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Defend abortion rights!

TUC march

SUNDAY 28 OCTOBER
ASSEMBLE 12.00 SPEAKERS
CORNER, HYDE PARK

BALLOT CONSPIRACY TO FORCE MASS SACKINGS



Edwardes

Never before have trade union leaders thrown such massive resources into a campaign to force their own members onto the dole queues as the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions in British Leyland.

Confed leaders are working hand in glove with BL boss Michael Edwardes to ensure the closure or part closure of 13 whole factories, and the loss of 25,000 jobs.

Riding roughshod

The extent of this collaboration goes beyond even the passive acceptance of closures by steel union leaders or the "reluctant acquiescence" of union bureaucrats to shipyard closures.

So anxious are Confed leaders to restore the profitab-

ility of BL at the expense of their own members that they are riding roughshod over the near-unanimous rejection of Edwardes' proposals by a conference of BL convenors.

And they have supported Edwardes to the hilt in his move to go over the heads of the convenors and organise a postal ballot on his plan in the midst of a colossal press campaign.

Confed leaders and Edwardes both hope that workers in the so-called "safe" BL plants—denied any alternative policy by their union officials, and with no sign of active resistance in the threatened factories—will combine to vote their fellow workers out of a job.

Of course the union leaders know full well that a 'yes' vote in the ballot carries far heavier implications than even the loss of 25,000 jobs. It means a frontal attack on those workers who stay on in BL.

The BL Board statement accompanying every ballot paper states clearly that:

"The Company cannot survive unless productivity is improved as a major priority. That depends on continuous production, fewer people and the use of proper industrial engineering standards. We are investing in modernisation of plants and we cannot afford out-dated attitudes which obstruct improvements in performance."

Abolish agreement

In other words a 'yes' vote will be taken as the go-ahead to impose a new common industrial engineering agreement which abolishes mutual agreement on manning levels and clears the way for all-out speed-up on the tracks.

With all this at stake, every possible pressure has been brought to bear on BL workers

to dragoon them into voting away their own jobs and working conditions.

Special nightshift

To ensure no concerted campaign could be mounted for a 'no' vote, printers at Nuffield Press were paid double rates for a special night shift to produce 165,000 ballot forms; and teams of workers were enlisted to mail out the forms within 24 hours of the BL Board's decision.

The ballot paper asks workers to vote 'Yes' or 'No' to the loaded question:

"Do you give your support to BL's recovery plan?"

And the accompanying statement threatens that:

"If you vote NO then you [!] will set the Company on a course which will be very grim indeed for all of us."

This threat was backed up at the weekend with a full-scale press campaign.

And on Monday the *Confed itself* used its own members' subscription money to take out advertising space in every

popular daily paper to argue for acceptance of Edwardes' job-slashing plan!

The propaganda task has been made easier by the complete political bankruptcy of BL convenors, and union officials of the TGWU and TASS, whose votes against the Edwardes plan have not been matched by any perspective for a fight to prevent the closures and sackings taking place.

Indeed the bulk of BL convenors have firmly supported Edwardes over the last two years.

Standing ovation

They gave him a standing ovation when he met them for the first time in January 1978 and spelled out his plans for 12,000 redundancies.

Through the reactionary 'workers participation' machinery they assisted BL management slash back the workforce, speed up production, force in corporate pay bargaining and close down the Triumph plant at Speke.

But now that Edwardes, seizing on their weakness, is demanding still *more* sackings and closures, they have felt obliged to move token opposition.

Witch-hunt

Edwardes has responded by launching a quite remarkable and unwarranted witch-hunt against some of his most loyal servants, declaring:

"I was glad that 274 shop stewards voted against the plan last week. They are mainly the militants who have dragged my workforce into industrial action and made them miserable in the process."

The message should be made absolutely clear. If Edwardes' current plan is forced through, it will by no means end closures and speed-up in BL.

Edwardes is an asset-stripper. His plan will run BL down as a vehicle producer to the point where it can survive in the capitalist market.

To vote for the Edwardes plan today to "save jobs" is to face redundancies by the thousand and for years to come.

Jobs cannot be defended by collaboration with crisis-ridden capitalism.

They can only be defended by a policy of *occupying* threatened plants, fighting for supporting strike action throughout the labour movement, and blocking work transferred from closed factories.

If there is less work, because of falling demand, it should be *shared* on full pay under the control of elected trade union committees.

Open the books

The books of BL, its suppliers, dealers and bankers, along with other car firms must be opened up to elected committees of trade unionists to expose those profiting from the corporation's "crisis".

The figures will show the need to *nationalise* the motor industry without compensation under workers' management if jobs are to be defended and productive forces utilised.

A fight on these policies in BL could form the centrepiece of the necessary mass action throughout the working class to bring down the Thatcher government and fight for a government responsive to the needs of the working class.

New court attacks on union rights

Once again, even before the Tories have put their new anti-union laws before Parliament, the Tory courts have struck a new savage blow at the right to picket.

Vauxhall strikers from the Ellesmere Port plant have been conducting a militant campaign of picketing in support of their seven-week struggle for a 25% pay claim.

Flying pickets on the gates of Harwich docks succeeded for three weeks in stopping vital supplies to Vauxhall's plants at Luton and Dunstable—bringing production to a standstill—and prevented the firm shipping in strikebreaking supplies of cars from the Continent.

But a combined assault—

from violent police thugs, who hospitalised two shop stewards, on the one hand; and lawyers, who obtained a court injunction against the pickets on the other—brought an end to this successful tactic.

Further injunction

In retaliation, strikers mounted pickets on Vauxhall and Opel dealers throughout the North West. But an obedient High Court judge, Mr Justice Bush, immediately responded to dealers' demands for a further injunction to prevent this picketing as well.

Though Vauxhall stewards have talked of simply transferring pickets to other dealers not covered by this injunction

it is plain that these court attacks are another move to effectively ban all forms of flying picketing, in advance of specific Tory legislation against "secondary" pickets.

Little by little over the last two years a body of precedents has been established which union leaders refuse to challenge.

It is essential that such attacks on hard-won union rights are met by full-scale mobilisation of the working class to bring down the Tory government and sweep aside the apparatus of courts and police through which the employers maintain their system of exploitation.



Leyland workers

-INTERNATIONAL

HUA AND GISCARD SHARE THEIR PROBLEMS

French radio, television and press last week were dominated by the arrival of Hua Guofeng, premier of China, in Paris.

Despite a week of strike action by gas and electricity workers and a two day strike by some railway workers; and major floods in the south of the country, the arrival of Hua was shown time and again as the major news item.

The minute details of his six-day stay were reported and mulled over for significant signs of change of policy and attitude.

No secret

The French bourgeoisie made no secret of their interest in the country of 975 million: the expansion of trade and the exploitation of Chinese workers in an effort to bolster up their crisis-ridden, staggering economy.

Although sales increased by 82% in the first seven months of this year as compared with last, this is not enough to make much difference to the disastrous French balance of payments deficit.

The fact that Hua arrived first in France rather than West Germany, which does the greatest trade with the People's Republic, was fully exploited by Giscard d'Estaing at a time of growing domestic scandal for his government.

More and more evidence is coming to light of the close relationship between ex-Emperor Bokassa and Giscard and his family.

What has become known as the "affair of the diamonds" is doing much to undermine



Giscard with Hua

Giscard's authority in the run-up to the 1981 presidential elections.

The satirical weekly *Le Canard Enchaîné* has begun to catalogue the 'gifts' given to the French president between 1970 and 1975.

It also printed a letter written on 18 April 1978 by Yvon Bourges, Minister of Defence which talks of the "friendship which has tied us together for so long" and "I remain attached by so many links... to Your Majesty."

Giscard desperately needed some event to use to attempt to boost his flagging standing.

However, the class struggle impinged on the beano when Hua was unable to travel to Brittany by train because of a railway workers' strike.

The Communist Party-dominated CGT, however, did their best to aid the government by restricting the gas and electricity workers' strikes to four hours on Tuesday and rotating regional strikes for the rest of the week.

In the midst of all this, and arguments about how much of an austerity budget the government will be able to get away with in 1980, Prime Minister Raymond Barre shrewdly took to his bed.

Even the polite, banal exchanges between the French and Chinese leaders were not without complications.

How was Giscard to react to Hua's talk of the need to continue "opposing any appeasement of the 'hegemonists'".

Should he make clear a position on the Kampuchean dispute?

How was he to continue to refuse to China the military weapons it asked for?

The French president played safe on all these issues and merely talked vaguely of the 'great affinity' between Asia and West Europe.

The Chinese bureaucracy, however arguably faces even more problems.

Hua's visit to Europe is unashamedly to try and gain

more credits and offer even more concessions to capitalism in a desperate attempt to pull the Chinese economy up by its boot laces.

The other major issue in Peking which got plenty of space in the French press this week was the trials of dissidents.

For the first time in post-revolutionary China a penal code is to be introduced as from 1 January.

The 'Gang of Four' is to be tried under the code. But those under attack at the moment as 'counter-revolutionaries' appear to represent much more of a threat to the bureaucracy than Mao's widow.

A so-called public trial with hundreds of people present was set up last week.

The main targets are those involved in the journal *Tansuo* (Explorations).

The first editor Wei Jing-sheng has apparently been sentenced to 15 years imprisonment.

29 years old, he is an electrician working for the parks department in Peking.

He was arrested on 29 March and has been in No. 1 Prison, Peking, ever since.

Cultural revolution

At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution he was at the school attached to the University of the People.

He comes from a family of old Party cadres and was among the first members of the Red Guards and the United Action Committee.

He revolted against the bureaucracy in 1967 when he realised that the Red Guards were being manipulated by one faction of the party leadership against another.

He also fought against Jiang Qing, Mao's wife, and was arrested along with 200 others but was freed by Mao.

He returned to his native Anhui in 1968 and was recruited into the army until three years later when he returned to Peking and took part in the Movement for Democracy.

On 5 December he put up his text on the "5th modernisation", that is democracy, which was the beginning of the revue which Yang Guang—now missing—and Lu Lin also collaborated on.

They were all arrested for their criticism of the invasion of Vietnam and a main article called "Democracy or new Despotism?".

All the verbiage of Hua's visit will not hide the fact that the Peking bureaucracy is facing enormous problems and that it turns to capitalism to shore it up against the Chinese working class.

Zimbabwe sell-out looms

The leaders of the Patriotic Front have successfully negotiated the latest critical turn in their historic deal with imperialism.

Now that all sides have amicably disposed of the constitutional questions, the London talks are moving on to the remaining problems of the transitional arrangements.

In accepting the Tories' proposals on the new constitution, Nkomo and Mugabe displayed once again the opportunism of their 'revolutionary' politics and further exposed the reality of the London talks.

Cover

Their carefully timed withdrawal from the conference and temporary refusal to agree to the imperialists' draft were a transparent cover that miserably failed to conceal the process of sell-out.

Carrington himself was able to call this feeble bluff with confidence by continuing talks with the Muzorewa delegation from the Salisbury regime.

The Tories were of course fully aware of the pressures which had brought the Patriotic Front leaders to London and which dictated their actions at the conference.

The governments of the 'front line states' and the Kremlin bureaucracy are

united in their determination to achieve a speedy end to the war in Zimbabwe.

The effects of international economic sanctions have not been confined within Zimbabwe. They have inevitably caused serious disruption to the economies of the bordering states, and Zambia in particular.

This situation sharpens the constant fears of Kaunda and his fellow petty bourgeois nationalists that mass action will develop to challenge their 'left' regimes and pro-imperialist policies.

These underlying threats are brought nearer to the surface with each day that Nkomo and Mugabe fail to win 'victory' by their strategy of limited guerrilla warfare.

In the past, the 'front line' presidents have eagerly assisted the Patriotic Front leaders to suppress any left opposition by imprisoning potential leaders of such a movement.

Now, as the bankruptcy of the Patriotic Front leadership becomes increasingly obvious, they have to act more boldly to

prevent an explosion within the guerrilla armies that would create the conditions for a new leadership to advance the struggle for social revolution in Zimbabwe, with inevitable consequences for their own hold on power.

No conflict

There is no conflict between this assessment and the need of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Kremlin to gain a negotiated settlement between the Patriotic Front and the imperialists that will not disturb the volatile balance of forces in southern Africa.

Nkomo and Mugabe can offer no political alternative to weigh against these massive pressures. While the Kremlin bureaucracy has played its well-tryed game of restricting the flow of arms and the provision of training to the guerrillas, the Patriotic Front leaders have connived at this continuous betrayal by holding back the greater part of the massive armies which they control.

Even within the disastrous limits of their own strategy, they have worked against the struggles to overthrow the racist Smith-Muzorewa regime.

Divert struggle

But this whole strategy has worked to divert the struggle for social revolu-

tion in Zimbabwe. Mugabe talks of the hunger for land of the rural masses in Zimbabwe, while he agrees to the Tories' draft constitution, which protects the property of the white settlers, in exchange for vague promises of some international imperialist fund to assist agricultural development.

Such sellouts are entirely consistent with his previous career, and they will be far from the last at this London conference.

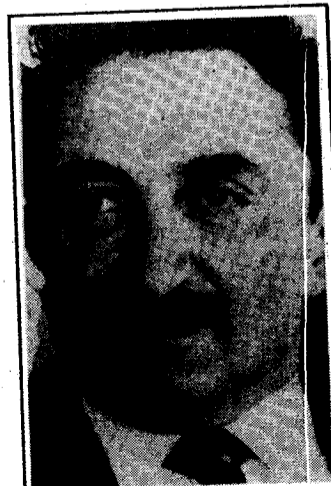
This opportunism throws into stark contrast the need to build a principled revolutionary leadership that can resolve the crisis of Zimbabwe within the international struggles for socialist revolution.

A new, revolutionary Marxist leadership must begin with the task that has been consciously avoided by the nationalist leaders—the mobilisation of the independent strength of the proletariat through a fight for the transitional programme to win over the rural masses who labour under oppression and lead them forward in a united struggle against the forces of imperialism within and beyond the borders of Zimbabwe.

Only the building of a Trotskyist party, section of a reconstructed Fourth International can offer the oppressed masses of Zimbabwe an alternative of freedom against the betrayals of today's leaders.



Carrington



THE FALL of Ecevit's bourgeois RPP government and the reluctance of the right wing Justice Party to precipitate a General Election in Turkey has brought a new lurch in the country's political crisis.
FEATURE ARTICLE
NEXT WEEK

INTERNATIONAL



Shooting during riots in San Salvador



Army takeover of university in San Salvador

Pre-emptive army coup in El Salvador

Last week's overthrow of the dictatorship of General Romero by a group of colonels is the first concrete result of the instability in Central America caused by the overthrow of Somoza and the establishment of the FSLN regime in Nicaragua.

The state department has been working overtime in El Salvador in an attempt to forestall civil war and the threat of a popular government coming to power.

'Liberation'

At first State Department characters such as Viron Vaky and William Bowdler tried to persuade Romero to announce early elections and a degree of 'liberalisation'; but when he backed away from this and failed to curtail the murderous activities of the death squads, the imperialists had no choice but to stage a coup with the 'reformist' wing of the military.

Washington had denied any complicity in the coup, but its efficient planning and the almost total absence of opposition from the right bear all the hallmarks of a CIA operation. However, the degree to which the imperialists are forced to go in their attempt to outflank the leftist popular organisations indicates their increasing weakness in this region.

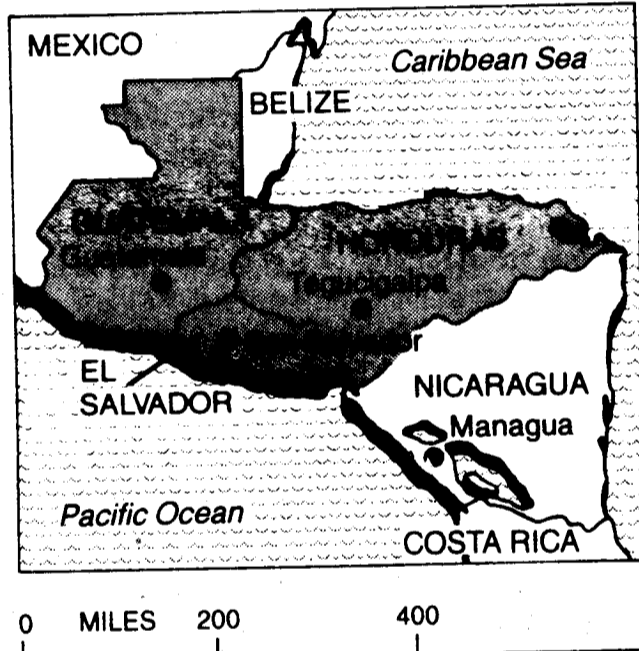
In addition to declaring an amnesty, 'restoration of all human rights', a new land reform and modification of 'the old fashioned socio-economic structure' the military junta has announced that it will strengthen links with Nicaragua and establish diplomatic relations with 'all peoples and governments'—by implication including Cuba and the workers' states. Vance has pronounced himself thoroughly satisfied with such statements.

Unsurprisingly, there has been no indication of this rhetoric being implemented. A long curfew is in force, some left wingers have been arrested, meetings of more than three people are outlawed and political activity is effectively proscribed.

Fighting

Moreover troops have been used to dislodge workers from the factories they have occupied and dozens of people have been killed in fighting around and in the capital of San Salvador.

Even the reformist bourgeoisie and the influential liberal clergy have held back from full support for the new regime whilst groups of guerrillas have come into the streets, organised the building of barricades,



distributed some arms and called for a full-scale insurrection.

There is no question of the junta succeeding in providing left cover for Washington.

The coup is clearly a last ditch manoeuvre and reveals the total crisis of the bourgeoisie and imperialists.

Vacuous

The promise of elections is totally vacuous and most unlikely to appease a significant sector of the masses. Popular resistance and the fighting are liable to increase and the question of power become ever more acute.

In many respects it is not surprising that it is in El Salvador that the war in Nicaragua has brought about political crisis most rapidly.

This tiny country is by far the most overpopulated in the region (233 people per square mile compared with 18 in Nicaragua) and boasts one of the most compact and ultramontane oligarchies in the world.

For many years the famous 'fourteen families' exercised almost total control over the economy based on cotton, coffee, and indigo and although industrialisation has increased significantly in the last two decades the core capitalist class can be numbered in terms of 200 families and property is still remarkably concentrated.

According to recent censuses six families own 72,000 hectares of land while 305,000 peasant families farm 43,000 hectares, generally on the basis of very insecure tenure.

In 1971 90% of all farms in

It was the crash in the coffee market as a result of the depression that drove the peasantry to revolt in 1932.

In a movement headed by the Communist Party land and crops were seized in a desperate communal effort to avoid starvation.

But the leadership of the movement had been infiltrated and the army moved in quickly to slaughter more than 20,000 people in an orgy of violence that has never been erased from popular memory.

Proscribed

From that day to this union organisation in the countryside has been proscribed.

This massive setback for the peasantry along with the lack of organisation in the small proletariat enabled the army to rule for nearly 30 years through a political system based on coups while the landed oligarchy held sway over the economy.

However, by the 1960s the Alliance for Progress and the formation of the Central American common market had accelerated industrialisation and increased the strength of the working class which now numbers 500,000.

This process also created a new sector within the bourgeoisie, too weak to challenge the landed sector, but of sufficient resource to back the US initiative for an 'electoral' political system and establish Christian and Social Democratic parties—the PDC and MNR.

Nevertheless, it was necessary for the military to retain power, and a system of fraud was established that kept the ruling PNC party in power from 1961 until now.

The cost of even a sham electoral process is popular mobilisation every four years and structural destabilisation.

In 1972 the fraud was so extensive that the opposition candidate, Napoleon Duarte of the PDC, tried a coup with the assistance of some of those officers who last week toppled Romero.

Transparent

In 1977 when Romero, formerly the minister of defence, was brought to power, the rigging of the poll was sufficiently transparent to cause the imperialist powers to dither before blessing him with recognition since this was manifestly a regime that was from its first day the enemy of the vast majority of the population.

Romero heralded a marked shift to the right and imposed a system of repression that must be considered among the most harsh in Latin America.

The army and police were supported by 'unofficial' terror-

ist squads such as the ORDEN and the White Warriors' Union which operated mainly in the countryside and killed hundreds of militants.

To itemise the attrition would be an endless task.

It hit all sectors; radical priests were frequently executed, the Jesuit order expelled for 'subversion' and 'encouraging communism', members of the middle class denounced by their colleagues and shot, dozens of students were killed in the army occupation of the campus in 1975 and, above all, trade unionists, peasants and leftists were spirited away in their scores to be tortured and assassinated.

Only a few days ago almost the entire national leadership of the newly united peasant union—the FTC—were taken out and shot on the edge of the Panamerican highway.

The opposition to Romero was organised in three broad groups which will now play a central role in the political arena and no doubt undergo shifts in composition and direction as the class struggle develops.

First, there is the reformist sector of the bourgeoisie, grouped around the PDC and MNR (which is backed by the Second 'socialist' International).

No popular base

Whilst the MNR has no popular base to speak of, the PDC for a time controlled the strongest of the peasant organisations and still retains an appreciable following.

These two parties fought the 1972 and 1977 elections together as the National Opposition Union (UNO) which also contained the electoral front of the CP—the Nationalist Democratic Union (UDN) formed in 1969.

The Stalinist organisation in El Salvador is possibly the strongest in Central America outside of Mexico. Its entire orientation is clearly towards the forging of a popular front.

The CP paper 'Voz Popular' speaks of developing the forces of production (i.e. capitalism) before taking power and the party's Seventh Congress in May dedicated itself almost exclusively to distinguishing between bourgeois democracy and fascism with scarcely a reference to class struggle.

There is no question of the alliance with the bourgeoisie being in any sense a temporary tactical manoeuvre; it is now ten years old and its continuance is engraved in the political logic of Stalinism.

Moreover, it will not be many days before its total bankruptcy will be revealed in the streets—where political matters are not discussed but shot out.

There are two popular political organisations in El Salvador which have a substantial base in the masses.

The Front for United Popular Action (FAPU) is the smaller, more heterogeneous and more opportunist.

FAPU agreed to participate in 'popular discussions' with the bourgeoisie. It considers land occupations as 'provocative', calls for simply a 'democratic' government and sees the principal struggle as being

against the fascists and military which, significantly, it identifies as parallel to rather than co-substantial with the state.

FAPU's strength is mainly in the towns, and although it has the support of sectors of the working class, it lacks consolidated organisation in the factories and several of its affiliated unions are no more than phantoms.

The leadership of FAPU is largely middle class and has strong connections with the FARN guerrilla group which earlier this year kidnapped the two British managers of Lloyds Bank.

In reality FAPU and FARN are simply two wings of the same organisation, but unlike the Nicaraguan case—where the guerrilla gave birth to the 'party'—in El Salvador the political and military organisations of resistance have been developed together, and objectively there is less chance of guerrillaism becoming the dominant form of opposition.

The Bloque Popular Revolucionario (BPR) was founded in mid-1975 around seven unions that quit FAPU. These included the largest peasant organisation—FECCAS—and the only legal entity in the alliance, the teachers union ANDES.

The Bloque is the principal focus of opposition in El Salvador, the most immediate parallel being the Prolonged People's War faction of the FSLN, whose military strategy and pseudo-Marxist terminology is shared by the Bloque.

The Bloque categorises El Salvador as a backward capitalist state. It also defines the CP as opportunist and revisionist—but on the basis that the CP denies the possibility of the masses taking power, rather than because it has actually allied itself with the bourgeoisie.

'Revolutionary pole'

The question of power is a central element in the Bloque's politics and it considers itself as the 'revolutionary pole' of the masses and a 'workers and peasants revolutionary front.'

In practice the Bloque is without a consistent programme and its activity is based on radical populism.

The guerrilla wing of the BPR is the FPL (Popular Liberation Forces) which has been increasingly active in recent months.

But however ill-defined and broad-based it may be, the Bloque is an organisation that already comprises tens of thousands and must inevitably develop a strategy that includes these forces rather than fall back on guerrillaism.

If the Salvadorean masses have maintained a remarkable resistance to the dictatorship and responded to the militancy of their comrades in Nicaragua, they are without a Marxist party and programme.

Organisations such as the Bloque that derive their strength from the spontaneous activity of the masses are incapable of carrying the assault on imperialism beyond militant pursuit of reforms which, without the smashing of the capitalist state and expropriation of imperialist holdings is no assault at all.



Romero

Poll proves massive support for IRA

An indication of the problems faced by Irish Prime Minister Jack Lynch in fully assisting the Tory government's planned crackdown on the republican movement has emerged from a survey published by the Irish Economic and Social Research Institute.

A massive 72% support a unilateral withdrawal of British troops from the occupied six counties.

68% look to a united Ireland as the solution to the continuing war of liberation in the North.

Supporting motives

20% openly admitted supporting the motives of the IRA in the war against British imperialism, and nearly 10% even admitted support for its methods—under conditions where the IRA is an illegal, witch-hunted organisation hounded on both sides of the imperialist-drawn 'border'.



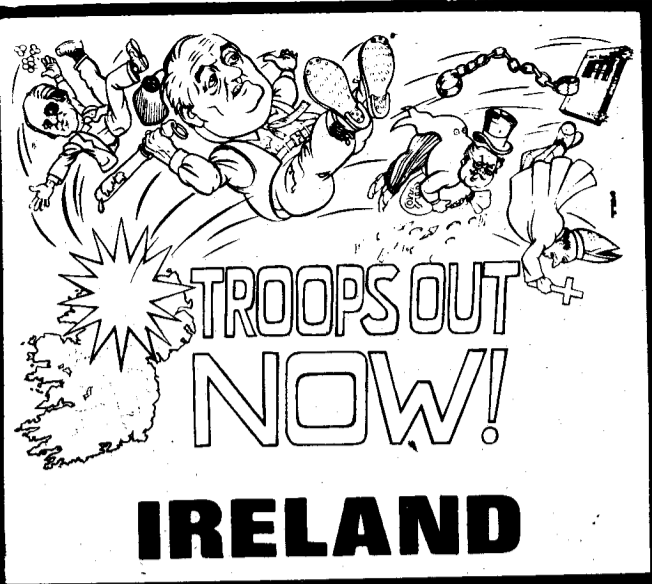
Lynch

It is necessary, of course, to warn of the inadequate and partial nature of such polls and surveys. But at the

same time the figures published clearly show that the republican movement maintains a mass base of political support in the South, as it also does in the nationalist ghetto areas of the six counties.

At the same time the failure of the republican movement to direct into the organised Irish workers' movement as the vital leading force in the anti-imperialist struggle means that this support remains more potential than actual.

A Trotskyist party, capable of mobilising the Irish masses on a programme of demands which connect with their existing consciousness and lead on to the struggle for national liberation and socialist revolution, must be built.



WAR WHAT WAR?
Bulletin of the Oxford Irish Delegation Committee
Second issue includes articles on raising Ireland in the labour movement and women in Ireland.
Available, price 25p (including postage) from Socialist Press, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

Conference to discuss fight against Tory attacks

With almost daily confirmation of both the escalation of the Tories' drive against workers' living standards and the deepening of the labour leaders' collaboration with these attacks, the urgency of developing and adopting an action programme to defeat these dual threats is clear.

Already millions of trade unionists have been forced forward in defence of pay and working conditions with tens of thousands of others involved in demonstrations and protests against public spending cuts and closures.

Gains

But whether the issue is the right to a job, as within shipbuilding, steel or BL, or protection of the gains represented by the education, health and social services, the reformist trade union leaders realise that at stake is the viability of the capitalist system itself.

Murray and the TUC complement Benn and Heffer in the Labour Party by avoiding like the plague the need for mass political action to bring down Thatcher.

Throughout the last decade, the working class in Britain has shown itself ready and able to challenge either Tory or Labour governments which stood in their way.

But at the same time the lack of clear, independent policies to answer the bosses effectively open up workers to great dangers.

Way forward

The Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement Conference Against the Tories, in drawing on its experiences of struggles against Callaghan and Healey, will be attempting to present a way forward for all those sections now being drawn into battle.

In particular, women and youth, forced to shoulder some of the heaviest burdens of the Tories' policies, are urged to join with trade unionists and Labour Party rank and file



Lining up for anti-union laws—James Prior

members in supporting the Conference.

Recent labour movement bodies carrying support for the CDLM include: Camden NUPE, Enfield Trades Council, Aylesbury Trades Council, Leicester Trades Council Women's sub-committee, COHSE Walsall, ASTMS NHS Manchester, BL Cowley Assem-

bly TGWU 5/293, Blackwells Oxford TGWU 5/833, Oxford DHSS CPSA, Oxford NUJ, UCATT Central Oxford, St. Clements Labour Party ward, Oxford.

All trade union branches, shop steward committees, etc. are urged to consider sending delegations.

Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
***Prepare to force out the Tories!**
***For mass action against Tory anti-union laws!**
***Strikes and occupations against the cuts!**
***Build Councils of Action!**
Saturday November 3, 10.30am-5pm
DIGBETH HALL, BIRMINGHAM
Open to all trade unionists and delegations from labour movement bodies
Credentials (£1) and details from:
Godfrey Webster, 99, Barclay Rd, Warley, West Midlands

PRESS GANG



The Church of England report on homosexuals has managed to offend almost everybody.

Gays must have been revolted by its patronising tone of addressing moral lepers. For the arbiters of society's morality however it was a good deal too wishy washy and liberal.

The press saw the report as a dangerous breach of the Church's traditional condemnation of gays.

The *Mirror* summed it up by saying "Gay lib for the Church is causing a storm in the Church of England."

The press seeks to keep gays firmly boxed into a 'problem' category.

A report which recommended 'compassion' from 'normal' people is fine, but in seeking to accommodate towards a strong gay lobby within its ranks, the Church report had suggested that perhaps 'abnormal' desires had some legitimacy.

The *Daily Telegraph* said that the Church should not be criticised for producing a report—tempting as this was.

"Our quarrel with this report rests on those confusions which apparently result from an over zealous adherence to modern fads rather than to strict theology... The report should have made clearer the distinc-

tion between that compassion which retrospectively makes allowances for such acts and the kind of prior moral judgement which specifically condones them."

This was—in longer words—saying the same thing as the almost unbelievably revolting *Sun*.

"Today there is rightly greater tolerance and more understanding towards homosexuals."

"BUT HOMOSEXUAL VICARS?"

"Will not the idea alarm all parents whose children take part in church activities?"

(The implied warning is of course that all homosexuals are child molesters.)

The report, in trying to face all ways at once, produced some proposals which almost defy reason. The *Sunday Telegraph* summed these up quite neatly.

"Homosexual acts, it declares, are not in themselves sinful; if performed promiscuously, however, they were; yet, it adds, for the Church to allow homosexuals to 'marry' each other would be going too far. As to priests it is all right to ordain homosexuals, but if, when ordained, they decide to make public what they are up to, they should offer their resignations to the bishop who should accept or reject them as the case may

be". There are obviously more complexities in theology than meet the eye.

Princess Margaret's low view of the Irish, as expressed to Mrs Jane Byrne, Chicago's Irish-American Mayor, would have caused little impact had it occurred out of earshot of an American columnist.

The British press, overhearing Princess Margaret refer to the Irish as pigs would have turned a deaf ear.

But the Americans' ambivalent attitude towards the British monarchy helped ensure that her remarks were widely repeated.

What was surprising in the British press was not that denials were quickly given prominence, but that the story was blown so big in the first place.

It could be that the initial response of Fleet Street was an unthinking reflex response to a controversy.

Or could it be more likely that in spreading her remarks across the front pages of their papers, the editors of Fleet Street, were expressing their agreement with the Queen's sister's sentiments?

Drivers claim £80

TGWU lorry drivers, whose dramatic strike action last winter achieved a major victory against the employers and established a £64 minimum wage, are to press ahead for a 25% increase this year.

A TGWU delegate conference discussed claims ranging up to £110 basic—and finally fixed on the figure of £80—one of the lowest submitted.

Also in the claim are the demands for a £2 meal allowance, an increase in the overnight allowance from £7.50 to £10, an extra week's holiday and a 35 hour week.

The reluctance of employers to confront the union after the bitter and costly battles of last winter has been indicated by the fact that in the Leeds and Bradford area one group of employers has already settled for a new £76 basic.

A survey last week of 5,600 executives from 650 companies showed an average take home pay of £8,281. This represented an increase in pay over the 12 months to July of over £10 per week.

On top of this, 59% held company cars, 50% free medical insurance and 44% received other bonuses.

OUT NOW!

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Crisis grows—world-wide

Last week saw a flurry of fresh evidence to show the scale of the economic crisis that stands as a major threat to working class living standards the world over.

In Britain the government announced that inflation has reached an annual rate of 16.5% with still more major price increases to come.

Derisory

Such continual pressure on weekly wage packets more than offsets the derisory tax rebates now being handed out to workers as a result of Howe's rich man's budget.

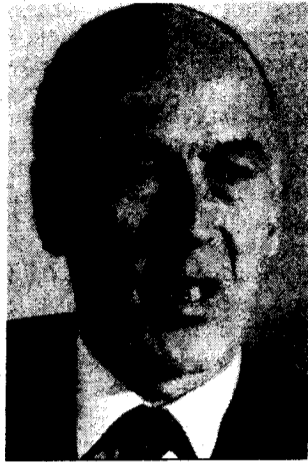
But the budget was also one setting a course for recession and mass unemployment, and last week saw additional evidence of this, with the mammoth attack on BL jobs being supplemented by gloomy forecasts elsewhere in the engineering industry.

The Alston Foundry in Cumbria will close next year, at a cost of 130 jobs, pleading a lack of orders from the car industry and general engineering.

This brings total closures among iron and steel foundries to over 40 in the last year; and, as the recession gathers in pace, demand for castings is estimated to be less than half the existing capacity—threatening up to 200 of the present 680 foundries with closure in the next few years.

Recession

Elsewhere, too, British industry seems set to enter a



Giscard

further recession after a period of increased output as Central Statistical Office figures showed a weakening of demand, and proved that once again the bulk of the last year's growth in output was solely the result of expansion in North Sea oil and gas.

Underlying causes

The depressed state of British manufacturing industry is also the underlying cause of the continuing balance of payments deficit which is outpacing North Sea oil revenues.

But while the high value of the pound and the soaring interest rates of the Tory credit squeeze, coming on top of the world slump begin to take their toll of weaker sections of capitalism in Britain, the plummeting value of the dollar on the money markets has now forced Carter's US administration into

adopting a series of similar policies.

Tight controls on money supply and sharply increased US interest rates now threaten a new downturn in the crucial US economy, which will have profound repercussions not only for the American working class but also for workers in Europe and throughout the world.

'Recessionary mode'

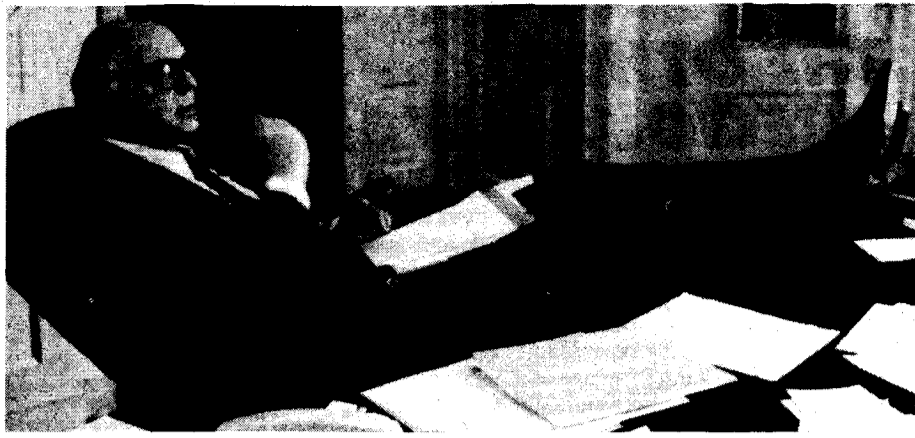
Even US Treasury Secretary William Miller has declared as Carter approaches a traumatic reelection campaign that the American economy is in "a recessionary mode".

The US recession will in turn heighten the demands from ailing sections of US capitalism for Carter to impose protectionist measures to keep out imports from their capitalist competitors in other countries.

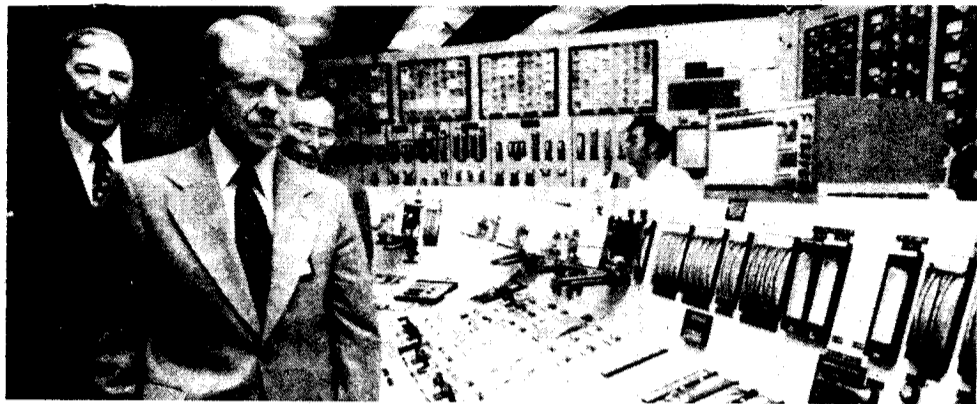
But it is not only the US that shows such tendencies. Even within the supposedly "planned" and orderly set-up of the European Common Market nationalistic tensions and divisions are growing alongside the economic crisis in each member country.

While Thatcher conducts her despairing appeals from one unsympathetic EEC head of state to another, seeking a reduction in the colossal £1.5 billion cost of British membership next year, the French government, too, is taking unilateral steps to defend its own interests.

Its recent controls on shipments of cheap British lamb and mutton are illegal under EEC rules and in defiance of a



US Federal Reserve Chairman Volcker—raising interest rates and squeezing credit



Launching recession in election year—a worried Jimmy Carter

European Court ruling. They have been condemned by seven member nations—but are still being upheld.

It is interesting to note in this context that the supposed "internationalists" of the French Communist Party have no difficulty in assessing where they stand on the issue of such controls.

Fifty French CP members demonstrated outside a meeting of EEC farm ministers, campaigning in favour of the controls, sporting a nationalistic banner declaring "France must save its sheep meat producers".

Worse to come

But, as if recession and existing inflation were not already bad enough news for the capitalist class, they know there is still worse to come.

A sharp drop in Iranian oil output is threatening a repeti-

tion of the shortages which caused such chaos earlier this year.

Crisis ridden

And while Libya has unilaterally raised the price of its crude oil above the present OPEC price ceiling and Kuwait is talking of cutting back oil production, OPEC ministers seem certain to raise prices by at least another 10% this winter.

On every front the worsening crisis compels the capitalists to contemplate intensified attacks on the working class.

And the total inability of crisis-ridden capitalism to develop and expand the forces of production to cater for the needs of the vast majority of mankind points unmistakably to the material necessity for the world socialist revolution.



Raising oil prices—Gaddafi



Howe



Saudi spokesman Yamani (right)

Butcher Mason in anti-Tory outburst



Callaghan

From his closely guarded, floodlit, bullet-proof hideaway Labour's former chief Torture Minister Roy Mason sent a rare message last week.

A note to a massive 2,500-strong anti-cuts rally in Sheffield appeared to adopt a militant anti-Tory stance.

He warned the Thatcher government that they were "throwing down the gauntlet", and that if they were not careful the Labour and trade union movement "would have to resist".

Empty wrath

And he threatened a "united effort" by unions, MPs and councillors. But perhaps workers should be more worried at this prospect than should Thatcher.

Because it was no trace of socialist sentiment that brought such empty wrath from the biro of the architect of the barbarities of Long Kesh and the torture of Castlereagh.

The message itself made this clear. The Tories, Mason complained, are prepared to stand "idly by" while workers this winter fight for wage increases to match inflation.

"This is a complete negation and abandonment of government", he moaned.

Beware

So that is it! Mason wants mass protests by trade unionists and Labour activists against Tory policies and in favour of . . . WAGE CONTROLS!

Workers in Sheffield and elsewhere should beware. Hyenas like Mason never change their spots—and the Callaghan gang can never lead the fight against the Tories.

Calls to action on cuts

The mass anti-cuts demonstration and lobby of Parliament called on 7 November by Lambeth Council will be followed up by a national lobby on 28 November called by South Yorkshire Association of Trades Councils, the Yorks and Humber TUC and the South Yorks County Council Labour Group.

This second lobby has already been supported by the executive of the civil service union, the CPSA. But still the TUC refuses

to name a date for the Day of Action on the cuts it is obligated to call as a result of resolutions passed at this year's Congress.

In mobilising the maximum support for the November lobbies, trade unionists must demand the public sector unions and the TUC organise a serious, co-ordinated, national programme of mass action to halt the Tory cuts, confront and bring down the job-slashing Thatcher government.

OUT NOW!

The Battle

for Founding documents of the Workers Socialist League

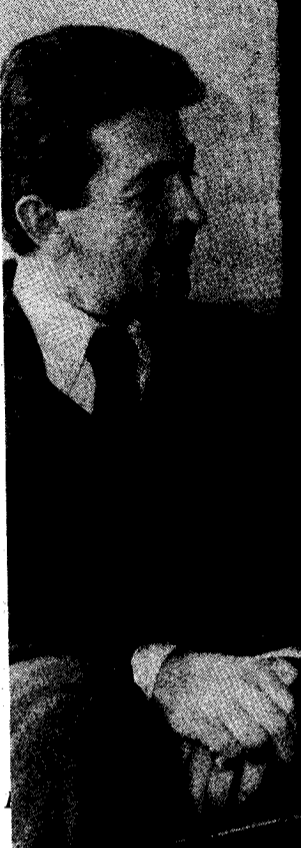
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USFI Xth WORLD CONGRESS

Part Five



Above and right: scenes from the Hungarian revolution of 1956. The USFI documents show that no lessons have been learned from these struggles

Errors that flow from refusal to learn from the past

It is not simply the series of awkward silences, evasions and omissions from the USFI's documents that mark them out as inadequate to offer a lead to the working class on a national or international level.

The documents also contain *wrong* positions—which yet again arise from the ramshackle theoretical and diplomatic basis on which the USFI is constructed.

There are a number of points that could be stressed—but this article will take up only a few of the more glaring examples, since others are generally either of a similar type or on clearly related issues.

Learned nothing

The World Document puts forward a section on Political Revolution which shows that the USFI has either learned nothing from the Hungarian events of 1956, or is simply congenitally incapable of putting forward a 'clear programme as the basis for practical action.

A study of the following passage reveals that the progress of the argument is upside down:

"The programme of the political revolution has thus been hammered out in living struggles. The main points include the elimination of the organs of mass repression, the conquest of political freedom for the toiling masses, the establishment of independence for

the trade unions and of genuine proletarian democracy with its real control by the workers; diversity of parties or factions, abolition of the censorship, and assurance of the right to real ideological opposition in all spheres of social life.

"TO CONSOLIDATE THESE GAINS requires the exercise of workers' power through freely elected councils of the masses, the establishment of workers power and workers' management, (. . . etc.).

"As part of an internationalist foreign policy, the army will be democratised and placed at the disposal of the international proletariat as it was when it was built under Trotsky." (emphasis added).

What this passage in the USFI's document *cannot* answer is *how* all these sweeping changes are to be brought about, if they are only going to be consolidated by the building of workers councils, and topped off by the democratisation of the army.

The question arises: is the bureaucracy to be removed from *above* or from *below*?

Mobilising forces

If from *below*, then the first primary question *before* sketching out a schema for the elaborate transformation of the state machinery, is to address the task of mobilising the forces for building factory committees workers councils, and other independent class bodies as the essential organs capable of challenging the state power held by the bureaucracy and advancing the independent strength of

the proletariat in the deformed workers' states.

This is the unmistakable lesson of the workers councils in Hungary.

Mass organisations

And the only way in which the proletariat, arms in hand, can hope to topple the conservative parasitic caste that at present controls the functioning of the workers states, is if the same struggle for independent mass organisations is also advanced into the ranks of the Red Army, and the fight taken up for the construction of committees of rank and file Red Army men independent of the officers.

Far from being the final seal that consolidates a victory won by other means, such committees and councils offer the only road to political revolution.

It is also conspicuous that the section on Political Revolution is stated to apply only to "the USSR, E. Europe and China".

In this context we should recall that *no* USFI statement called—in even the most general terms—for the construction of workers and peasants councils in South Vietnam at the point where the imperialist puppet forces crumbled in mid 1975.

There still is *no* real conception inside the USFI leadership—despite the continued existence of USFI sections in Eastern Europe and the individual courage of those militants—of how central the struggle for working class independence from the Stalinist bureaucracy is to the method of the Transi-

tional Programme.

But this confusion is compounded by the production of the document on Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

This amounts to a wordy, evasive but wholesale adaptation to the various Eurocommunist currents that seek to transform the Soviet Union into a bourgeois democracy, and which have publicly thrown overboard even the pretence of fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The most obvious question to raise is why on earth such a document should be written by Trotskyists.

It seeks to lay down in the most abstract possible terms, formulae and norms for a hypothetical future workers' state: but at the same time it *ignores* the obvious theoretical starting point for any such analysis—the Transitional Programme itself, and the actual *experience* of workers in the Soviet Union and the subsequent deformed workers states.

Free vote

Trotsky makes it clear in calling—remember in 1938—for the democratisation of the Soviets, that:

"In the Soviets there is room only for representatives of the workers, rank and file collective farmers, peasants and Red Army men.

"Democratisation of the Soviets is impossible without legalisation of Soviet parties. The workers and peasants themselves, by their own free vote,

will indicate what parties they recognise as Soviet parties."

This class criteria—placing the decision in the hands of the independent organs of the toiling masses—is not good enough for the USFI leadership.

They wish to accommodate to the Eurocommunists, by watering down the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the extent of specifying the legalisation of *bourgeois* parties, and elaborating in the most idealistic fashion, what they consider would be necessary to provide workers with democratic rights in excess of those available under bourgeois democracy.

Soviets

The fact that the organs of workers power—workers councils or Soviets—that emerge as the basis of the revolutionary seizure of power, and within which conscious revolutionaries will be only one tendency among many—will offer to workers the opportunity to participate for the first time in their lives in the determining of political policy and the shaping of the future, is set aside as inadequate.

The USFI wants television, radio time, phone-in time on computers, and a whole series of rights to give full vent to the most avid petty bourgeois appetite for individual expression.

As a result the concept of Dictatorship of the Proletariat is robbed of any real class content.

Though a few careful disclaimer are thrown in here and there, the document as a whole makes it clear that this is seen as

a "Dictatorship" that really represses nobody, suppresses nobody, and makes itself felt chiefly by its absence from view.

It bears no relationship at all to the only *actual* example of the dictatorship of the proletariat—in the Soviet Union.

The USFI's schema is not only a million miles away from the reality of the Russian Revolution; it is also a strong echo of the kind of idealist current vigorously attacked by Trotsky in *The Class Nature of the Soviet State*:

"To these gentlemen the dictatorship of the proletariat is simply an imponderable concept, an ideal norm not to be realized upon our sinful planet. Small wonder that 'theoreticians' of this stripe, insofar as they do not denounce altogether the very word dictatorship, strive to smear over the irreconcilable contradiction between the latter and bourgeois democracy.

"Extremely characteristic from the laboratory and not the political point of view, is the Parisian sect of 'Communist democrats' (Souvarine and Co.). The very name already implies a break with Marxism. In the critique of the Gotha programme, Marx rejected the name social democracy in view of the fact that it places the revolutionary socialist struggle under the formal control of democracy.

"It is quite obvious that there is no difference in principle between 'communist democrats' and 'social democrats', social democrats that there is no hard and fast part

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,

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.

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.

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.

Correct errors

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 article below, part five of a series examining the position of the USFI in the run-up to its XIth Congress, is a critique of the five main texts presented to the Congress by the new majority leadership.

- These deal with:
*The World Political Situation.
*European Perspectives.
*Perspectives for Latin America.
*The fight against women's oppression.
*Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Concluded next week

Readers who doubt our assessment are advised themselves to explore the document and wade through the eighteen pages of platitudes, abstractions and cop-outs that are the USFI's substitute for a clear line of march for the European proletariat.

However it would be wrong to conclude an examination of the XI World Congress documents without looking briefly at the USFI's line on the struggle against women's oppression, because their refusal to draw a class line on this struggle echoes their attitude to the question of "anti-nuke" and ecology campaigns which in many countries they support uncritically, without spelling out any specifically socialist perspective.

In the USA the SWP-backed anti-nuke campaign combines opportunist blocs with variegated petty bourgeois groups with advocating the use of coal—no doubt to the delight of the capitalist mine owners.

The USFI document on the fight against women's oppression specifically opposes the building of a communist women's movement or a primary orientation to working class women:

"Our support for and work to build the independent women's liberation movement distinguishes the Fourth International today from many sectarian groups that claim to stand on Marxist orthodoxy as represented by their interpretations of the resolutions of the first four congresses of the Third International. Such groups reject the construction of any women's organisations except those tied directly to and under the political control of their party.

4. There is no contradiction between building the independent women's liberation movement and building a revolutionary Marxist party of women and men.

The struggle for socialism requires both a mass feminist movement and a mass revolutionary Marxist party. The two serve different functions. The former mobilises women in struggle around their needs and through their own independent forms of organization. The latter provides leadership, through programme and action, for the working class and its allies, including women, and uncompromisingly orients all facets of the class struggle toward a combined drive to abolish capitalism.

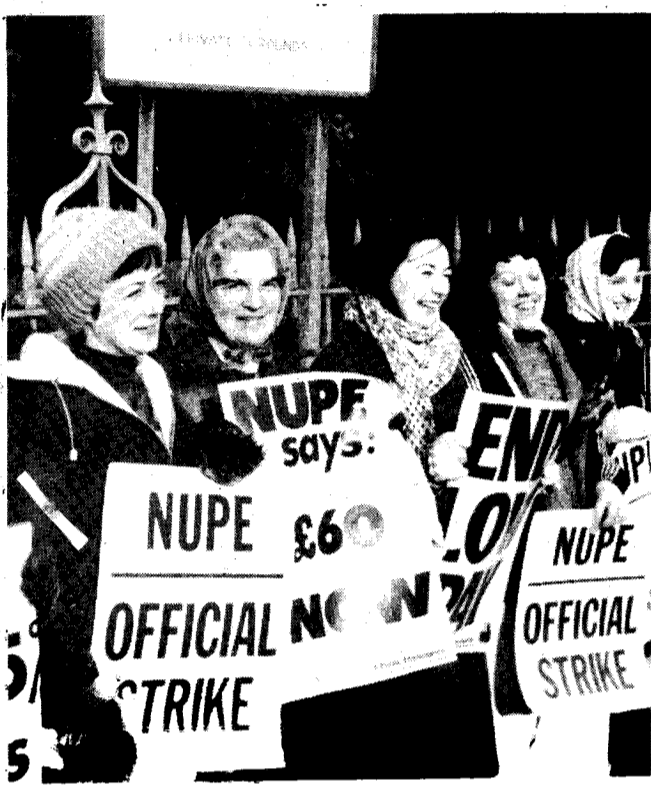
There is no objective basis for a separate revolutionary Marxist women's organisation."

This whole passage ignores the vital leading role of proletarian women and the organised labour movement in the struggle against women's oppression. And under the guise of opposing a "separate revolutionary Marxist women's organisation" the USFI in practice give up the struggle to combat the bourgeois feminist currents that lead the existing women's liberation movements, and abandon any struggle to draw class lines within these movements.

The present day catalogue of errors and transparent political bankruptcy of the USFI on these questions is not a development out of the blue.

As is the case of every historical event or "fact", today's reality is the product of yesterday's contradictions, yesterday's perspectives.

In the case of the USFI, today's wrong positions are the result of yesterday's unanswered questions—combined with a persistent, stubborn refusal to examine the experiences of the past.



USFI fails to orientate to working class women

tion between socialism and communism. Transgression begins only when socialism and communism as a movement or as a state is subordinated not to the actual course of the class struggle, not to the material conditions of the historical process but to the supra-social and supra-historical abstraction 'democracy', which in reality is a weapon of self-defence serving the bourgeoisie against the proletarian dictatorship.

"If during the epoch of the Gotha Programme it was still possible to see in the word social democracy only an incorrect and non-scientific name for a proletarian party, whose spirit was healthy, then the entire subsequent history of bourgeois and 'social' democracy turns the banner of 'democratic communism (?)' into the banner of an outright class betrayal"

With the USFI now ready to compromise even on the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat, there are obviously dire consequences for the other elements of the Transitional Programme.

Generalisations

We have already seen that the XI Congress documents, so full of generalisations, even truisms, contain no allusion whatever to the practical experience of any of the USFI's sections. In particular there is no example given of the fight for transitional demands in the working class.

One reason why this fight is clearly not waged by USFI sections is doubtless because their leadership appear completely confused on what the demands really are.

They are, in the true Pabloite tradition, preoccupied instead with finding ready-made "revolutionary" layers with whom they have simply to fuse on the basis of "class struggle" demands which fall far short of transitional demands.

The necessary political fight for programme is supplanted by organisational "turns" and manoeuvres.

Thus the World Document simply lays stress on "continuing the proletarian orientation"

The only demand it puts forward for this orientation is to campaign for a shorter working week without loss of pay.

This demand in practice amounts to tail-ending the bureaucrats' favourite demand of a 35 hour week—a demand which is already policy of virtually every trade union in the imperialist countries—and the subject of endless empty tub-thumping speeches by fake left reformists.

More honest

But the document on Europe is more honest on the USFI's "proletarian orientation", making it clear that this means in reality orientating petty bourgeois people into proletarian workplaces—

"If the leaderships do not consciously organise the shift into this new stage [sending members into industry] comrades will naturally tend to take jobs in nonindustrial sectors, often as a result of the kind of education they have received."

That could be regarded as simply a difference of tactics—and the traditions of the workers' movement are certainly different in other countries, possibly more favourable to such a gamble.

But what we can say without any doubt is that without a clear perspective and programme on which to take up this work, the cadres sent into the factories will end up floundering lamely behind left reformist and Stalinist currents.

Not only does the USFI offer no such programme, but it has replaced the bewildering Mandelstam notion of the "new mass vanguard" with the equally bankrupt and bewildering SWP concept of the "class struggle left wing".

No perspective

It is worth noting that while this concept comes from the American SWP, there is yet again in the XIth Congress documents no political perspective whatever for the struggle for Trotskyism in the USA, no reference to the experience and work of the SWP.

Instead their ideas are to be foisted on USFI sections everywhere else!

It is worth examining the way in which the grandiose visions conjured up by the initial use of the phrase "class struggle left wing" end up as the most miserable adaptation to

existing levels of consciousness within the working class.

It starts off sounding really bold and dramatic:

"All these factors point up the importance of building a class struggle left wing to win the leadership of the unions away from the SP and CP apparatuses..."

But such a vision has its problems:

"There is no class struggle left wing now, not even an incipient one, in any European union."

Yet the USFI doesn't look on the black side:

"NONETHELESS, broad layers of workers are seeking new answers to the problems with which they are confronted and can be won to such a perspective."

From this general truism, the document goes on to list a few emerging opposition tendencies; but it states categorically that

"The growth of such opposition currents cannot lead,



Exempted from political revolution: Fidel Castro

through simple numerical accretion, to the formation of a real class struggle left wing. Oppositions that appear now and again against a leadership, or a simple grouping of revolutionaries in a union, cannot be confused with a class struggle left wing."

"To have a class struggle left wing, you have to have a class-struggle orientation(?) and a programme offering an alternative to the class collaborationist policy of the reformists, as well as a relatively high level of organisation and leadership."

But all these grand pretensions are soon abandoned.

"Nonetheless, the appearance of the opposition currents described above is an important step in the formation of a class struggle left wing. In fact these groupings propose demands that represent components of a class-struggle programme."

So the conclusion is that:

"In the present phase, our work in the unions must focus particularly on these various

opposition groupings."

Who will the USFI go for? Left talking bureaucrats, among others.

"The class struggle left wing that we are fighting to build will include people who are union leaders now and will be won to this perspective..."

To complete the abrupt descent from the glimpse into the imaginary pent-house of the ideal "class struggle left wing" to the real basement of tail ending 'left' talking currents of Stalinists, reformists and centrists, the document declares that:

"In order to stimulate this process of differentiation and to advance the development of groupings offering elements of a class struggle programme, we may bloc with currents supporting progressive positions"—a blank cheque to link up with anyone!

This whole section—"Work in the Trade Union Movement"—is divorced completely from any concept of the fight for transitional demands.

Indeed its programme is carefully defined as no more than "an alternative to the class collaborationist policy of the reformists."

The references to transitional demands are separated from this by many pages of almost incoherent rambling.

On page 28 we see a quote from the Transitional Programme stressing the need for a system of transitional demands as the bridge between the present demands and the socialist programme of the revolution.

Ramshackle

But the sketchy demands that follow include no examination of the ways in which the fight to mobilise workers in struggle for the transitional demands offers a means of exposing and discrediting the existing reformist and Stalinist leaders.

It would be possible to make many other points about the confused and ramshackle list of demands cobbled together by a USFI leadership that clearly has little intention of and no idea how to fight in practice for demands which conflict with the existing trade union consciousness of their would-be "class struggle left wing"

LENIN AND THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION



Lenin

In 1918, Lenin remarked that whereas it was much easier for the Russian working class to start the revolution than it was for the West European working classes, it was much more difficult for them to continue.*

The irony Lenin had in mind related to the problem of 'culture'.

The Western working classes, ideologically dominated as they were, were in a 'state of cultural slavery': revolution would mean breaking with the powerful cultural and ideological machine which a developed capitalism made possible.

But once that break had been made, the culture of Western capitalism—in the sense of its advanced knowledge, civilisation, science and technology—could be appropriated by the proletariat as a basis on which to build socialism.

Endangered

In Russia, the situation was the reverse: given the lack of a developed 'civilisation' in the Western sense, the state ideological machine was less powerful, and revolution therefore easier; but once that revolution was made, it was severely endangered by the lack of the developed forces of modern civilisation.

It is clear from this fact alone that Lenin regarded 'culture' as being of the highest importance to the making and sustaining of the revolution.

By 'culture' he meant not so much works of art, but knowledge, literacy, and modern technology; without the harnessing of such forces, the building of socialism was put in dire peril.

"We must", he declared, "take the entire culture that capitalism left behind and build socialism with it."

"We must take all its science, technology, knowledge and art.

TERRY EAGLETON reviews "Lenin and the Cultural Revolution" by Carmen Claudin-Urondo, published by Harvester Press, unpriced.

Without these we shall be unable to build communist society."***

Carmen Claudin-Urondo is unhappy with Lenin's attitude. It suggests to her a too uncritical stance on Lenin's part towards the inherited culture of capitalism, which she contrasts with the policy of *Proletkult*.

Proletkult was an independent organisation for the creation of a 'pure' proletarian culture, led by the idealist Bogdanov and opposed by both Lenin and Trotsky.

Fiercely sectarian, dogmatic and at times culturally ultra-leftist (some members rejected the whole of past culture out of hand), *Proletkult* demanded that the proletariat recast culture 'in the crucible of its own class consciousness'.

Claudín-Urondo approves this as a revolutionary transformation of culture, in contrast to what she sees as Lenin's programme of merely extending an already-existing stock of culture to the masses.

Transformation

Proletkult was certainly correct to see the process of building a revolutionary culture in Russia as one of struggle and transformation.

But so did Lenin: all of his considerable writings on literature (work significantly not mentioned by Claudín-Urondo) stress the need to reinterpret the artistic culture of class-society from a working-class viewpoint. (Lenin's celebrated articles on Tolstoy are a precise example).

But there is a difference between 'reinterpreting' electrification from the same viewpoint.



Trotsky

By 'culture', Lenin is normally thinking of the second—of the massed forces of developed civilisation, which must be placed under proletarian government.

Claudín-Urondo dislikes this too: she accuses Lenin of treating science and technology as ideologically neutral forces which can be merely taken over.

She doesn't quite go to the ridiculous lengths of claiming that technology is 'bourgeois'; but she does quote without criticism Bogdanov's demand for a 'proletarian mathematics', which prefigured some of the more absurd 'scientific' quackery of the Stalin era.

She also seems to support *Proletkult's* workerist refusal to integrate the skills of bourgeois experts into the proletarian revolution—an integration which Lenin and Trotsky deemed of

supreme importance to the revolution's success.

Proletkult was a prime example of a familiar Marxist deviation: the reduction of class position (the political positions taken by an individual in theory and practice) to class situation (the social class to which an individual belongs).

Hence its sectarian assertion that 'the bourgeois specialist is psychologically incapable of serving the interests of the proletariat', and its divisive hostility to the peasantry.

Bordered on mystical

Claudín-Urondo also ignores the fact that *Proletkult's* cultivation of 'pure proletarian consciousness' often bordered on the mystical—proletarian consciousness as a new religion; and she is blind to the contradictions of its cultural programme.

That programme centred on "elaborating a proletarian culture which, with the destruction of society's division into classes, will become common to all mankind" (*Declaration of the 1st All-Russian Proletkult conference*).

This is a very curious statement indeed. If it is taken seriously, then, by some dialectical trick, the future socialist culture will be no more than an extension 'to all mankind' of the culture the proletariat can create now, in conditions of severe backwardness, mass illiteracy and economic underdevelopment.

The culture of classless society will be, in contradictory fashion the culture of a class.

Proletkult thus ignored the fact that socialist culture, far

from being the 'extension' of the inevitably partial, class-based culture of a struggling revolutionary proletariat, will in fact be created in the whole process of struggle towards the abolition of social classes.

There is no sense in which future socialist culture can be simply 'read off' from revolutionary proletarian culture—quite apart from the fact that such a 'revolutionary proletarian culture', given the material deprivation of the Russian working class, was for the most part merely a pipe-dream of the *Proletkultists*.

Trotsky's resolute opposition to *Proletkult* receives a resounding silence in Claudín-Urondo's book.

Postponement

For Trotsky, the attempt to create a proletarian culture and project this into the far future signified a postponement of the drive to build the classless society of communism.

It was, in effect, a refusal of the perspective of permanent revolution at the level of culture.

The task of the proletariat, for Trotsky, was not to consolidate its own class-culture; it was to strive to abolish classes altogether, and so lay the basis for a quite different, and in many ways unforeseeable, form of culture in the future.

In the second half of this book, the meaning of Claudín-Urondo's attack on Lenin's cultural views become beautifully clear.

It is, in fact, nothing less than a convenient way of attacking the whole basis of Leninism itself.

She launches the usual petty-bourgeois assault on *What Is To*

Be Done?, which she distorts to suggest that Lenin believed that 'consciousness comes from knowledge, and not from practice'.

Material conditions

She bemoans Lenin's encouragement of specialists in the production process, with hardly a word about the material conditions which necessitated this, and hardly a hint of an alternative programme.

She suggests that Lenin's belief that large-scale industry is essential to the building of socialism is simply one more example of his uncritical attitude to capitalist culture, without quite committing herself to a 'small is beautiful' or 'back to the market garden' strategy.

And though quotation after quotation from Lenin reveals how acutely conscious and candid he himself was about the objective contradictions of building socialism in the Russian situation, it is all seen somehow as a question of Lenin's own 'mistaken' views, rather than of those contradictions themselves. *Lenin and the Cultural Revolution* valuably airs an aspect of revolutionary activity which is too often ignored.

But it also churns out a number of stock anti-Leninist opinions which would be better ignored.

Footnotes

*Speech at 4th Conference of Moscow Trade Unions and Factory Committees, *Collected Works*, vol. 27.

***The Achievements and Difficulties of the Soviet Government*, *Collected Works*, vol 29.



Russian peasants



Lenin (left) playing Bogdanov at chess



Women from Crossroads march in protest at police raids on their camp



Police harassment at Crossroads

The working class throughout the world is strong and increasingly ready to fight. But it still faces the obstacle of a leadership that is incapable of mobilising its strength in independent mass struggles against the capitalist class.

Nowhere is this more sharply demonstrated than in the struggle of the super-exploited black working class of South Africa.

In particular, the recent developments in the struggle being waged by workers and their families in the Crossroads squatter camp give concrete form to the lessons of Trotskyism.

In April of this year, the South African state, retreating from its intention to bulldoze Crossroads and expel the community to the 'homeland' labour reservoirs, announced that the squatters would be rehoused in Cape Town's African ghettos.

Concession

A committee was set up, drawn from the state bureaucracy and the league of capitalists known as the Urban Foundation, to decide which of the people qualified for the concession, and which were condemned to the poverty and disease of the 'homelands'.

In Socialist Press 153, this concession, which in no way met the full demands of the workers, was correctly shown to be a partial victory won by the working class community.

It was forced on the state not only by the high level of organisation and unity forged during the struggle, but also by the threat of widespread solidarity action by the working class in the event of a frontal attack by the state.

Class forces

This situation reflected the balance of class forces in South Africa.

Within an overall forward movement of the working class, which began in the massive strikes of 1973 and reached its high point in the 1976 uprising, a crisis of leadership has given rise to a temporary lull in the proletarian upsurge.

The impasse now reached by workers in struggle represents the limits of spontaneous militancy and is an unstable situation which carries the threat of setbacks.

Yet those within the ruling class who opt for a strategy of head-on attack, have been unable to carry their position, a clear indication that they recognise the persisting strength of the proletariat.

The state has been forced to turn more to ways of eroding the political independence won

SOUTH AFRICAN BOSSES SHRINK FROM MASS CONFRONTATION

by the working class.

In this it relies heavily on liberal white capitalists and their black bourgeois and petty bourgeois lackeys.

When the bourgeois state is forced to retreat before a forward moving working class, it will of course try to turn any concession into a noose around the neck of the proletariat.

The only firm defence for the working class, is the development of a leadership basing itself on the independence of the class and the strategy of permanent revolution (in which the mass strength of the working class must be brought to the forefront of the

struggles of the oppressed black masses, and democratic demands obtained and secured through socialist revolution).

The crisis of leadership however means that gains won in struggle, such as the Crossroads concession, can be transformed into reversals, or even more serious setbacks for the class.

The state, in announcing this month its decision to re-house only 6,000 of the estimated 24,000 Crossroads people, clearly feels that the efforts of the Urban Foundation and its agents have had some success in weakening the independence attained by the community and its organised committees.

No bulldozing

At the same time, recognising the continuing level of strength displayed nationally by the proletariat, the state still holds back from all-out assault, declaring that there will be no bulldozing of the 3,000 shacks.

The question of re-housing the workers and their families, and with it the question of whether a partial victory is consolidated or weakened, will of course be decided by a struggle, and not simply by the proclamation of a state official.

There are clear signs of parallel struggles being waged throughout the country in response to the increases in physical and economic attacks

launched on the masses by a decaying bourgeoisie.

Most recently, these struggles have included the important month-old bus boycott in the Durban industrial area.

This now involves about 15,000 workers walking tens of miles daily in protest against the bus fare increases.

In some ghettos, streets have been barricaded to stop buses, and there have been

battles with riot police.

Bosses have voiced surprise at the determination and solidarity of the boycott, despite vigorous attempts to divide the workers.

For revolutionaries, these features reflect the underlying reliance of the workers on their own forces, and are based on the degree of political independence achieved by the class as a whole.

Revolutionary intervention

in such particular struggles must aim to develop them into focal points for the defence and extension of the political independence of the class.

The mission of the agents of the big bourgeoisie is to undermine this development, to demobilise the proletariat and chain it to illusory reformist demands.

These collaborators have speeded up their manoeuvres and zig-zags in a desperate bid to maintain their credibility before a militant proletariat.

The Soweto Committee of Ten recently launched the Soweto Civic Alliance, aiming to harness the power of the masses in their drive for control of the vast township.

Motlana, the leader of this clique of opportunists, manages to combine 'left' speeches to the masses with brotherly advice to the bourgeoisie at university symposiums.

Political agility

His political agility is matched only by Buthelezi, leader of the significant Inkatha movement, who recently opened Inkatha membership to all blacks, after returning from a tour of the USA.

The fight to politically destroy these pretenders can be successful only through revolutionary methods that clearly expose the illusions they have so far been able to create.

This fight forms part of the battle for leadership of the proletariat, which will also come up against the political bankruptcy of the established nationalist movements, the reformism of trade union leaders, and the militant popular frontism of Black Consciousness, recently revived under the banner of the Azanian People's Organisation.

The fate of the South African revolution in the coming period of struggle depends crucially on the outcome of the battle for leadership of the working class.



Botha



Police violence against blacks



INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Trade union inquiry probes geriatric care

A report produced by a trade union inquiry in Oxford has come out in strong condemnation of the proposed closure of Cowley Road geriatric hospital.

The inquiry was set up by four trade union bodies in the county, including the Oxford Trades Council and the Joint Trade Union Committee of health service unions.

It has produced a report which has published for the first time the views of the workers at the hospital and exposed the lie which had been manufactured by NUPE officials that the workers were in favour of closure.

Beginnings

At the same time it has shown the beginnings of what could be achieved by full scale inquiries of health workers in exposing the mis-planning and the profiteering in the health service.

The Oxford inquiry is not a full scale workers inquiry. It has not 'opened the books' of the health authority. But it has, by going directly to the workers concerned, pointed the way towards doing so.

A historical introduction

to the report shows how care of the elderly grew at first out of the poor laws and Victorian 'philanthropy'. The Cowley Road Hospital itself was at one time an old workhouse.

The Tory government is of course seeking to destroy the NHS and replace it with an updated version of such minimal care for the working class.

As the report states: "The enormous gain of the National Health Service, won by the labour movement after 150 years of struggle, has survived the deprivations of successive post war governments wracked by the crises of post war capitalism.

"Both by direct cuts, 'redistribution' of resources and the encouragement of the inflationary erosion of real resources, the state's commitment to the provision of health care has been progressively reduced.

"Westminster politicians have been attempting to build up 'traditional' family values of each looking after their own, to force the burden of care back into the home."

The report looks at population forecasts, which show that the numbers of over 65s and in particular over 75s will grow dramati-

cally over the next ten years.

In 1978 the Oxfordshire Area Health Authority fell short of the DHSS standards for the numbers of hospital beds for the elderly by 127. Using official government forecasts on population, this shortfall will rise to 374 by 1978.

The AHA has presented the proposed closure of the hospital as a 'level transfer' as part of opening the new multi-million pound John Radcliffe Hospital. They deny that the closure of the hospital is a cut.



Health Secretary Vaughan

But the report exposes this as a lie. The number of beds earmarked for geriatric patients in the new hospital has been fudged through a system of double counting and those elderly who were previously in general wards and not counted as occupying 'geriatric beds' have now been counted in to the new total.

Staff at Cowley Road Hospital have concentrated on the question of patient care.

They are acutely aware that the existing building is inadequate and in need of substantial improvement.

But they also recognise that the specialist nursing of geriatrics is to be split up and that far more geriatric patients will be put into

general wards.

On general wards geriatric patients have to 'compete' for attention with younger patients, who may have clinically more 'interesting' cases.

Hard-pressed nurses (the new hospital is 60 nurses short of requirements) have no time for the constant turning and changing that totally dependent geriatrics need.

But most of all the report points to the way that at a time of desperate need the authority can consider closing a highly successful and cheap hospital and pretend that it is not a cut.

The hospital is in a local community which itself has a high number of old people. It is convenient for visitors and on the best bus route in the city.

The report concludes: "In many ways the argument of Cowley Road Hospital is not an argument over this or that scheme for how geriatric patients should be looked after.

"It is a choice between saving one of the most precious resources in Oxford, or making a drastic irreversible change which has potentially disastrous results.

"Confidence in the will or the ability of the AHA to plan a health service based on need is at an all time low.

"The closure of Cowley Road Hospital is first and foremost an act of expediency.

"It might coincide with some long term plan for geriatric care in the county, but since no such plan exists, it is certainly not part of one.

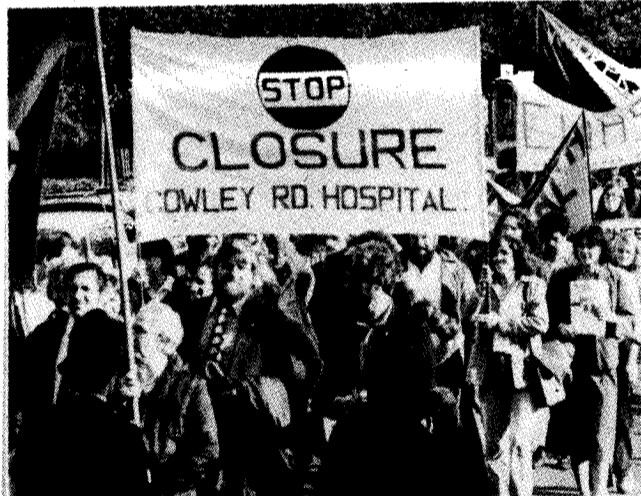
"Once the hospital is closed there will be no turning back and there will be no compensating improvements in the service."

This report, based on the trade union movement and directed into the organised and unorganised workers in the hospital is a valuable tool in a fight to save the hospital.

It was excluded from proposing policies and is therefore completely inadequate in itself as a means of defending the hospital.

It does however provide a basis from which a campaign for policies of occupation and supporting strikes can be launched.

"Cowley Road Hospital—The Case Against Closure" is available from P. Ward, Secretary, Oxford and District Trades Union Council, Bedlam, Trading Estate, Old Road, Headington, Oxford, price 10p plus postage.



Demonstrators fight to save Cowley Road Hospital.

JOIN OUR FIGHT AGAINST TORIES!

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

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

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

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

TUC leaders, too, have set out to establish a 'basis for collaboration with Thatcher and the Tory cabinet, paralleling their anti-working class alliance with Wilson and then Callaghan. But the working class has experienced and overcome such betrayals before—to topple Heath's union-bashing government in 1974, and smash through Callaghan's reactionary Phase 4 of wage controls in a series of monumental pay battles last winter.

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

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

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

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

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

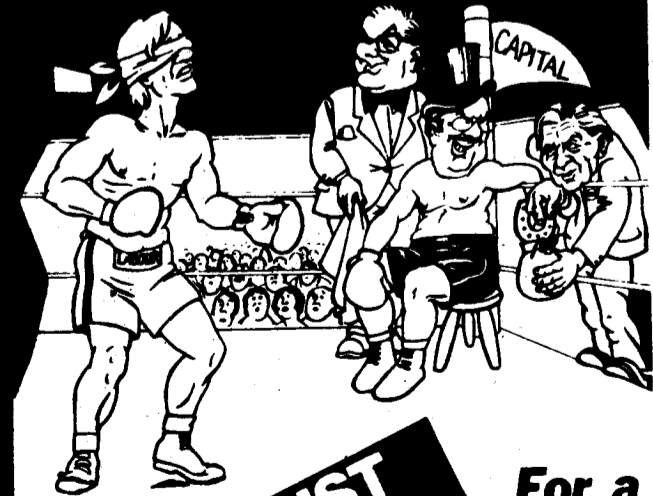
This means fighting for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

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

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

JOIN US and take forward the struggle for socialism!

DON'T GO INTO THE FIGHT BLINDFOLD!



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Big guns used for Stoke sell-out

Delegates show way to union 'leaders'

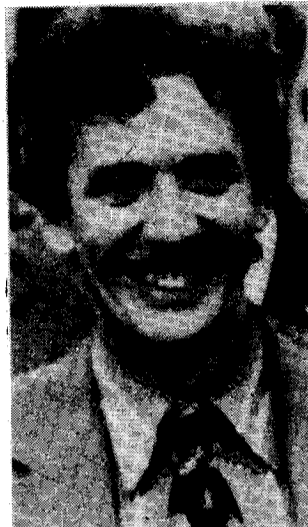
Following the successful struggle to end the strike by workers at Talbot's Ryton plant the national leaderships of the TGWU and AUEW wheeled out even bigger guns to knife the strike at the nearby Stoke plant.

A mass meeting held last Thursday was addressed by Grenville Hawley, national secretary of the automotive trade group of the TGWU and Ken Cure, Midlands Executive member of the AUEW.

The task facing them was more difficult than that which their colleagues had faced two weeks previously because the plant leadership at Stoke were opposing the company's offer and arguing for a continuation of the strike.

Bureaucrats everywhere will have been inspired by the officials' performance. In the face of militant workers chanting "Off, Off, Off" they pushed home the message that there was clearly no money available and that to continue the strike would mean that Talbot workers would end up on the dole.

These people, who did nothing to aid the strike from week one to week fifteen played



Hawley

the decisive role management required.

When the vote was taken it was narrowly in favour of a return to work.

Stoke workers have little to show for their fifteen week strike. Management refused to go above its original 5% offer.

As with the Ryton strike the prime lesson which must be learnt is the treachery of the national officials and the necessity of workers themselves to

act to defend and extend their strikes.

The Stoke leaders initiated a series of important actions to black Talbot products. The officials should have been forced to deepen that blacking.

A question that can be legitimately asked is why the national officials were allowed onto the platform at Ryton and Stoke. They should have been told bluntly that they had done nothing to earn the right to address the mass meetings.

Talbot management will obviously now go onto the offensive to smash trade union organisation within the plants.

The strength displayed by the rank and file in the pay strikes shows that this offensive can be halted if the militants in the plant work to counteract the initial demoralisation and cynicism which are always likely to accompany defeats of this sort.

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'leaders'

Entering the main hall of Congress House the 406 delegates attending the South East Region TUC conference on the cuts were inundated with an impressive array of brochures, leaflets and posters listing the cuts and their effects.

This reflected completely the kind of "fight" the leadership of the SERTUC and the TUC are prepared to launch against the Tory cuts.

"We must educate the public on the effects of the cuts."

"We must wage a propaganda war".

"We must convince the membership of the reality of the cuts."

One after another the platform speakers, Harry Barton, NUPE, Gerry Gilmore, SCPS, Les Wood UCATT, gave us a long list of the cuts hitting their members and the effects these would have on the "public".

Then they unveiled SERTUC's own secret weapon against the Tories—a November 'Week of Action'.

"United"

Not one platform speaker stated what form this 'action' against the cuts will take—they only insisted that whatever happens (or doesn't happen) it must be "united".

Delegates were offered a tantalising glimpse of a possible day of action to be organised by the TUC on a working day sometime next year by Terry Parry of the FBU.

But he quickly sped on to describe the thousands that will be made redundant not by the cuts, the Edwardes plan, the closure of Corby steel, Singers, the docks, etc—but by the silicon chip.

Parry did, however, give one sound piece of advice:

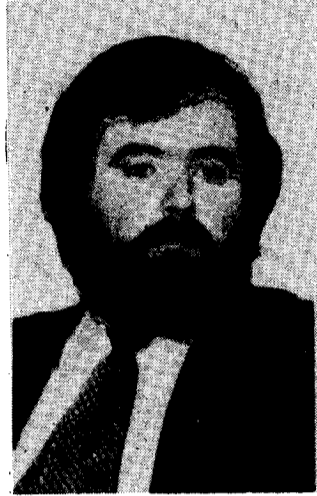
"Whatever you feel about the cuts don't leave the fight to the general council of the TUC".

Inactivity

Jack Dromey, having rocketed to dizzy heights on SERTUC (and now comfortably installed in Transport House as a TGWU full-time official) summed up by giving his usual call for unity.

It was clear the unity he meant—unity behind a policy of toothless inactivity, capitulation and sell-out.

He stressed his belief that the Tories "are here for some time to come", and that "you



Dromey

are mad if you think that they will go out in a wave of working class militancy in March or April next year"

Astonished delegates were told that "this government is here to stay because the working class has moved to the right."

His five-point tactical programme on fighting the cuts reflected TUC policy down the line.

But the conference hadn't gone the way Dromey expected, despite all his careful selection of rostrum speakers.

His speech received cold reception from the floor.

FBU leader Parry who boasted of holding wages down for the Labour government sounded more left with his call for a full scale nationalisation programme.

But worse than this for Dromey there were disturbing calls from the floor for action to bring down the Tories which were warmly welcomed by the delegates.

The COHSE delegate from Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth said in his area alone



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Parry

(where 9 hospitals are scheduled for closure) they have three fully operational occupation committees ready to take over threatened hospitals.

Tommy Dumas spoke of the Hackney-wide one-day strike action involving production workers from BOC and public sector employees in defence of the public sector.

Many more rostrum speakers got applause for asking what the TUC and SERTUC are going to do about the cuts.

Ken Eaton, UCATT, stated He welcomed the conference brochure sent to all delegates listing the cuts for their information:

"But there seems to be crucial pages missing—on what we are going to do about it."

Then, in a miscalculation, Dromey allowed a speaker to address the floor on policies, pointing the way forward.

Need for action

Anne-Marie Sweeney, Oxford County NUPE, spoke on the decision of the Longworth Hospital COHSE members to occupy their hospital if threatened with immediate closure.

She pointed to the other policies of the campaign, and stressed the need for action to defend occupations which can be broken if denied the necessary supporting strike action from other public sector workers.

She stressed the need to open the books to show how the private firms—drug companies, building contractors, etc—sponged off the NHS, making profits while services are slashed as they say there is no money.

She also pointed to the necessity of replacing the non-elected RHAs and AHAs who can only be sacked for not balancing their books with elected bodies of trade unionists, workers and users of the NHS, answerable to the labour movement.

"The Tories know what class they represent, and are going hell for leather to represent it, using every weapon to fight for their interests."

"But what are our leaders that we have heard today doing? What are the weapons they are using? Are glossy posters and brochures the weapons of the working class?"

No! We need occupations, strikes and workers control!"

Finally Dromey, desperate to show he was doing something in fighting the cuts, promised he would go down to the depots and speak to the "T&G lads and lassies and see if they can come up with a tanker or two of oil to supply the occupied Fulham swimming baths.

But unfortunately for him, before he finished his winding up the caretaker had switched the lights out on the platform.

Singer stewards cave in

Only days after the Singer management announced that all 3,000 jobs at Clydebank were to be lost, the stewards in the plant caved in and offered no plan for resistance.

This was supposedly because of tenuous "interest" in the Singer plant by two American companies and vague promises of government aid.

This is one method of allowing the Singer management a free rein to dispose of the factory.

The American firms would only be interested in Singers if they could (as at Marathon) impose speed-up, no strike clauses and redundancies on the workforce.

The point is that workers can never trust management. The only way of preserving the Clydebank plant is by an occupation of the factory, opening the books of the Singer combine to committees of trade unionists and fighting for supporting action as part of the fight against the hated anti-working class Tory government.

*Occupy Singers and open the books!

*Appeal to all workers to take action in support of the occupation against the Tories!

*Nationalise Singers without compensation under workers' management.

*No redundancies! For work sharing on full pay while trade union committees map out a programme of useful public works for the plant!

Times . . . from back page.

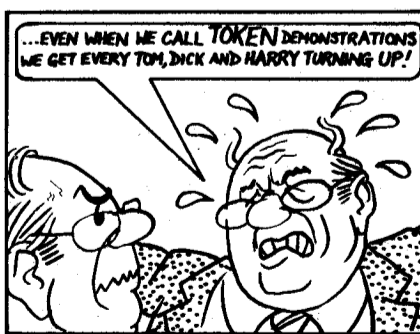
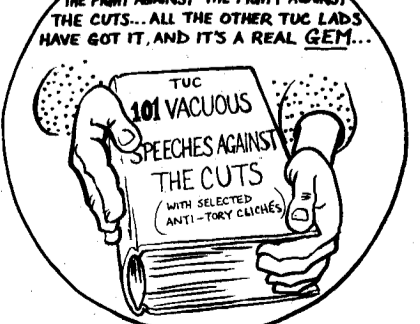
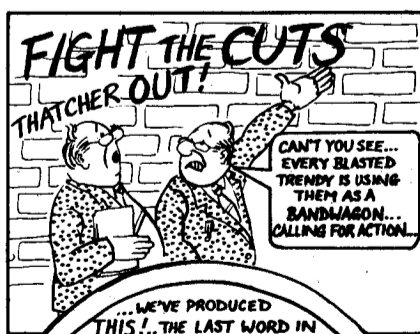
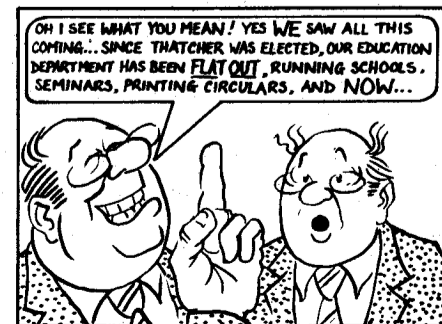
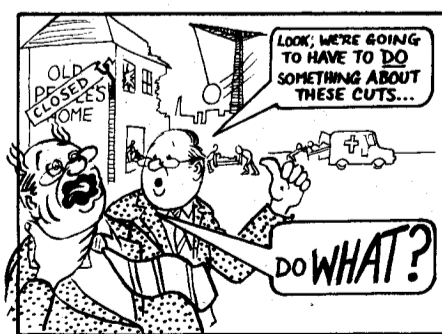
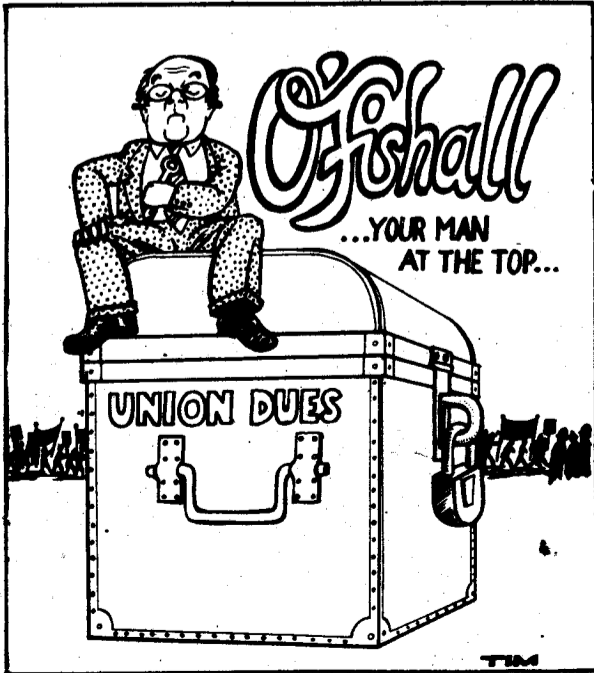
tially the most damaging to chapel strength and the most difficult to quantify.

Whether "no disruption" clauses hold still depends on the relative strength of the chapels.

The chapels—not the union leaders—have beaten off the worst effects of the attacks.

But nothing has been solved for the future and at no time during the shutdown has a coherent workers' challenge to the management been mounted on the offensive.

By not occupying the papers and challenging the right of capitalists to run papers in the bosses' interests, workers at the Times have ensured that their problems are all still ahead of them.



SOCIALIST PRESS ★

FIGHT CORRIE- FIGHT THE TORIES!

Thousands of men and women will join the TUC march this coming Sunday against John Corrie's reactionary anti-abortion Bill.

It will be a massive show of opposition to one of the most mediaeval and savage pieces of legislation to be introduced so far under the Thatcher government.

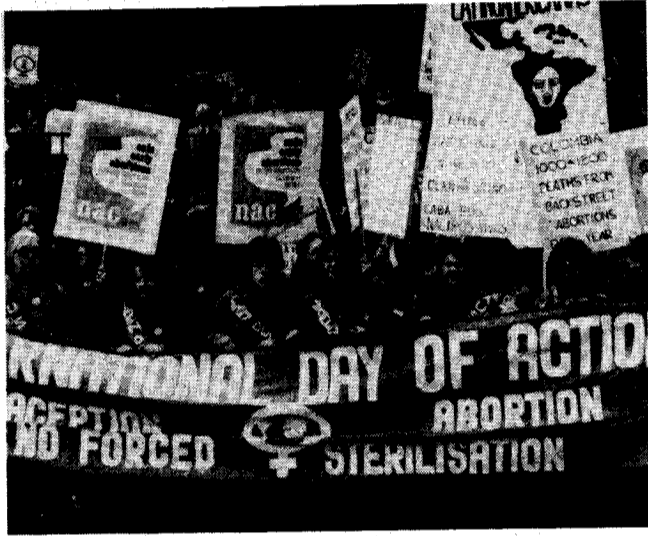
Broadened

But if the Bill is to be actually defeated, and if steps are to be taken towards the necessary extension of existing abortion rights to provide free abortion on demand as a right under the National Health Service, then the fight needs to be broadened and linked to the growing mass struggles against Tory policies.

Even now women are being denied abortions under the 1967 Act because the slashed NHS has no facilities to provide them.

The Parliamentary majority that Corrie is expecting for the Third Reading of his Bill is based on two basic forces.

One is the same vicious anti-



Pro-abortion demonstrators in March this year

working class Tory majority that is enabling the Thatcher government to ram home its policies of destroying the National Health Service, sabotaging state education, and decimating other vital public services; of hand-outs for the

rich and soaring prices for the working class; of mass unemployment and anti-union laws.

The other are Labour's crypto-Tory anti-working class right wing, the same MPs who time and again oppose independent action by workers to

defend jobs, living standards or public services and who essentially agree with the Tories that "a woman's place" is chained to the home, producing and rearing children.

"Consciences"

The supposedly tender "consciences" of such Labour MPs and their professed concern for the "unborn child" do not extend to the slightest interest in the misery of working class women facing unwanted pregnancy or the suffering of unwanted children forced into the world by lack of abortion facilities.

The combination of these reactionary forces in Parliament poses the real threat that the Corrie Bill could become law.

But neither force is invincible. The last Tory government under Heath, with a seemingly impregnable Parliamentary majority, was unable to impose its anti-union laws or its wage control policy in the face of mass working class resistance, and was driven from office in February 1974.

Of course then, as now, the right wing leadership of the Labour Party and the TUC opposed such independent

action, and attempted to hold it back within the bounds of peaceful protest.

But since then the growing confidence of the working class has brought other developments: notably, extreme right wing Labourite Reg Prentice (an anti-abortionist) was ousted by Newham Labour Party and forced to reveal his true Tory colours.

The last Labour conference showed the pressure from the Party's ranks for still further control over its leaders.

Strikes

And throughout the country thousands of men and women workers are now joining strikes, demonstrations and lobbies against the Tories' spending cuts and closures of hospitals, schools and nurseries.

To build a movement from Sunday's demonstration capable of defeating the Corrie Bill it is essential to connect these struggles, and to ensure that the fight for abortion rights is placed at the centre of the anti-Tory mobilisation.

Set a date

Every worker must demand that his/her union branch calls on the TUC to set a date for its 'Day of Action' against the cuts, and to include opposition to the Corrie Bill as a major part of that campaign.

Every Labour Party member must press for resolutions

instructing Labour MPs to vote against the Corrie Bill or face removal from office.

Strikes and occupations to defend threatened hospitals and NHS facilities must be coupled to demands for the extension of abortion facilities.

In opposing Prior's forthcoming anti-union laws, workers must show that such attacks are simply part of a range of Tory attacks on democratic rights, another one of which is the Corrie Bill.

In every way possible the fight to defend and extend abortion rights must be linked up with the fight for mass action capable of forcing this anti-working class Tory government out of office.

Yet such an approach requires a positive principled leadership to be built in the labour movement.

Many 'left' MPs—such as Tony Benn—claim to endorse the fight against Corrie. But they have all refused to fight for the removal of the right wing Callaghan-Healey leadership—who have explicitly denounced attempts to bring down the Tories through mass action.

In the struggles to come these 'lefts' must be called upon to wage such a fight—or stand exposed as incapable of advancing women's struggle for the most basic right of all—the right to control their own fertility and the working of their own bodies.

Thatcher

BLOODY DRAW AT THE TIMES

When the Times and Sunday Times reappear next month hardly a single one of the crucial attacks made on the workforce will have been definitively settled.

The outcome of the 12 month closure has been a bloody draw in which management have failed to establish their most ambitious plans—but in which hundreds of print

workers' jobs have been thrown away.

The contrast between Times Newspapers Ltd Chief Executive Marmaduke Hussey and NGA President Les Dixon as they emerged from the final round of all-night talks suggested that the union had given ground rapidly.

Hussey stood like a patrician rock mouthing platitudes to the press, while Dixon fawned like an elderly spaniel at his feet.

The consensus of the rest of Fleet Street—which desperately wanted a humiliating defeat on the unions—was that the NGA had won out.

They pointed out: *Direct inputting onto the computer by journalists and ad reps—the main pre-closedown demand—had not been conceded.

*TNL had lost between £30 million and £35 million during the shutdown.

*NGA compositors had jumped to the top of the wages league with rates of £227.50 a week once they move onto the new machines.

*A single night shift now brings £90 for NGA members in the machine room as against £67 for NATSOPA members.

But the outcome is not a victory for the unions.

"Flexibility"

Many chapels have accepted large job cuts (e.g. 17% among NATSOPA machine assistants in the Sunday Times).

Direct inputting is to be re-discussed and NGA leaders are committed to 'flexibility' on the question.

A tight disputes procedure has also been agreed which guarantees continuous production.

This last concession is poten-

FUND

The money has certainly come tumbling through the letter box this week. We received a total of £179.70 including £1.50 from supporters in Middlesborough, £5.50 from a supporter in Elgin and £40 from an Iranian supporter in appreciation of our coverage of Iran.

But we still have a long way to go in the next week to complete our target—£391.75 to be precise.

So let's step up the fight for this finance and ensure that this month we successfully complete the target on time!

All donations, large and small, are welcome. Our address is:

Socialist Press Monthly Fund
31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

Cont'd p.11, col.3

Now you see 'em



Top trade union, Labour Party and Communist Party leaders proudly marching last month against repression in Chile.

Now you don't!



Not one trade union, Labour Party or Communist Party leader was prepared to join last Saturday's 600-strong Provisional Sinn Fein national demonstration through Oxford against British repression in Ireland, demanding the restoration of political status to republican prisoners of war. The concluding rally heard speeches from Provisional Sinn Fein, the IRSP, Hands Off Ireland, Women in Ireland and the Oxford Irish Delegation Committee.