the bourgeoisie was weak a stable democratic regime was impossible.

The working class, to defend its interests, would be forced to seize power and adopt socialist measures.

This was the theory of Permanent Revolution which drew out the dynamics of the revolution and



Trotsky

placed it in the context of a world socialist revolution.

This was the lesson of 1917 drawn publicly by Lenin in the struggle for the April Theses of that year, and then shown in practice by the events of October.

The same basic mistake was now being repeated by Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev in 1923.

October

The book analyses crucial moments in the course of the October revolution: the decision not to send the troops to the front which sparked off the insurrection, and Lenin's arrival in Russia to turn the whole course of the revolution towards an extra-parliamentary struggle for power and against an alliance with the Mensheviks.

The right wing of the Bolshevik Party, which included Kamenev and Zinoviev, was steeped in pessimism about the prospects for revolution.

As in 1923 in Germany they emphasised the reluctance and unpreparedness of the masses to fight.

They came out in complete opposition to the motion for armed insurrection put by Lenin.

Instead, they adopted a policy of steering the Soviets towards an alliance with the Constituent Assembly.

These ideas of the right were exactly the same as conceptions held by the Mensheviks.

Conservative

They failed to analyse the movements in the class, lagging behind the historical tasks and becoming a conservative force.

Trotsky's keen understanding of revolutionary strategy and tactics shines throughout the book.

In the July preceding the October revolution the question arose of participating in the Pre-Parliament.

Some sections of the party were in favour of participation at a time when the masses were already on the streets and the actual struggle for power was posed.

Trotsky analyses the danger of seeking the revolution through the parliamentary road.

He wrote: "It is not true that many years must elapse between the bourgeois and proletarian revolutions."

"It is not true that the school of parliamentarianism is the one and only or the main, or the compulsory training school for the conquest of power."

"It is not true that the road to power runs neces-

sarily through bourgeois democracy.

"These are all naked abstractions, doctrinaire patterns, and they play only one political role, namely, to bind the proletarian vanguard hand and foot, and by means of the 'democratic' state machinery turn it into an oppositionist political shadow of the bourgeoisie bearing the name of social democracy."

"The policy of the proletariat must not be guided by schoolboy patterns but in accordance with the real flux of the class struggle."

"Our task is not to go to the pre-parliament but to organise the insurrection and seize power."



Kamenev (top) and Zinoviev

Trotsky was trying to show in his book the necessity of learning the lessons of previous victories and defeats of the Communist movement and in particular the rich experience of 1917.

These lessons have to be absorbed and applied in a living way to the concrete problems and opportunities of our own time.

As the book concludes: "... Bolshevism is not a doctrine (i.e. not merely a doctrine) but a system of revolutionary training for the proletarian upheaval."

"What is the Bolshevisation of Communist Parties? It is giving them such a training and effecting such a selection of the leading staff as would prevent them from 'drifting' when the hour of their October strikes."

"That is the whole of Hegel, and the wisdom of books and the meaning of all philosophy ..."



Trotsky (centre) with the Petrograd Soviet



PHOTO: Mark Rusher, IFL



PHOTO: Mark Rusher, IFL

ABC defendants outside the Old Bailey

Supporters of Astrid Proll picket Bow Street Magistrates Court

A dress rehearsal in state repression

The Persons Unknown case is the latest in a series of state trials which reflect shifts in the attitudes of the state and the level of its technical preparation for the developing crisis in Britain.

State trials, occasions on which the full machinery of state security, the media and 'justice' are mobilised against political opponents of the state regime, are not rare in Britain. Indeed, every capitalist regime requires the occasional test of its apparatus, to train its staff and to evaluate its latest techniques.

Context

The 'Persons Unknown' case must be seen in this context.

To say this is in no way to denigrate the revolutionary seriousness of the anarchists who are the victims of the case, and with whom we have profound political differences.

We are convinced that the charges against them are untrue, but even if it were otherwise, we do not believe that the method of individual terror and sabotage is in any way capable of providing a solution to the problems faced by the mass of the workers.

The scale of the resources which the state has employed in the trial however, is clear out of all proportion to any threat which any small group of anarchists, however well equipped, is capable of posing.

Training procedure

We are convinced therefore that the trial is a testing and training procedure, and in no sense a serious exercise by the state in its own defence.

The most important of the recent state trials was the ABC trial, which resulted in a humiliating defeat for the security forces.

In itself the ABC trial was important to the security forces, for several reasons.

The 3 journalists in the case were engaged in serious investigations of the state apparatus, reaching conclusions which the state apparatus found deeply embarrassing.

The successful defence of the ABC journalists showed the fact that the working class movement remained determined to defend its democratic rights.

Coinciding with a rising wave of wage militancy, it marked a limit to the capitalist state's drive against the living conditions of the working class.

Other cases in this period had proved to be greater successes for the state particularly the Agee and Hosenball case (with which the ABC trial was closely linked) and the WRP/Observer libel case.

Not discouraged

As a result the security forces are not likely to be seriously discouraged by their defeat in the ABC trial. Indeed, all the evidence points in the opposite direction.

The eventually successful extradition of Astrid Proll, requiring changes in the law, and the repeated fascist attacks against her defence organisation,

shows the continued determination of the state and the extreme right wing to perfect the apparatus of repression.

The use of the Prevention of Terrorism Act against Time Out journalist Ron McKay was yet another example.

The 'Persons Unknown' case has been particularly protracted, and as a result its various phases reflect the ebbs and flows of the process of the state testing its strength.

For this very reason the pamphlet is important material in our study of the apparatus of repression, despite our disagreements with the politics of the accused and their supporters.

An important theme

ERNIE STUBBINS reviews a pamphlet on the 'Persons Unknown' case, available from Box 123, 182 Upper Street, London N1, priced 40p.

pamphlet of the court hearings give a vivid picture of the ways in which the basic rights of workers, when tested in court procedures prove not to exist.

There are interesting sections on the security arrangements operated by the police.

These varied from week to week, confirming our belief that the police were using the case to rehearse their techniques.

which the judges and court officials knowingly connive.

Those who persisted in attempting to observe the proceedings were subjected to searches, questions and identity checks.

Sometimes they were filmed. When they finally got into the public gallery they found the view blocked by a line of police.



PHOTO: Andrew Wliard, Report.

Five of the six 'Persons Unknown' defendants: (l to r) Vince Stevenson, Iris Mills, Ronan Bennett, Trevor Dawton and Dafydd Ladd.

developed by the pamphlet is the flimsiness, one could even say the non-existence, of the evidence on which the accused have been held, for over 16 months.

During most of this time they have been in Brixton prison and for long periods in solitary confinement.

At a series of appearances in court the police hinted at, but never presented, evidence of enormous and deeply laid plans to destroy society.

The magistrates at Lambeth never questioned any of the police's assertions, never asked for any evidence, and complied mechanically with the police requests to refuse bail. In contravention of the Bail Act, bail was refused because of the accused's political beliefs.

The accounts in the

Always they involved police firearms, sometimes sub-machine guns, sometimes handguns, sometimes sharpshooters' rifles.

They also involved serious restrictions on the rights of the public to observe the courts at work, and sometimes also the exclusion of the press (the key to the press gallery was 'lost').

Many workers believe in the old saying of 'justice being seen to be done'.

Filled by police

Anyone who has ever tried to observe an important trial will have found that there are very few places available for the public, and that these few are usually taken up by the police. This is a well tried trick with

This same treatment was accorded to the defence solicitors. In one instance the police searched one of the solicitors and read all his confidential defence notes!

In reply to complaints the magistrate actually praised the police for their diligence!

Obviously this kind of interference with legal rights makes nonsense of any concept of 'a fair trial'.

The high speed armed convoys from Brixton jail to Lambeth courthouse, were an important feature of the hearings.

Clearly these were intended to check and improve co-ordination between the prison authority, the Anti-terrorist Squad, the Traffic Division and the other police

units (including the SPG).

The most recent development in the security surrounding the trials is the announcement that the jury will be vetted—i.e. selected to exclude anyone the police think might be sympathetic to the accused.

Jury fixing

This kind of jury-fixing came to light during the ABC trial (where an ex SAS man had been selected as jury foreman), and has been used at least 25 times (as the Attorney General admits since August 1975).

Even here the state appears to be improving its methods, with a new 3-level vetting based on criminal records, Special Branch records (which include political materials) and local police information.

In a particularly hypocritical effort to maintain the fiction of justice, the accused have been offered the chance to vet the jury panel themselves.

This will presumably be of great value to any workers who happen to have private access to the Police National Computer, but of less value to the average victim of the system.

Wave of raids

The pamphlet also has useful material on the wave of raids that surrounded the trial.

These had two main purposes. In the first place they produced a large amount of intelligence.

Diaries and address books were seized, along with notes of meetings, letters, etc. In one raid the police produced a chart of their view of the anarchist movement and its interconnections.

The second purpose was to intimidate the raided households, in an effort to prevent the building of the defence organisation. Dogs and drawn guns were common features of the raids.

An interesting feature of these raids was the participation of German police in at least two of them.

Obviously this marks a further development in police techniques which merits further investigation.

Role of media

The pamphlet goes on to discuss the role of the media in building a widespread belief in the guilt of the accused.

The development of a close cooperation between the state and the media is briefly traced out.

The material here is not new, although it deserves to be more widely known. It begins with Kitson and Clutterbuck, the

'counter-insurgency' experts, and includes the proposals of the right wing think-tank 'Institute for the Study of Conflict' ideas on black propaganda and press manipulation.

Robert Mark implemented many of these ideas during his reign at Scotland Yard, and McNee is continuing down the same road.

Tailored news

The police are currently attempting to refuse to recognise journalists who do not have police-issued press cards. Recent exposures of BBC procedures also confirm the extent to which official news is tailored to meet the wishes of the police and army.

The defence group sets out to draw some conclusions about its own activities. They have correctly tried to publicise their warnings about the case.

It marks an effort to make anarchism an illegal political belief, and this is a very serious threat not only to the rest of the far left but to basic democratic rights.

They make some justified criticisms of the left's lethargy in relation to the case.

There are criticisms that should be made of the defence campaign however.

Labour movement

In comparison with the ABC and Agee/Hosenball cases there has been an evident failure to propagandise the case in trade union and Labour Party branches with a view to building a campaign in the working class.

This underlies the complaint that 'the left' was more interested in fighting the Nazis than the oppressive moves of the state.

It is also connected with the second political failure of the campaign—the failure to propagandise the anarchist views of the accused and their defenders in the campaign.

The international campaign to defend the HKS, for example, for all its weaknesses, involves political debate on policies for Iran.

In the Persons Unknown case, even at the end of the present pamphlet we have no knowledge of the politics of the accused except that they call themselves anarchists.

Experiences

How is it possible for workers to understand the need to defend the anarchists if they will not explain themselves?

There is a brief concluding section in the pamphlet, describing the experiences of the accused while remanded in prison.

Although there is little new here it is a useful brief summary of the conditions imposed upon people who have not even come to trial and yet are often subject to even more barbaric treatment than convicted prisoners.

Socialist Press readers will find the pamphlet informative and, at 40p, good value.

It should be used especially in trade union branches to propagandise about the true nature of the police and the courts, and also to build solidarity with the arrested anarchists now, facing a brazen frame-up trial at the Old Bailey.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

March against the Corrie Bill

Sunday 28 October 1979
 Assemble: Speakers Corner at 11.30 a.m.
 March to Trafalgar Square for a Rally

Super plans for pickets

Smirking happily at the thumping pay increases handed out to them by the Tories, and delighted at Whitelaw's enthusiastic defence of Special Patrol Group thugs last week, senior police officers have been airing their views on how to weaken picketing rights.

A meeting of the Police Superintendants Association heard one delegate propose a five point plan including:

- *restricting by law the number of pickets allowed in a dispute;
- *ensuring that pickets are made identifiable with armbands;
- *clearer definition of so-called "secondary picketing";
- *making it illegal to prevent people entering or leaving premises against their will;
- *compelling pickets to notify the police before manning gates.

Another Superintendent from South Yorkshire, went even further, and suggested that pickets should be compelled to pay the wages of policemen called to break up their picket lines.

"Why not?" he asked. "They do this at football matches!"

While top police officers debate tactics and list their demands, the Tory government, in discussion with TUC leaders, is proceeding to formulate its promised anti-union legislation.

The present wave of struggles on pay and against the cuts, however, shows beyond any doubt that such legislation can be defeated by the mobilisation of the full strength of the working class.

But such mass action will only take place in conflict with the existing trade union leaders.

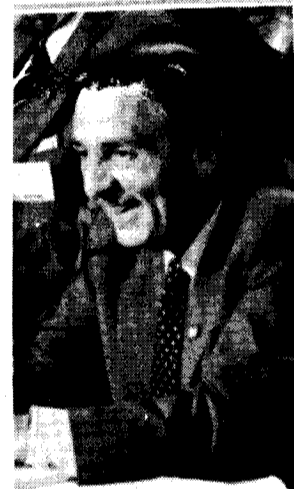
wages for housewives.

The motion pointed out that current social problems are caused by "the breakup of the family" and poor educational standards are fuelled by a 'bad' home environment.

The conference called for greater financial inducements for one parent to stay at home, and rejected an alternative proposal for higher child benefits, index linked to protect against inflation.

Labour Party leaders, themselves committed to similar reactionary attempts to force women back into the isolation and dependence of the home will of course mount no challenge to this offensive.

In the fight to defend and extend women's rights a principled, socialist leadership must be built within the labour movement.



Murray

Tories slam women's right to work!

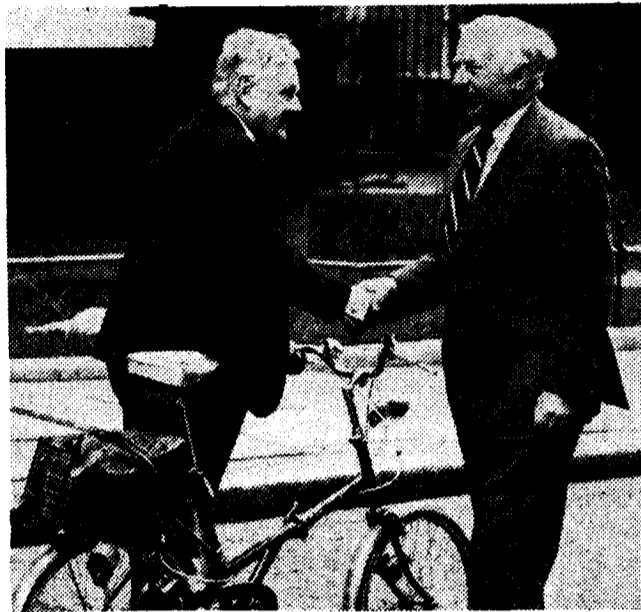
This week has seen further signs of the Tory government's determination to cut back on workers' basic rights.

Employment Secretary James Prior has announced a package, to be legislated by the end of the year, designed to seriously undermine the Employment Protection Act.

The effects will be felt by workers in small firms which must, according to Mrs Thatcher, be given a chance to grow and thrive—at the expense, of course, of their employees.

Exempt

Firms employing less than 20 workers are to be exempted from unfair dismissal legislation,—effectively sanctioning summary



Prior with Tory Lord Chancellor Hailsham

sackings and victimisations—maternity leave provisions and unionisation legislation.

These proposals will inevitably mean a further attack on women's rights to employment, decent wages and conditions, since it is very often women who work for such small firms.

Right

The right to maternity leave—albeit in many cases far too limited in time and often unpaid—is an important gain of the past decade and must be defended.

TUC chief Murray has correctly pointed out that the proposals are:

"A charter for backward employers, restoring to them the right to treat workers unfairly without infringing the law."

But Murray forgets that this is the bosses' government that the TUC continues to discuss and collabor-

ate with and against which he and his fellow bureaucrats refuse to call any action.

Maternity rights

It is of course no accident that the Tories choose to attack maternity rights.

It is a direct result of their determination to insist that a woman's primary role is that of home-maker and child rearer, and the questions of jobs and other interests outside the home must be of only secondary interest to women.

The attacks on maternity rights link up completely with the Corrie anti-abortion Bill and the threatened closure of nursery facilities throughout the country.

In this aim the Tories are supported to the hilt by the Liberals who this week in their Party conference in Margate overwhelmingly passed a motion calling for



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 crack-down 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.

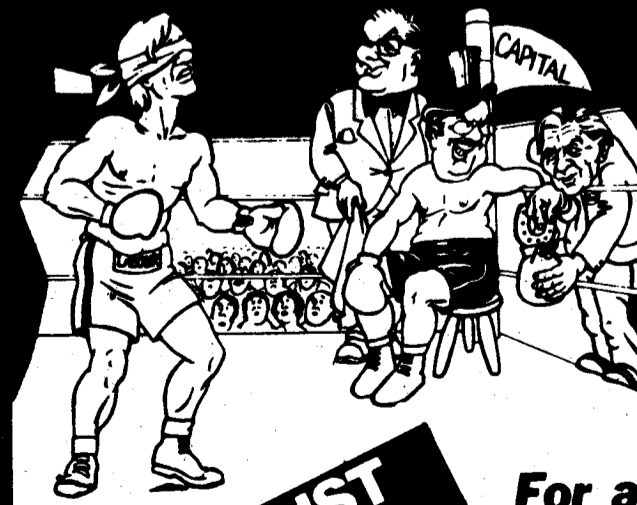
This means fighting for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

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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Postal workers under the axe

Robb Caledon at head of jobs fight

Postal workers have seen over recent months the spectacle of the Tory hatchet-men whetting their axe for a bloody attack on the Post Office.

Carefully cultivated witch-hunts in the mass media have formed a necessary part of the Tories' preparations to cut state spending massively in this sector.

Already plans have been announced to split the corporation in two, and sell off to private capital highly lucrative sections of the telecommunications side.

At the same time, in a piece of legalistic chicanery, the postal service in London has been referred to the Monopolies Commission.

Of course it is perfectly obvious to even the most humble domestic user of the postal service that there are increasing delays in delivery, especially in the London area.

But contrary to the indignant cries of the bourgeois press, these are not caused by card-playing postal workers with bulging pay packets.

Entangled in a lengthy process of mechanisation, the postal service is still chronically short of staff in most areas.

The reasons are not hard to find: primitive working conditions for repetitious drudgery; a barbaric shift system which effectively excludes mothers of young children; and poor pay to clinch the bargain.

The Post Office only continues to function at all because of the massive hours of overtime worked by most employees desperate to take home a living wage.

Behind this situation of mass exploitation, Tom Jackson and the UPW leadership continue their long careers of capitulation and betrayal.

The UPW executive's response to the new Tory attacks carries on this sordid tradition.

Piqued by accusations of incompetence even Post Office management has been more militant in resisting the government's threats.

'Determination' to oppose the splitting of the corporation has already produced its first fruits in the second round of the 1979 wage bargaining.

Accepted

The management offer recommended by the executive proposed separate review dates for the postal side and the telecommunications side.

This effectively accepted the split, and drove a wedge into any possible solidarity from the whole union in wages struggles.

For postal workers, the offer came in two parts: 1) a measly 3½% compensation for shifting the review date from January 1 to April 1; 2) a 7% increase in the basic rate, dependent on an 'efficiency' agreement.

Despite the massive rejection of the scandalous offer recommended by the executive earlier in the year, this separate offer was accepted by an overwhelming majority in the branch ballot.

Astonished to find that the promised second round of wage bargaining had actually materialised, UPW members were tempted by the prospect of much-needed cash in hand to look on the brighter side of the 'efficiency' agreement, as the

union bureaucracy urged them to.

The agreement is a masterpiece of calculated vagueness and deliberate unclarity.

Happy

With no mention of defending their members' jobs and conditions, the UPW executive happily agree to promote the 'efficiency' of 'the Post Office'.

Specific details are supposedly to be ratified by a special conference next year.

But postal workers already know what measures management are seeking to carry through—the re-introduction of part-time staff, and industrial engineering to discover the best means of reducing staff and introducing speed-up.

The Tories' threats to embark on the risky project of de-nationalising sections of the postal service are at present mainly designed to cow the UPW into accepting a huge loss of jobs and drastic worsening of conditions.

There will certainly be a mass response from UPW members as soon as the Tories' plans become obvious.

But there will be no possibility of resisting these attacks under the present union leadership.

Replace

Jackson and his fellows will not fight one millimetre of the way forward against the Tory attacks: they must be replaced by an alternative, revolutionary leadership in the UPW to defend and improve every aspect of the interests of postal workers.

Steel leaders collapse

Right wing steel union leaders, never ones to question the need for their members to sacrifice to make the loss-making industry viable, have yet again been humiliated by BSC management.

Their "substantial" pay claim, including a call for cost-of-living indexation and a reduction of working hours was scornfully turfed out at first sight by BSC management.

ISTC leaders meekly trailed away to think again, and, no doubt, to drop their claim in deference to the corporation's "ability to pay".

The impact such a retreat will have on steelworkers' ability to pay soaring prices is no doubt the last thing on the minds of these "negotiators".

As employers step up the drive for rationalisation and redundancies in industry each week provides new evidence of the inability of union leaders to defend jobs.

At the threatened Robb Caledon shipyard in Dundee, where workers have imposed sanctions that prevent the launching of four ships until they get a guarantee of continued work at the yard, Confed leaders have made an unsuccessful attempt to get the action called off.

Boilermakers' leader John Chalmers, with tortured logic, argued that the action "weakened the workers' case for

keeping the yard open".

But convenor Bob Barty rejected such mumbo jumbo, and refused to consider a reduction in the size of the workforce:

"We do not talk of redundancy here, either voluntary or any other kind. It is a dirty word."

String pulling

Unfortunately it is not such a dirty word for union officials in the North East, whose year-long campaign of string-pulling to keep open Vickers' Scotswood plant at Newcastle-upon-Tyne has resulted in dismal failure.

Not only is the plant to close, but the year's "campaign"

Fighting for new leadership

The broader the scope of the mass struggles now erupting in the labour movement, the more workers will be forced into conflict with the perspective and programme upheld by their bureaucratic leaders.

It is more essential than ever that a full discussion is held on the way forward in the trade unions and the Labour Party.

This is the importance of the national conference to be held on November 3 by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement.

It will provide an arena within which policies to defend jobs, social services and living standards can be argued out in the context of the struggles now under way.

Union branches and labour movement organisations are invited to send delegates to the conference, which is also open to trade unionists and unemployed.

Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

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ACTT says 'No'

11 out of 14 ACTT shops have voted by about 3-1 to reject the latest pay offer from ITV companies and to continue the eight week strike.

The offer spans two years and, under the guise of "cost of living payments" attempts to smuggle in a 37½% deal that, with inflation unchecked, would leave workers worse off than

they are now.

The ACTT negotiating committee recommended rejection of the offer. Members of NATKE and the EETPU also employed by ITV are to vote on it this week.

As the strike remains solid the unions' position is growing stronger as advertisers press the employers to get back on the air for the peak pre-Christmas period.



Jackson

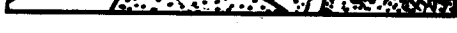
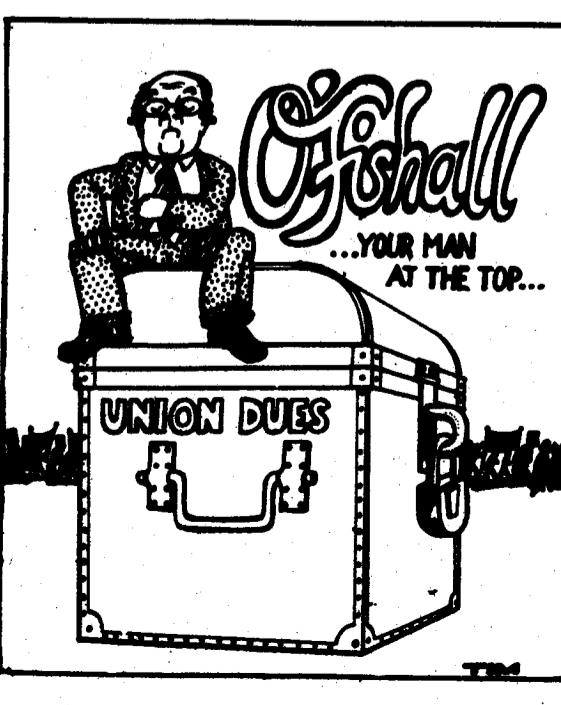
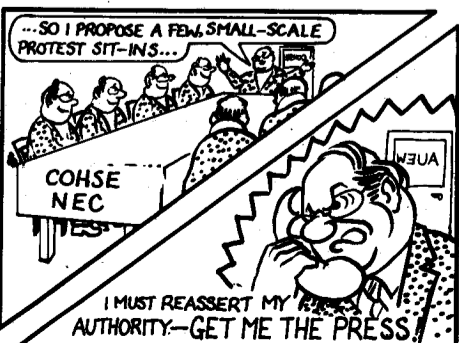
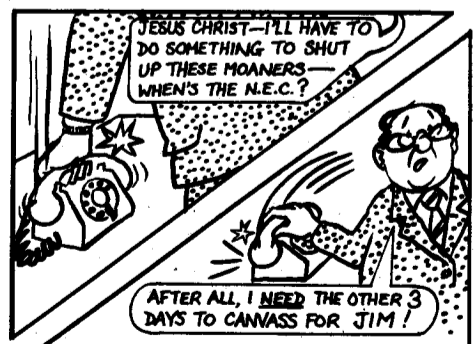


PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

SOCIALIST PRESS



COHSE call to occupy hospitals

Labour Conference

Needed: political challenge to Callaghan

As we go to press, the odds seem stacked against Labour leader Callaghan winning the conference battle against democratic reforms—but possibly in favour of him winning the war.

While a rare display of eve-of-conference resistance by 'lefts' on the Party's National Executive ensured that the three contentious reforms will go to a vote on Tuesday, the NEC also simultaneously conceded that the forthcoming party inquiry will be able to propose reversing any changes that occur.

General secretaries

The inquiry will revolve around five union general secretaries, whose disinclination to extend rank and file democracy can be judged from their behaviour at the TUC and union conferences.

But while the press focusses exclusively on these constitutional changes, the real issues at stake at the Labour conference are obscured.

Callaghan would undoubtedly suffer a further blow to his pride and authority if defeated for a second year running on a major issue.

No alternative

But at the same time the 'lefts' who sound off so readily about 'democracy' have still done nothing to spell out any political alternative to the right wing's basic orientation—seeking to manage crisis-ridden British capitalism in such a way as to produce a few half-hearted 'reforms' for the working class. Labour's dismal and reac-

OUR'S GOOD FOR BRITAIN



1978 Conference

tionary Election Manifesto this year reflected not so much a lack of democracy in the party as the fact that the capitalist crisis is so deep that there are no reforms that can be offered: instead living standards must be attacked to raise profits.

The 'lefts', themselves dedicated to seeking gradual Parliamentary reforms through state investment and subsidies to capitalist industry along with nationalist import controls, cannot politically challenge this position.

The only serious challenge to Callaghan would be one based on the need to mobilise the mass strength of the working

class for the overthrow of capitalism, the nationalisation without compensation of basic industries and the banks, and the establishment of a planned socialist economy under workers' management.

And as long as they shrink from such a position the 'lefts' must also inevitably pull back from the necessary struggle for the removal of the right wing Callaghan-Healey leadership—which would then face them with the task of leading workers forward in struggle or standing themselves exposed as the pompous windbags they are.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Albert Spanswick, General Secretary of the health service union COHSE, grabbed the headlines last week with his talk of occupying hospitals to prevent closure.

Such a policy, if carried out as national policy with the full backing of the 215,000 union and other public sector unions, could play a major role in advancing the struggle against the Tory cuts.

It would provide in every area a focus around which the local labour movement could develop mass strike action in defence of jobs and public services—a rallying point for the necessary struggle to bring down the Tories.

But Spanswick doesn't see it like that. He stressed that COHSE does not plan a political campaign of industrial action against the cuts.

COHSE leaders see their "work-in" policy as the opposite of such a campaign.

They refer to the outcome of the 30-month Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital work-



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Spanswick

in—in which the hospital has now been closed as a general hospital for treatment of women and may, possibly, reopen, as a gynaecological hospital, in 3 years' time—as a "success".

There is little doubt that the Tories would dearly love to see COHSE deliver similar "successes" to their membership in other parts of the country!

Spanswick has also declared that COHSE would initiate occupations only in selected "viable" hospitals—while other hospitals, wards, clinics and facilities will clearly be abandoned without a fight to the Tories' closure plans.

Behind the 'left' bluster of Spanswick's "work-in" scheme is the tired old diversionary tactic of 'selective action', calculated to divide, confuse, mislead and demoralise health service workers, who are showing themselves increasingly ready to take determined action to defend the NHS.

But this should not let Spanswick and others off the hook. Now that the COHSE leaders have raised the issue of occupation, health workers in every area should press forward with demands that their own local leaders adopt and implement the policy, in defence of jobs and services.

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Workers occupy

TWO DAYS after a one-day strike against the cuts by workers in the borough, Fulham workers moved in on September 30 to occupy the local swimming baths to prevent their closure.

The action followed a packed Town Hall meeting last Wednesday at which a WSL speaker from the floor had urged that occupation, linked to supporting strikes was the only way in which the Tory Council could be stopped.

The Baths are now being occupied around the clock by local trade unionists, who are appealing for assistance from skilled engineers and supporters in keeping them functioning and manning the occupation. Funds are urgently needed.

NEXT WEEK

Terry Eagleton on 'Marxism and Culture'. An analysis of the Spanish PSOE Conference. USFI and Portugal, Part 2.

Stop these show trials

While the SPG murderers of Blair Peach are allowed to roam free, the political trials of 342 of those thousands of demonstrators who dared to oppose a deliberately provocative NF meeting in the centre of Southall are running daily at Barnet Magistrates Court.

Contradictory police evidence is accepted as good coin and defence evidence brushed aside without a thought by a bench who have maintained an astounding 80% conviction rate. Seventy or eighty of the

defendants are likely to be jailed in the immediate future.

The whole issue of the events of April 23 and since must be raised within all bodies of the labour movement.

Contribute towards the fines of the defendants by sending donations to the Southall Youth Movement (SYM, 12, Featherstone Road, Southall, Middlesex).

Join the picket of the reopened inquest of Blair Peach at Hammersmith Coroner's Court on Thursday October 11.

Demand a workers' inquiry into the Southall events of 23 April.

Demand the disbanding of the Special Patrol Group.

More talk of Spain coup

"Terrorism, insecurity, inflation, economic crisis, unemployment, pornography and above all crisis of authority."

That, according to General Jaime Milans del Bosch, is a picture of modern Spain.

In a press interview following the assassination of the military governor of Guipuzcoa province (ETA (militar)'s third high ranking victim in less than a week), the General went further than any senior officer so far in preparing the way for a military coup.

He said that the army would intervene:

"When it had become clear that the law, police and judicial action are not enough, or when

it becomes necessary to guarantee the sovereignty and independence of our country."

The whole tone of the interview suggests that he, for one, sees that time as being very close.

The Suarez government was looking very jumpy indeed after these events.

Emergency cabinet meetings were called and Premier Suarez cancelled all overseas visits until after the Basque and Catalan referenda on October 25.

The regime's earnest appeals for calm are serving only to increase the atmosphere of political tension.

Under increasing attack from the right, civilian as well as military, for its weakness in dealing with ETA terrorism, the

Suarez regime is being backed by the Socialist and Communist parties and the bourgeois Basque National Party (the main expected beneficiary of the proposed autonomy statute).

United

Those parties have united to issue joint ritual denunciations of ETA violence and called for everything to be settled through the referendum vote.

But with ETA (militar)'s boycott campaign fast building up, there is a real doubt as to whether the Euskadi referendum will produce the authoritative vote of approval on which both government and opposition are now counting to outflank ETA.

FUND

Well the £77.38 we received since the last issue was nowhere near enough to reach our target. So although there is still some money in the post our total at the end of the month stands at only £542.90. That is over £50 short of our former target let alone this month's new target of £750.

Since we have no revenue from advertising we rely on this fund to stave off the worst effects of the economic crisis and enable us to fight for our policies in the working class. Without this money our paper will itself face a substantial crisis.

It is essential that we do better than this with the October fund. All readers and supporters should consider whether they can send a donation to assist the maintenance of Socialist Press.

All donations should be sent to:
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