

SPARTACIST



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15p

BRITAIN

Robinson sacking spearheads attacks

Bury the Prior Bill!



Birmingham, November 26. Thousands of workers demonstrate in defence of Derek Robinson and demand the ousting of BL overseer Edwardes.



Trade unionists march in London on anti-cuts Day of Action, November 28

For a general strike to smash anti-union offensive!

Britain is teetering on the edge of a major industrial showdown. Over the past month, blow after rapid-fire blow has rained down upon the working class in the most concentrated series of attacks since Thatcher's Tories came to power last May. And while tens of thousands of workers have demonstrated a readiness to smash these attacks, the pro-capitalist union leaders have sought to undercut or defeat every struggle.

It began at Leyland. BL chairman Sir Michael Edwardes managed to extort a 7-1 'yes' vote from the workforce for his plans to 'save' the chronically ailing company through massive redundancies and plant closures. Then he produced an 85-page document demanding a massive increase in productivity in exchange for ... a *five per cent* wage rise. And on November 19 BL management sacked Communist Party member Derek Robinson, the leading shop steward in the entire industry, in a brazenly provocative victimisation.

Then came the rest. In the first week of December British Steel announced an insulting *two per cent* wage offer and plans for slashing another 32,000 jobs in the already ravaged industry, leading to the threat of a national steel strike. And on December 7 Employment

Secretary James Prior crowned the attack, introducing the government's promised 'industrial relations' package, a sweeping attack on just about every trade union right.

From the Robinson sacking to the Prior Bill

The Robinson sacking was an open declaration of war on union shop-floor organisation. It demanded a solid show of force by the entire trade union movement -- an immediate national strike throughout Leyland, mass protest rallies, direct preparations to use the full industrial muscle of the unions as necessary, up to and including a general strike. But instead of a show of force the union leadership presented a spectacle of weakness.

While 40,000 Leyland workers throughout the Midlands downed tools in solidarity with Robinson -- shutting five BL factories -- the union bureaucracy worked overtime to defuse the struggle. Only two days after a spirited march through the streets of Birmingham by 6000 unionists demanding Robinson's reinstatement, Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers president Terry Duffy ordered everybody back to work until the outcome of an AUEW 'inquiry' into Robinson's 'behaviour'. It was a green light to the bourgeoisie to proceed with impunity.

Which is exactly what they did. Prior introduced his ludicrously mistitled 'Employment Bill' in Parliament two weeks later. Under its sinister provisions, secondary pickets and

flying pickets will be outlawed. The extension of the closed shop will be all but stopped by demanding an 80 per cent affirmative vote in any union organising election. Any attempt to prevent scabbing will be effectively rendered illegal by the threat of civil court action for 'compelling' workers to join a union and by offering 'conscientious objectors' exemption from union membership on any grounds. A dangerous precedent for accelerated state intervention into the labour movement will be set by providing government funds for secret union ballots. To make the government's intentions clear, on the same day that Prior announced his legislation Social Services Secretary Patrick Jenkin struck out against the unions on a second front: authorising the use of scab 'volunteers' to break strikes by health workers and stopping the pay of any hospital worker who respected a picket line.

The director general of the Confederation of British Industry gloated that Prior's bill 'hits the right target', while the tabloids hailed 'Prior's tough plan to tame the union bullies'. Indeed this is the most far-reaching attempt to cripple the union movement through legislation since the last Tory government's Industrial Relations Act bit the dust following the victorious struggle to free the Pentonville Five in 1972.

Now is the time to remember that struggle! When the dockers took on Heath's 'tough plan'

**Split in the
United Secretariat ... p6**

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No imperialist troops to Zimbabwe!

Patriotic Front bows to white supremacists

On December 5 Lord Carrington announced that a final settlement had been reached between the petty-bourgeois nationalist Patriotic Front (PF) guerrilla alliance and the white-supremacist Salisbury regime. PF leaders Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe have joined ranks with Ian Smith's Rhodesia Front and the quisling black government of Bishop Muzorewa to accept a new constitution which guarantees 20 per cent parliamentary representation for the 230,000 white settlers, continues white control over the army and police and leaves white ownership of land and industry virtually untouched. They have agreed that for an 'interim period' a British colonial governor will be installed as head of state and that British and Commonwealth troops will be brought in on an imperialist 'peacekeeping' mission. And finally both sides in the Rhodesia Constitutional Conference talks at Lancaster House have accepted in principle a ceasefire formula.

For the seven million blacks of Zimbabwe the actions of the PF leaders have been a massive betrayal. And an all-too-predictable one as well, given the wretched political histories of Mugabe and Nkomo, their mutual tribalist-based animosities and their fealty to neo-colonialist leaders of 'front line' African states like Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda. After seven years of bitter armed struggle, and with a military victory over the increasingly brittle and isolated Salisbury regime seemingly within their grasp, the PF leaders have sold out the aspirations of hundreds of thousands of their followers who have struggled long and hard for the destruction of white-supremacist rule.

There remains the problem of actually implementing the agreement -- and this is no small matter. It seems doubtful (to say the least!) that Salisbury's supreme military commander, General Peter Walls, will peacefully integrate the nationalist guerrilla forces into his army in a new, 'multi-racial' Zimbabwe. After all,

this is the army which includes thousands of foreign mercenaries and South African-trained troops and pilots who have provided the cutting edge in Salisbury's 'counter-insurgency' campaign. Along with the British and Muzorewa, Walls is demanding that the PF forces concentrate in about fifteen 'designated areas' and surrender their arms under the supervision of newly-installed British and Commonwealth military forces. Even Nkomo and Mugabe had to gag at this proposal. To assuage their fears, Lord Carrington promised to send in more foreign troops and 'disarm' the airforce, and gave a token verbal warning to South Africa to keep out.

But the key demand of the PF's proposals for the ceasefire all along has been the call for more British imperialist and other Commonwealth troops to come into the country. Where Carrington initially proposed that 300 troops 'oversee' a ceasefire, Mugabe and Nkomo have demanded many thousands, claiming that a 'substantial peacekeeping force (army and police) capable of enforcing the ceasefire, is a fundamental requirement to achieving the confidence and sense of security of the parties' (*Times*, 20 November). The entire history of class struggle -- and particularly the bloody record of British imperialist intervention, from India to Ireland -- has demonstrated with horrific clarity that imperialist troops only intervene to protect the interests of their capitalist masters.

The British workers movement must adamantly oppose any imperialist intervention in Zimbabwe.

The fact that the PF leaders can welcome and even demand the intervention of British troops speaks volumes about their treacherous neo-colonialist programme. Even if the butcher Walls & Co bomb the ceasefire out of existence and the Patriotic Front pulls out of the agreement, the PF have shown that they lack even the tenacity and self-sacrifice of other African petty-bourgeois nationalist movements, as in Algeria and Angola.

No imperialist troops -- No deals with Smith, Walls and their black frontmen! White supremacy in Rhodesia must be smashed! But only a Trotskyist vanguard party, committed to the programme of permanent revolution, can lead the toiling masses in the struggle to regain their birthright through socialist revolution in Zimbabwe and throughout southern Africa. ■



Black fodder for white supremacy: new recruits for Rhodesian police

Protest war criminal Carver!



Spartacist Britain

The Birmingham University Spartacist Society saw to it that imperialist butcher Field Marshal Sir Michael Carver did not go unopposed when he came to speak at the university on November 15 on 'Combatting Insurgency -- The British Army Experience'. Carver is well equipped to draw the 'lessons' of a military career spanning three continents and four decades of imperialist war and colonialist savagery, from Kenya to Malaysia to Northern Ireland. But the presentation of the bloody adventures of the declining British Empire as a public affairs lecture in modern statesmanship was an insult and a challenge to anyone opposed to British imperialism's brutal history.

Carver was met by a spirited 40-strong united front demonstration initiated by the Spartacist Society around the slogan 'Protest the presence of imperialist hatchet-man Carver on Birmingham University!' The demonstration was endorsed by, among others, the International Marxist Group, Socialist Students Alliance, Communist Society, Workers Action, Anarchist Association, Malaysian Society and the Labour Club chairman. The Spartacist contingent of a dozen was the largest on the protest. Carver was forced to slink in the back door and deliver his lecture to the accompaniment of Spartacist chants demanding 'No platform for imperialist thugs' and 'Send Carver back to his victims'.

'Down with the White Law!'

Over twenty thousand demonstrators marched through London on November 25 to protest against Tory Home Secretary William Whitelaw's move to toughen up Britain's already notorious immigration laws. The Tories' new law -- designed to prevent Indian women from bringing their husbands or fiancés into the country -- is on a par with the Labour government's enforcement of the odious Home Office directive to give Indian women vaginal examinations before allowing them to enter Britain.

Linking the fight against the bourgeoisie's racist immigration laws with the struggle to smash the fascists, the Spartacist League contingent carried placards calling for, 'Down with the Tories' White Law', 'No deportations', 'For working class action to smash the fascists' and 'Tories' laws were Labour's laws, fight for a workers government'.



Spartacist Britain

500 at Detroit labour/black protest say:

'Smash the Klan!'



left: Car workers rally against KKK
above right: Massive leafletting mobilised for the protest

On November 3, to the horror of more than 100 onlookers, the Ku Klux Klan stormed an anti-Klan rally in Greensboro, North Carolina in the US South with guns blazing, murdering five demonstrators and wounding many others. The victims were longtime civil rights activists and union organisers, and they called themselves communists, members of a tiny Maoist group known as the Workers Viewpoint Organisation. The capitalist press and capitalist politicians unanimously termed it a 'Klan-leftist shootout', though not a single KKKer was even scratched. Then they claimed that the anti-Klan demonstrators fired first. But the millions who saw the news footage on television knew it to be a lie of grotesque proportions.

The unprecedented broad-daylight murder raid upon the racially integrated crowd -- in full view of local police -- was shocking in its openness. This was no night-ride through town. No midnight cross burning. No hooded intimidation. This was murder, cold-blooded racist murder: a declaration in blood to the enemies of the Klan -- the blacks, the communists, the Jews and the labour movement -- that this fascist terrorist gang is alive and well. The Greensboro massacre demanded an immediate, powerful response. But the official union and black leaders throughout America refused to move and even joined in the slanderous chorus against 'extremists', equating the murderers with their victims, while most 'socialist' groups sat on their hands. A protest was needed, a labour/black mobilisation against the Klan.

The Klan won't ride in the Motor City'

There was such a demonstration, on November 10 in Kennedy Square in Detroit, the hub of the American motor industry. The demonstration's initial endorsers included two dozen area unionists and black spokesmen, and it was heavily built by the Spartacist League/US (SL/US) and its youth section the Spartacus Youth League. This was no ordinary middle-class liberal protest but something not seen in years. The crowd of 500 was overwhelmingly (two-thirds) black: a hundred or more came, individually and in groups, from Detroit factories, particularly the huge car plants. They braved the threat of mass arrests. They came in spite of a press blackout. Their message: 'The Klan won't ride in the Motor City!'

Only weeks before the shocking racist murder, two foremen at Ford's giant River Rouge complex had strutted through the plant wearing KKK hoods. Six workers put down their tools and walked off in protest, stopping the line. When the six were threatened with disciplinary action, over 1000 workers responded with a petition demanding the sacking of the foremen and no victimisation of the workers. As a result of this massive show of support and press publicity, the union leadership finally took up the

issue and management promised the offenders would be out of Rouge.

Three days after the Greensboro massacre -- and following a public threat by a Michigan Klan spokesman to parade in the streets of Detroit -- the same militant car workers who had launched the petition drive issued a leaflet calling on Detroit unionists to 'Drive These Bigoted Scum from the Streets!... We in the organized labor movement must smash the Klan's terror with a mobilization of our thousands of ranks'. That day, Detroit's mayor, black liberal Democrat Coleman Young, announced that both pro- and anti-Klan marches would be prohibited.

The ensuing events were reported as follows in a special supplement of *Workers Vanguard* (16 November):

'By 1am Thursday morning, some two dozen people, seven of them Rouge workers, have endorsed a leaflet for an anti-Klan demonstration. The pictures tell the story: "This...or this." Rouge workers drive out KKK-hooded foremen in Detroit ...or Klan murders and cop beatings in Greensboro. "Mayor Coleman Young", the leaflet reads, "said we who oppose the Klan have no more rights than the KKK killers, that we should not show our faces on fear of arrest. We say no to Coleman Young...and Coleman Young better think about it." The demands: Down with Klan Terror! For the Right of Southern Black Armed Self-Defense! For Factory Seizures Against Layoffs! Oust the Bosses' Tools in the Labor Movement! For Independent Black and Labor Candidates Against the Democratic Party! Build a Workers Party! RALLY AT KENNEDY SQUARE! BE THERE!... 'As the flyers go out across the city the outrage over Greensboro, opposition to the KKK marching in Detroit and anger at Mayor Young are apparent. Bus drivers are placing bundles at their coin boxes for their passengers, newspaper vendors hand them out with the evening paper, and auto workers are taking them into the plants, reams at a time, to paste them up by lockers and water coolers.

'We confront the mayor on his turf. A press conference is scheduled for Young's office at 1pm. There the rally organizers are met by mayoral aide James Graham who says the ban stands: any demonstrators will be arrested. [River Rouge militant Frank] Hicks answers for the protesters: "You arrest hundreds of black and white workers in Kennedy Square for demonstrating against KKK murders and your political career is finished in this city." As we walk out, under the TV lights of all the Detroit media, we make our response: "We Will March!"'

Labour, blacks and communists rally against the Klan

And march they did. This was a hard-core demonstration of people who were not stopped by the mayor's threats, and the 367 copies of *Workers Vanguard* sold were an indication of the serious-



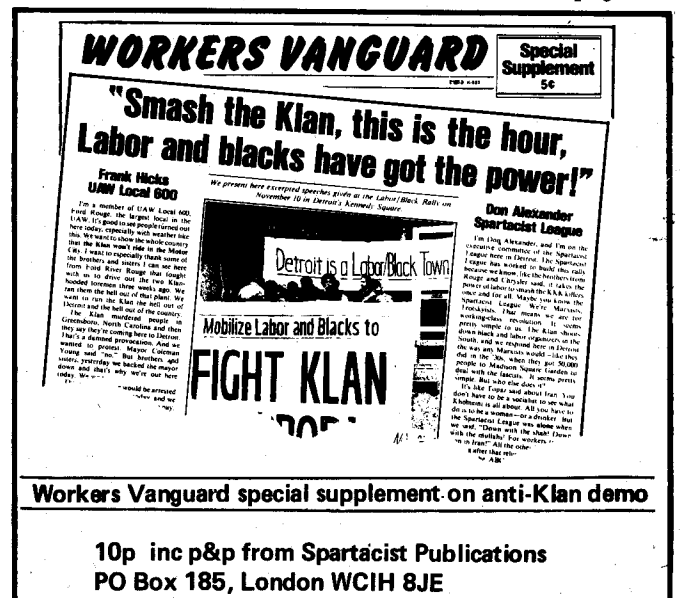
ness of the participants. They had broken through the press blackout, forced an eleventh-hour backdown by the mayor, passed out altogether 85,000 leaflets at plant gates, bus stops, supermarkets, black neighbourhoods. For 90 minutes, spirited chants resounded through Kennedy Square: 'Smash the Klan, this is the hour -- Labour and blacks have got the power!'

Speaker after speaker, many of them class-struggle union militants, slammed away at liberal illusions like 'free speech for fascists', gun control legislation and reliance on the bourgeois state. Said Hicks: 'After you're murdered the government will defend your civil rights. Thanks a lot, we don't need it.' Another militant, Jane Margolis, an executive board member of the phone workers union in California explained how Carter's Secret Service had dragged her off the floor of her union convention 'because I wanted to speak in defence of the workers against the racist, anti-working class policies of the Democratic Party'. SL/US spokesman Don Alexander denounced the imperialist ruling class that supports 'every racist strike-breaking regime they could find from Tehran to South Korea to South Africa' behind the smokescreen of its 'Human Rights, Hate Russia' crusade. Not 'progressive' Democrats, urged Alexander, but a 'slate of labor/black candidates ... a campaign that says it won't be in the voting booth, at the polls, but in the factories, on the picket lines, on the barricades of the class struggle that the fundamental political questions confronting the working class will be solved'.

'America's last, best chance'

It was no accident that this demonstration took place in the 'Motor City'. Detroit is a northern city populated by southern blacks and southern whites, a city with a long history of

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WSL on British Leyland:

A bankrupt policy for a bankrupt firm

'Most British equipment is in use twenty years after it should have been scrapped.' A comment from some recent study of the British economy? No, American steel tycoon Andrew Carnegie speaking to English steel manufacturers in the 1890s. Two world wars, the dissolution of its Empire, *ninety* years later, British capitalism has only become older and more senile. And British social democracy has become not one whit better, promising ever more doggedly that as caretaker of capitalist interests it will (ultimately) nationalise all the gangrenous pieces and realise the Clause Four pie in the sky.

Sir Michael Edwardes' plan to sack 40,000 workers to 'save' British Leyland demonstrated yet again that the nationalisation of ailing, inefficient and uncompetitive industries does not make them suddenly competitive on the international market. More important -- for the workers involved -- it does not make such industries more 'democratic', more 'accountable', more generous with pay or less vicious at job-slashing than private enterprise. If anything the *opposite* is the case -- as the mess of BL so eloquently attests. British 'socialism' a la Leyland has been so 'successful' that the country now competes with the south of Italy to be the most economically backward area in Western Europe.

Yet without exception the fake lefts -- both within and outside the Labour Party -- responded to the Edwardes plan by demanding more of the same. As we put it in an article entitled 'Don't Pay for the Bosses' Mess' in last month's *Spartacist Britain*, they plead for 'more cash bail-outs; more production (to be sold where?), more protectionist import controls or ... more nationalisations'. The widespread knee-jerk reaction in the British left of calling for state assistance and takeovers of failing companies is profoundly anti-Marxist. It bears within it a petty-bourgeois Proudhonist, craft-unionist protest against technological progress, akin to the Luddite mobilisations.

But most centrally it is a reflection of the pernicious grip of Labourite reformism, of the social-democratic mentality which fosters demands for capitalist government intervention and nationalisation of bankrupt companies. In the *Transitional Programme*, Trotsky recognised that 'when the occasion warrants, the demand for the expropriation of several key branches of industry vital for national existence or of the most parasitic group of the bourgeoisie' may be appropriate. But in a very real sense the social-democratic practice of nationalising bankrupt and lame-duck industries (advocated ad nauseam by centrists like the Workers Socialist League of Alan Thornett) is the antithesis of the socialist expropriation of the most advanced and vital sections of the economy. Their formula seems to be: if it's archaic, save it by pumping in subsidies. Keep making those horse-collars!

In our article we warned that workers must assume no responsibility for 'saving' the bosses' economy, and raised demands to defend the BL workforce through work-sharing on full pay with any necessary retraining and relocation to be carried out at the bosses' expense. We offered a strategy not just for another round of trade union militancy, which by itself *cannot* offer a way out of the impasse and decay of British capitalism, but for a way forward to the workers' seizure of power. We pointed to the need for a co-ordinated strike throughout the motor industry coupled with a 'series of militant plant seizures' throughout Leyland 'which could be the clarion call for a massive class upsurge.... The question which must be forced

onto the agenda is not "Who wants Leyland?" but "Who rules Britain?"

In the context of this revolutionary challenge to bourgeois property rights and the failing capitalist system of which Leyland is simply a frontrunner, we also raised as a possible tactical outcome of the plant seizures the sale of the assets by the workers. We said that this would be far preferable to such futile schemes as 'workers co-ops' and 'workers plans'. Such a demand could be an apt and powerful call to anti-capitalist struggle in certain situations, for example in connection with the threatened collapse of Chrysler in America, where the Spartacist League/US has raised it in counter-position to the social democrats' calls for government bail-outs and nationalisation. But in the case of British Leyland the tactic was mechanically misapplied.

BL is already at the end of the road of



Spartacist contingent on Birmingham Day of Action, November 26

government bail-outs and lame-duck nationalisations. Nor is the decrepit British economy at all capable of reabsorbing the hundreds of thousands of workers who in any case would be without jobs if Leyland went under. BL workers must fight management's attacks and defend their jobs; but the stark truth is that there is *no* short-term 'solution' to the problem of Leyland -- it is the problem of British capitalism. If communists do not provide a revolutionary answer, then the fascists will be ready in the wings to step in and provide a totalitarian and genocidal one.

'Comic opera'?

Our article last month provoked a silly and unserious page-long polemic in *Socialist Press*, paper of the centrist/economist WSL, entitled 'Comic Opera Policies from Spartacist Dream Machine'. But what the WSL considers 'comical' is precisely the *revolutionary challenge* to the bourgeois order which our article posed. The most interesting question raised by their jumble of stupid witticisms, outright lies and distortions and crass social-democratic legalism is: why did they bother to run it in the first place?

The answer might lie in the conspicuous absence of any reply (or even reference) to one particular charge we raised in our article: that the WSL harbours a *scab* in its top leadership. There has clearly been some unease among the WSL membership lately about their vaunted 'proletarian leader' Alan Thornett, who ignominiously joined a back-to-work movement at BL Cowley during the recent national engineering strike. Thornett had to spend 25 minutes on a defence-confession of his actions in response to our comrades' interventions at a recent conference of the WSL's fake-mass trade union front group, the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement. But none of this found its way into

Socialist Press. Could the WSL paper's polemic be intended as a smokescreen? Are they worried about something, perhaps?

What the *Socialist Press* article *does* do is demonstrate the WSL's trade union parochialism and social-democratic cretinism. It tries to defend their call for a 'fight in the plants singled out for closure' rather than a fight for occupations throughout Leyland, while slanderously implying that we would *oppose* the occupation of only one or several plants. It likewise defends their *refusal* to fight for co-ordinated strike action with the rest of the motor industry, falsely and ludicrously asserting that we call on Ford workers to 'unilaterally' [!] save BL jobs. Yet the WSL claims with hurt pride to be 'no defenders of the divisions between crafts and workplaces' -- which must be why they oppose industry-wide (or even Leyland-wide) wage negotiations and support individual plant and craft bargaining (eg the toolmakers). And why Thornett scabbed on the *national* engineering strike simply because a lot of workers in *his* plant didn't want to go out.

The WSL also takes umbrage at our assertion that their call for nationalisation of the entire motor industry can only save car workers' jobs -- even temporarily -- if it is premised on chauvinist import controls to protect the run-down, grossly uncompetitive British industry. (Sixty per cent of all cars sold in this country last month were imports; the percentage rises inexorably every month.) But they refuse to explain why we are wrong; and nor do they explain the curious 'dialectic' whereby opening the books of the failed nationalised BL will automatically prove the need to nationalise the rest of the industry. The WSL shows that, at bottom, it shares the 'save Leyland' methodology of social democracy, the idea that a nationalised industry is somehow 'ours'. They are locked into the world of socialisation at a snail's pace: first this bankrupt firm, then another.... And that road leads *nowhere*.

The Transitional Programme and the struggle for power

The WSL has, in fact, nothing to counterpose to our supposed 'flight of fancy' save the call to 'save jobs' through social-democratic nationalisations. But this is no answer to the plight of BL. It requires a programme for the overthrow of capitalism and the reconstruction of the economy on a planned, socialist basis -- not simply a programme for the (temporary) protection of jobs *under* capitalism. The struggle to defend jobs, and every other partial and reform struggle, must be linked consciously through a *system* of demands to the struggle to mobilise the workers for the *seizure of power*. That is the purpose of the Transitional Programme.

Instead the WSL offers a linear *schema* of demands, each assigned its own particular place in the development of the class struggle and with

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SPARTACIST BRITAIN

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The threat behind imperialist tears for Cambodia

For the past month it has been impossible to pick up a paper or turn on the TV without confronting the agonising spectacle of skeletal and dying Cambodian refugees struggling over the border to 'sanctuary' in Thailand. The starvation is real, but the message -- that if only it weren't for obstruction by the bloodthirsty Vietnamese, 'free world' leaders like Jimmy 'Human Rights' Carter and his tag-along 'statesman' Australian prime minister Malcolm Fraser would have been able to rush in massive aid long ago -- is a vicious lie of genocidal proportions.

Oh, Cambodia used to be such a 'lush, gentle land', they cry. And Phnom Penh used to be so 'elegant and luxurious', so 'civilised' a watering hole -- at least for the suave diplomats and mass murderers of imperialism. All this sudden imperialist 'humanitarianism' comes from people whose hands are soaked with the blood of the Indochinese peoples. Coming from Rosalynn Carter and her husband (who as governor of Georgia declared a day of celebration for 'our boys' in Vietnam, protesting the conviction of My Lai mass murderer Lt William Calley), this 'concern' is cruelly hypocritical. The US didn't care too much about 'the survival of the Khmer people' when it rained more bombs on the Cambodians even than it did on the Japanese during World War II.

Although most bourgeois pundits trace the cause of the present starvation back to the murderous horrors of the Pol Pot regime which overthrew the US puppet Lon Nol in 1975, the real beginning is in early 1969, when the US began four years of the most devastating carpet bombing of the Vietnam War. Between 1970 and 1973, the US rained down an average of more than 100 tons of bombs for every man, woman and child in Cambodia, turning heavily populated areas into fields of craters and destroying agricultural dikes and waterworks. Probably a million died in Cambodia during the civil war against Lon Nol, and famine already existed when the US brutally cut off all aid following the fall of its henchman in 1975.

Certainly there's plenty of horror to go around. The Pol Pot regime, ousted by Vietnamese forces this spring, while it overthrew capitalism, was undoubtedly the most brutal, primitive and bizarre Stalinist dictatorship ever to rule a deformed workers state. While it's necessary to critically examine atrocity stories from obviously self-interested sources, the total mass of evidence is convincing. The Vietnamese 'boat people' do not claim they've left a land of mass murder and rampant starvation, as do the thousands of Cambodian refugees. Nor do those mainland Chinese fleeing to Hong Kong claim they were forcibly marched hundreds of miles from their homelands, made to work at gunpoint and live in sexually segregated compounds.

Now that they've been thrown out and are looking for allies, even Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge are engaging in a little self-criticism. Former foreign minister Ieng Sary admits that some cadres 'did not give medicine to the sick people though there were medicines, some people were made to work hard though they were not in a position to do so.... Some cadres even forbade people to grow maize or sugar cane around their houses as it was considered a sign of individualism. Those who had grown them were not even allowed to eat them' (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 22 June). In *Le Monde* (2 June) Sary admits that when the present Heng Samrin government was installed in January, there were 'people who went toward ... the Vietnamese, attracted by their programme'.

There is no doubt that the plight of the Cambodian people today is desperate. But the sudden announcement of 'concern' by the United States and its anti-communist allies of the ASEAN alliance (Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia) is nothing but the thinnest cover for a renewed imperialist drive to 'save' Cambodia for capitalism -- and, they hope, to strike a blow against the Vietnamese deformed workers state. For months now the US and its new ally China have manoeuvred to isolate the Hanoi-backed Heng Samrin government, upholding the

universally despised Pol Pot regime as the 'legitimate' representative of the Cambodians in the United Nations.

Thus it's no accident that UN special sessions on providing food to Cambodia took place only a week before the General Assembly passed a motion November 14, sponsored by the ASEAN nations and heavily lobbied for by Peking, calling on Vietnam to withdraw its troops from Cambodia. And at an 'emergency conference' on Cambodia held in New York City on November 17, the main speakers unanimously called for a Geneva-style international conference to restore Cambodia's 'national integrity' and 'neutrality'. Keynote speaker In Tam, former prime minister in a pre-Lon Nol government, pushed for a 'third force' under Prince Norodom Sihanouk. This, of course, is simply a call for capitalist restoration.

Food is 'not political'?

Meanwhile, the Pol Pot forces are increasingly desperate and isolated. Rapidly reduced to a small band and driven into the mountainous regions near the Thai border, the remnants of the Khmer Rouge have been kept alive with food and sanctuary in Thailand, including permission to escape Vietnamese forces through Thai territory and re-enter Cambodia at safer points. They have also been allowed to receive arms from their Stalinist Chinese backers across Thai territory (*Financial Review* [Sydney], 26 October). In February, after promising the US to 'teach Vietnam a bloody lesson', China launched a 'punitive' invasion, thus solidifying the US/China alliance aimed against the Soviet Union and putting additional military pressure on Vietnam.

Three months ago, the Heng Samrin government of Cambodia urgently appealed to the Red Cross and UN relief agencies for food and vital medical supplies, only to be met with a string of hypocritical 'guarantees' and 'conditions'. Any aid to Phnom Penh had to be distributed to people under Pol Pot's control as well, despite the civil war conditions and obvious predominance of the Hanoi-backed regime. According to one report, UN troops would be required to distribute the aid, and Australia volunteered to be part of the 'peacekeeping force' (*Asiaweek*, 26 October). Naturally, Phnom Penh rejected this blackmail. No red tape has held up aid going into Thailand, however. Food supplies available across the border have turned a refugee trickle -- little more than a few Chinese advisors of Pol Pot turned up in Thailand in the few months immediately after the Vietnamese takeover -- into a flood.

Recent US actions clearly serve to bolster Pol Pot, who controls enough of the distribution to funnel aid into Cambodia, where his guerrilla fighters get preference. But food is only the beginning. More than half a dozen rightist groups led by former officials and generals of the Sihanouk and Lon Nol regimes, and probably supplied and backed by the CIA via Thailand, are now operating alongside the Khmer Rouge inside Cambodia against their common enemy. One of these, the 'Khmer Serika', is called the 'paras' by Vietnamese, apparently because of their crisp new camouflage uniforms. Thailand itself is getting rush shipments and top priority on US military aid, including latest model M48 tanks and sophisticated TOW anti-tank missile systems, with plenty of American advisors for training.

Against this background, Jimmy Carter's call for prayers for the Cambodians, and statements that the 'aid' issue is 'beyond politics ... a matter of simple and humanitarian concern' coming from White House officials ring hollow



Vietnamese troops during the February 1979 Chinese invasion which consummated anti-Soviet US/China alliance. Since then imperialist propaganda war continued: first the 'boat people', now starvation in Cambodia

indeed. Although more aid is now being flown into Phnom Penh by Western agencies for appearances' sake, the latest US ploy is to demand the Heng Samrin government's approval for a 'land bridge' of aid from Thailand, which would only strengthen the already existing links to the various rightist bands operating in border areas.

The threat behind imperialist tears

But what is it all for? Surely the US has no desire to restore the former Pol Pot regime, despite the latter's valiant effort to beat the US' own record for brutality in Southeast Asia. The Khmer Rouge gang, however, is now out of power and former president Khieu Samphan called in September for a 'front of national unity' against Vietnam, stating 'the past is no obstacle' (*New York Times*, 3 September). If this programme could be realised, it would lead to a *social counterrevolution* in Cambodia -- and, not incidentally, to the slaughter of the weak Khmer Rouge forces after 'victory', since only imperialist-armed forces could defeat the powerful Vietnamese army, and their programme for exploiting the Cambodian population does not have room in it for Pol Pot's xenophobic peasant collectivism.

With a reported 180,000 Vietnamese troops in Cambodia, neither the Pol Pot nor the Sihanouk 'options' appear to have much chance. But none of them would exist at all were it not for the Thai/imperialist aid and comfort. Vietnam is hungry and devastated by war, pressed militarily in the north by China and internationally isolated except for its alliance with the Soviet Union. But the counterrevolutionary Brezhnev bureaucracy refused to honour its treaty with Vietnam during the Chinese invasion in February, opting instead for the illusion of 'detente' with imperialism. And the longer the imperialists and their Thai and Chinese allies can keep an anti-Vietnamese option open in Cambodia, thus forcing the Vietnamese army to remain, the greater chance they have of making the national question work against the Vietnamese Stalinists.

When the Heng Samrin puppet regime was installed by the Vietnamese army, after a lengthy and vicious border war, the international Spartacist tendency refused to support either side in what was then essentially a war between qualitatively equivalent Stalinist regimes. We warned that the continuing occupation of Cambodia by the Vietnamese army would ultimately 'increase the poison of national chauvinism among both peoples...' (*Workers Vanguard* no 223, 19 January). We did not, however, call for withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops, pointing out that 'history will decide' whether the Cambodian people might not actually prefer the Hanoi-

continued on page 11



Mandel



Barnes

Split in the



Moreno



Lambert

United Secretariat

For the past decade and a half the main drawing card of the 'United Secretariat' has been its pretensions to be the Fourth International. Even while its warring factions were publicly hurling epithets at each other from opposite sides of the barricades over Portugal in 1975, even while its rejection of the revolutionary programme was demonstrated more vividly every day, the USec could still attract subjectively revolutionary militants with its claim to be the organisational embodiment of the world party of socialist revolution founded by Leon Trotsky. And woe to any USec militants who challenged this myth -- over the years left oppositions have been summarily chucked out for such sacrilege.

Now in the last two months, the USec has been torn apart over Nicaragua, with two roughly equal-sized blocs (each a marriage of convenience in true USec tradition) taking shape to claim the title. On the eve of its 'Eleventh World Congress' last month a provocation/expulsion/walkout ripped out a quarter of the USec's 'star' section, the French Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (LCR). The expellees were mainly supporters of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency (LTT), the USec friends of Pierre Lambert's Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI), and also included the partisans of Nahuel Moreno's Bolshevik Faction, which is allied with the OCI in what promises to be one of the shortest-lived rotten blocs of all time.

In Latin America more than two-thirds of the USec's supporters have also gone with the BF, while two or three hundred Morenoites have walked out of the Spanish LCR. The split was formalised when the world congress excluded all those who did not recognise that the French LTT and BF had broken from the 'Fourth International'. The two new counterposed blocs are deeply unstable, both consisting of currents led by centrist-talking adventurers, Ernest Mandel and Nahuel Moreno, combined with hard social-democratic national machines, the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Jack Barnes and the French OCI respectively.

Nicaragua

Le Monde (1 November) commented wryly that 'the motive, or the occasion' of the split in the LCR was a 'difference in evaluating the Nicaraguan revolution'. Occasion, si; motive, no. In a document establishing a 'parity committee' of the OCI/LTT/BF, the splitters argue that:

'The danger of dispersing the forces of the Fourth International is much more serious than the one provoked starting in 1951 by Pabloism, since the attack on our principled positions is even more brutal than 1951.'

Certainly the provocations have been spectacular, beginning with the USec's support for (and alleged complicity in) the Sandinista Front (FSLN) expulsion of the Morenoite-led Simon Bolivar Brigade from Nicaragua last August (see *Spartacist Britain* no 16, November 1979). True enough, where Michel Pablo ordered the 'deep entry' of sections of the Fourth International into Stalinist and social-democratic parties in the early 1950s, today his epigones order their Nicaraguan followers to liquidate into the

petty-bourgeois FSLN. But aren't Lambert/Moreno forgetting something? The USec was founded in 1963 on the basis of total support to Castroism. Where do they claim to have been for the last decade and a half?

The OCI/LTT/BF split will pick up a number of sincerely leftist elements aghast at the spectacle of their comrades being arrested at gunpoint and expelled by the Sandinista regime with the approval/aid of the USec leaders. And if the issue was really that of maintaining an independent section in Nicaragua, genuine revolutionists would stand on the same side with those opposing liquidation into the FSLN. A split along these lines could open the way to a struggle for consistent proletarian independence and against those who would build a 'Trotskyist' party only in order to pressure the Sandinistas.

But in fact, the new lash-up between the OCI and Moreno is one of the most rotten and unnatural alliances in history. When Vishinsky ranted at the Moscow trials against a 'bloc of rights and Trotskyites' it was a Stalinist slander, but the OCI and Moreno have actually created something worse. Trotsky and Bukharin had more in common than this pair! Lambert's organisation is a known quantity among ostensible Trotskyists in Europe; its social-democratic Stalinophobic politics meant eagerly supporting the candidate of the popular front, Socialist leader Mitterand, in the 1973 French presidential elections. By 1975 the OCI's slide into reformism was sealed by its support to the 'democratic' CIA-funded Portuguese Socialists as the latter spearheaded a counterrevolutionary mass mobilisation. No real Trotskyist can join with 'State Department socialists' such as Lambert's OCI!

The Morenoite current is far more contradictory. Moreno himself was a reformist in Argentina, but one who lost his reformist base, the direct tie to his 'own' bourgeoisie. Forcibly separated from the terrain of Argentine reformism, with nothing to sell out and no Peron to sell it to, Moreno -- now based on the Colombian PST -- chose to embark on a leftist adventure in Nicaragua. Now seeking to consolidate the benefits of his refurbished militant reputation, Moreno has gone out on a centrist swing. The Bolshevik Faction has been based on a left critique of the Mandelites' response to Eurocommunism, and of the SWP over Portugal and Angola. On these questions the BF sounds uncannily close to the positions of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt). But it is a fraud. Moreno is a consummate charlatan, as we have proven in our *Moreno Truth Kit*.

For some time now this Argentine political *bandolero* has been sneaking up on Mandel,

scurrying through the bushes and then hiding under the skirts of a larger group, only to break from it on a 'left' basis when an appropriate opportunity presents itself. First with the SWP (in 1969-75) in the reformist pseudo-orthodox 'Leninist-Trotskyist Faction' (which was at bottom a rightist opposition to Mandel's vicarious guerrillaism); then in a more informal way in bloc with Mandel. Each time he has extended his influence: first to the rest of Latin America, then to a beachhead on the southern flank of Europe (Italy, Spain). Meanwhile his policies at home remained ultra-reformist (written declarations of support to the Peronist regime, equating left-wing guerrillaism with fascist death squads etc).

Now Moreno is at it again with the OCI. And the current bloc is even less stable than his previous operations. Its components can't even agree on whether they are for the 'reconstruction', 'reorganisation' or 'reunification' of the Fourth International; and Moreno has admitted that his 'parity committee' with the OCI is nothing but a defensive 'united front' -- but one which will supposedly proceed to build 'Trotskyist parties' despite its disagreements over fundamental political issues! The 'parity committee' is merely a cynical attempt to trump the Mandelites by playing the 'unity' card, and not surprisingly the USec is invited to join in.

The Morenoites knew long ago that their number was up in the USec, and lately they were just carrying out rearguard actions before pulling out. Their factional rampaging has been so blatant that more than two years ago Mandel/Barnes threatened to expel them at the next opportunity. As for Lambert, he had the French LTT leadership in tow, and presumably felt it better to start carving up the spoils of the raiding operation before Moreno started making inroads north of the Pyrenees and Alps. In France it is calculated that the take from the LCR has been about 350-400 militants, who after a period as the formally independent Ligue Communiste Internationaliste are supposed to



Sandinista fighters finish off Somoza's national guard

simply be swallowed by the OCI.

However, there are those who may balk at the prospect of life under Lambert. In France the 'parity committee' gambit was decided at the top, leaving many rank-and-filers disoriented. Meanwhile across the Channel, British LTT leader John Strawson and his cohorts were talking of the 'French split' and swearing fealty to the IMG and the USec. Evidently Strawson would prefer his comfortable niche as house critic to the prospect of going with Lambert, whose British supporters have historically been forced to undergo deep immersion in the Labour Party.

In Spain the LTT has also not left the USec section, while in Sweden and Germany BF forces appear to be playing for time in order to consolidate support. The British Morenoites are clearly headed for the chop, but as they are but a tiny handful Moreno may well reason that his main chance in this country lies in an alliance with another outfit, most likely the Workers Socialist League which has publicly welcomed the USec split. Sean Matgamna's International-Communist League has however also put in its bid, announcing publicly its support for the 'parity committee' initiative. So the centrists and reformists manoeuvre, dismantling their old rotten blocs and throwing together new ones, while small-time national outfits like the I-CL and WSL make *their* bid for a piece of the action. And for all of them, programme is *never* the decisive consideration.

Mandelites in crisis

The big loser in the split will surely be Mandel. Only a few months ago he was promising one and all an 'international' that brought together '95 per cent of the world's Trotskyists'. The USec was supposed to be on the verge of becoming an 'alternative pole of attraction' to the '3 to 4 million voters of the far left' in Europe. Shining in its diadem would be a French section of 10,000 members. And with that, he said, echoing another centrist of the 1930s, 'everything is possible'. No more. His grand schemes lying in tatters around him, Ernest Mandel looks today like a stock market speculator on the day after the crash of '79.

The split comes in a context where virtually all the European Mandelite sections (and many elsewhere) are in a state of permanent crisis. Most dramatic has been that of the French LCR, which ever since its congress in January 1979 has been *without a majority* for any tendency. At that meeting the outgoing leadership of

Tendency 4 received 143 votes, while the semi-oppositional Tendency 3 (of H Weber and J-M Vincent) got 142. ('Historic' leader Alain Krivine was not part of any of the tendencies.) The hot issue was whether or not to 'fuse' with the by-now substantially larger OCI (which claims more than 5000 members), with Tendency 3 being hard opponents of fusion. The Bolshevik Faction Declaration/Platform quotes a graphic description of the LCR Political Bureau functioning in this period, which sounds more like a truce committee than a PB of an ostensibly Marxist organisation: 'The PB ... is a sum of individuals (who) meet once a week to make sure that no major differences have arisen since the previous meeting' (cited in [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* no 3, July 1979).

Now the marriage with the OCI is definitely off, and Mandel is left with a French section not of 10,000 but 1200. When the OCI/LTT/BF bloc provocatively announced in late October that they were forming their 'parity committee' and called a 'democratic conference open to all forces claiming to be Trotskyist' (ie a counter world congress) for early next year, Krivine and his ally Daniel Bensaid leapt at the opportunity to get rid of the oppositionists and reassume control of the LCR. They circulated to the cells a motion demanding condemnation of the OCI/LTT/BF manoeuvre as a 'split attempt'. Not voting for the motion would mean instant 'exclusion'. A week later the split was consummated at an extraordinary LCR congress when the LTT and BF delegates refused to vote for the motion and walked out.

In an article entitled 'The French LCR Spits Out its Seeds', *Liberation* of 2 November notes the 'satisfaction' and rapidity with which the LCR leaders 'seized the pretext thus offered by their adversaries'. After all, six weeks beforehand it was simply a question of what pace for a fusion with the OCI which would have left Krivine/Bensaid out in the cold. Now they're back in the saddle again, and with the most obstreperous oppositionists gone their 'solid' 43 per cent plurality on the CC should ensure a temporarily more-or-less 'stable' minority cabinet in the hectic politicking at the LCR helm.

If the LCR has long been the leading Mandelite section, the IMG was the second most important. Its internal situation is no better, and after the failure of various regroupment schemes the IMG leadership has been discussing for some months a proposal for fusion/liquidation into the British SWP of Tony Cliff (see 'IMG in Crisis', *Spartacist Britain* no 16,

November 1979). At its congress to elect delegates to the world USec meeting the IMG also showed how deeply divided it is. The core of the leadership under John Ross received a bare majority of the votes, and was faced with three substantial opposition tendencies (one centering around another 'historic' USec superstar, Tariq Ali, most ardent for total immersion into the Cliffites).

And in Germany last year the Political Bureau of the GIM became so inoperative due to clique/tendency squabbling among the leadership that a tie-breaking vote was given to the USec. Meanwhile virtually every other Mandelite section is in more or less acute organisational/political crisis including Spain, Mexico and others.

What the Morenoites do not explain is the political origin of the malaise in the Mandelite ex-majority of the USec. The BF document notes that after the 'new mass vanguard' evaporated following the forced-draft cooling down of the pre-revolutionary situation in Portugal (November 1975), Mandel's International Majority Tendency (IMT) had to find a new tactical orientation. This they did, in the form of becoming loyal left critics of a series of popular fronts (France, Spain, Italy). But because Moreno & Co have the *same policy or worse* towards the Stalinists' and social democrats' class-collaborationist blocs with the bourgeoisie, the Bolshevik Faction makes *no fundamental critique* of the IMT's post-1975 policies (other than accusations of lingering 'ultra-leftism'). Yet it is precisely the collapse of the French and Italian popular fronts which placed the Mandelites in their present dilemma. As *Le Monde* of 1 November put it:

'... within the LCR, the policies outlined by the leadership of the movement over the course of the last years have been subjected to revision after the failure of the Union of the Left without another policy having been clearly defined.'

SWP calling the shots?

Up until now Mandel has had the votes to call the shots at the USec headquarters, but Barnes' American SWP has the tremendous advantage of a consistent reformist political line. With the departure of the LTT/BF forces and various 'leftists' they drag along behind them, the USec will likely consolidate around a reformist axis with the SWP holding the whip hand.

Mandel's tendency is that of rapidly rightward-moving centrism, in the tow of Eurocommunism and lacking any current real opportunities to tail a mass movement. But while the Mandelites whirl around looking for a new vanguard in the ecology movement, a belated feminist upsurge, lost-cause nationalists (Corsicans, Bretons), the Saharan Polisario Front -- *anything!* -- the American SWP knows what it wants and has a consistent reformist programme to get it. On the prosaic day-to-day level this is seen in the USec's SWP-initiated 'proletarian turn', a programme to become advisors to dissident union bureaucrats.

But reformism is not just doing donkey work for liberal and social-democratic labour traitors. At bottom, when the crunch comes, it means *counterrevolution*. It means supporting Mario Soares' CIA-financed Socialist Party in 1975, or remaining pro-imperialist neutral in the face of the imperialist invasion of Angola in 1975. And it also means *betrayal*, if necessary of their own comrades -- which is why the SWP *leapt* at the chance to back (or engineer?) the expulsion of the Simon Bolivar Brigade from Nicaragua.

The just-concluded rump USec world congress saw three main tendencies, most clearly expressed in competing motions on the nature of the present Sandinista/bourgeois government in Nicaragua. The right-wing around the SWP praised the ruling junta in Managua as a workers and peasants government. In the middle was the grouping around Mandel saying, in typical centrist fashion, that the nature of the Nicaraguan regime was undetermined. And there was Mandel's left cover, a hodge-podge centred on the IMG, sections of the Swedish group and the Matti tendency in the French LCR. These loyal oppositionists labelled the Sandinista junta a bourgeois class-collaborationist regime, but instead of calling for a Trotskyist party to organise an independent, proletarian opposition in Nicaragua, they accepted the USec's liquidationist policy of

How IMG defends USec:

All the betrayals have been small ones...

For years the International Marxist Group (IMG) has claimed one distinguishing feature from the rest of the centrist/reformist swamp of self-styled Trotskyists: it was part of 'the Fourth International'. It is this on which the IMG's hopes to woo and win its latest 'main chance', Tony Cliff's state-capitalist Socialist Workers Party have rested.

No longer. The split in the United Secretariat has not yet torn a chunk of the IMG's membership out, but it has shattered those pretensions. The scarcely consoling message purveyed by the IMG leadership in a special four-page supplement to *Socialist Challenge* (15 November) on the 'tragic event' is that whatever faults and weaknesses the USec has, it's still all we have (patently ludicrous) and outside it there lies nothing but barren wasteland. And for theoretical dressing the supplement serves up a brief but crude rehash of the IMG's 'unity is paramount' thesis -- spelled out more fully in *Red Weekly's* 1976 'Faction and Party' series, which attempted to render a century of struggle for the revolutionary proletarian programme by Marx, Lenin and Trotsky into an unceasing quest for unity with its antagonists and betrayers. And the admonition to those who choose to doubt is that they may wind up in ... the Spartacist League (SL)!

Denouncing the split as 'both unprincipled and unnecessary', IMG leader John Ross warns of: '... a dismal future unless they rejoin the FI, for the road of "national Trotskyism" is lit-

tered with corpses. The experiences of groups like the Militant, the Workers' Revolutionary Party and Spartacist League show the ultimate fate that awaits them.'

Elsewhere in the supplement, Dave Packer and Phil Hearse argue that:

'... those who challenge the FI's conception of international democratic centralism in reality want a homogeneous and monolithic international, just as they want monolithic national parties. With such a conception perhaps an international sect like the Spartacist League is possible. Any steps towards a mass revolutionary international are impossible with such sect-like conceptions.'

Leaving aside the bizarre and slanderous amalgam of the SL with the Labour-loyal Militant group and the Qaddafi-loyal WRP and the seeming incapacity of the IMG leadership to even agree on a characterisation of the SL, the references to our supposedly 'irrelevant' (national/international?) 'sect' are not accidental. For nearly two decades the Spartacist tendency has uniquely posed a consistently principled and truly democratic-centralist alternative to the USec, reflected not least by the number of left-wing oppositionists we have won from the latter organisation.

Indeed, for all its heterogeneity, there has always been *one* kind of Trotskyist the USec would not tolerate -- the real kind: The Revolutionary Tendency (precursor of the Spartacist League/US) -- expelled from the American SWP in

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USec split...

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entry into the petty-bourgeois bonapartist FSLN.

Thus *all* wings of the USec are 'united' around a programme which is an exact analogue to Stalin's liquidation of the Chinese CP into the Kuomintang, or Michel Pablo's participation in the Algerian government of Ben Bella in the early 1960s. And while the Mandelites have tried to distance themselves from the most craven aspects of the US SWP position, they shamefacedly go along with the SWP's policy of *red-baiting* and *framing up* BF and LTT supporters in Nicaragua.

Iran! Iran!

But in Nicaragua it is only a dissident faction in the USec that immediately pays the price of centrist/reformist treachery. The even graver betrayal is one that none of the competing fake-Trotskyist gangs dare to mention, for they are all deeply complicit: Iran. For it is there that the women, the Kurds, the Arabs, other ethnic and religious minorities, the oil workers, leftists, homosexuals and drinkers are suffering murderous repression at the hands of Ayatollah Khomeini and his Islamic fundamentalist mullahs. The twelve members of the USec's HKS now facing possible execution are the least of the thousands of victims.

For over a year we have exposed how the SWP, Mandelites, Morenoites and Lambertists all hailed Khomeini's 'Islamic Revolution' as 'anti-imperialist', 'one of the greatest revolutions of the century' (this from Moreno, of course, who does everything with bombast), 'the beginning of the proletarian revolution' etc. The international Spartacist tendency *alone* said, 'Down with the shah! Down with the mullahs!', and warned that Khomeini would put 'women in veils, workers in jails'. We, and only we, told what would come if the Iranian proletariat did not forge its own independent leadership.

But finally it was too much even for Iranian USec supporters, and following the HKS' shameful participation in Khomeini's plebiscitary 'election' for an Islamic 'Council of Experts' last August the 'fused' (SWP/Mandelite/OCI) Iranian group has come apart at the seams. The HKS was patched together early this year as Iranian exiles returned from Europe (Mandelites) and the US (SWP); with the SWP supporters arriving on the scene first and dominating the new organisation and its political line.

As the most rabid mullah lovers and legalists, the SWPers naturally wanted to participate in the rigged 'vote', even though Khomeini was denouncing all Marxists as 'Satanic elements' and had already arrested more than a dozen HKSers. But as the ranks began to get worried about what was in store for them, the Mandelites got a majority in favour of boycott and flew off to Europe to get USec backing. While they were away, however, Babak Zahrahi, leader of the pro-SWP forces, overturned the decision and publicly announced that the HKS would participate in the voting. The result was an open split, now consolidated into essentially separate organisations, as Mandelite candidates withdrew at the last minute.

So the HKS split becomes part of the crisis in the USec, and in September the LTT issued a statement condemning the SWP for its 'shameful policy of "participating" in the ... so-called "election" to a supposed "Constituent Assembly"' But where did this policy come from? The LTT only denounces it for having 'ruined the unity' of the HKS in the 'initial moments of the Iranian revolution'. That 'unity', which included all of the competing USec factions, was based on the programme of helping the butcher Khomeini to achieve power. The 'disunity' comes when it is time to pay the piper -- and it is not the SWP that flinches at the bloody sight. No, in fact the latest word from the SWP's Zahrahi was that, 'As strange as it may seem, there has never been as much freedom in Iran as now' (quoted in *Le Matin*, 3 October). The cynical leading the blind.

Reforge the Fourth International!

Those who know that Trotskyism does *not* mean telling the working people of Iran that they 'never had it so good' -- and that it does mean putting forward an independent communist programme, against both the butcher shah and the bloody ayatollah -- should investigate the record of the international Spartacist tendency. Those that agree with Zahrahi will find it more

congenial with Barnes, Mandel, Lambert or Moreno ... provided they aren't in Iran and don't have to live with the consequences of these betrayals.

It is not surprising that both the USec and Moreno/OCI blocs are showing a suddenly increased vulnerability to the politics of the Spartacist tendency, especially in France. The response has been a wave of scummy cop-baiting and thug violence in the worst Stalinist tradition. Both the LCR and OCI recently used goon squads to attempt to silence the Ligue Trotskyiste de France (see box), but this policy is already beginning to backfire. Only four days after the USec's GIM local in Koln, West Germany, expelled our comrades of the Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands from a public forum, the GIM local in Tübingen at a November 27 public meeting on Iran solidarised with the TLD's proletarian opposition to Khomeini's clerical reaction. No wonder Mandel told the last GIM conference that regarding the future of his German section, 'One can only pray.'

We can do more than pray. Over the years serious leftist USec supporters who sought an



USec heroes past and present: Algeria's Ben Bella and Cuba's Fidel Castro

alternative to petty-bourgeois impressionism and popular-frontism have regrouped behind the authentic Trotskyist programme of the iSt. From the Cuban revolution to the Portuguese upsurge of 1974-75; from the clericalist mass mobilisations in Iran to the insurgence in Nicaragua; our tendency has counterposed the struggle for Trotskyist parties to the Pabloist liquidationism of the USec.

In early 1977, we proposed that if, under the pressure of revolutionary events in Portugal, a section of the USec had polarised around opposition to popular-frontism and in favour of dual power and a Leninist party, we would welcome the opportunity to join with them in common opposition to the Mandel/SWP USec leadership. As a model for such a principled Trotskyist programme we put forward a draft platform of nine points (*Workers Vanguard* no 143, 4 February 1977), including:

- no political or electoral support to popular fronts;
- for proletarian leadership of the national/social struggle;
- for military, but no political support to bourgeois nationalist forces fighting imperialism -- build Trotskyist parties in every country;
- for unconditional defence of the deformed/degenerated workers states against imperialism, and political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies;
- against violence in the workers movement;
- for communist fractions in the trade unions based on the Transitional Programme;
- for the communist tactic of the united front from above, for revolutionary regroupment and intransigent exposure of centrism;
- rejection of the claims of the ostensibly Trotskyist internationals;
- for the reforging of a democratic-centralist Fourth International which will stop at nothing short of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

That is the programme that has stood the test of time.

adapted from *Workers Vanguard* nos 243, 9 November 1979, and 245, 7 December 1979

Betrayals...

(Continued from page 7)

1963 with the approval of the USec leadership for the 'crime' of characterising the SWP leadership as centrist (a justification for the expulsion of Trotsky from Stalin's CPSU). The Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency in Australia and the US -- driven out before the 1974 World Congress. The Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency -- expelled from the Canadian Revolutionary Marxist Group in 1975, explicitly for holding a 'programmatically incompatible' position. The expulsion of a CC member of the French LCR in 1975; similar purge attempts -- successful and unsuccessful -- in the German and Swedish USec sections; etc. And not only revolutionaries: there is the wholesale expulsion of the Mandeliste Internationalist Tendency by the American SWP in 1974, which then offered them up as sacrificial lambs to the bourgeois state in its social-democratic 'Watersuit' -- with scarcely a word of protest from Mandel & Co.

And how many *political* expulsions has the 'monolithic' Spartacist tendency carried out? Not one! As we said in reply to the American SWP pamphlet 'Spartacist: Making of an American Sect' by former SL/US Central Committee member Bob Pearlman:

'The organization described by Pearlman is clearly both extremely cohesive politically and extremely democratic.... Those in the SWP who find themselves in the unenviable position of being in opposition in that extremely bureaucratic organization would do well to read Pearlman's polemic with an eye to the "regime" question.' (*Workers Vanguard* no 168, 29 July 1977)

It is precisely our political cohesion and programmatic homogeneity which the IMG falsely denigrates as 'monolithism', for the same reason that the French centrist Pivert in the 1930s, in Trotsky's words, 'depict[ed] the regime in the Fourth International as a regime of monolithism and blind submission' (*Trotsky on France*, p231). Because centrists, in their willingness to abandon programme and trample principles in order to tail any and every political will-of-the-wisp, are congenitally *incapable* of programmatic homogeneity. While offering lip service to the proletarian revolution, they plead for 'unity' with reformists; while decrying monolithism, they expel revolutionists.

Thus, for the IMG, a revolutionary party is not built by defending the programme which can lead the proletariat to power, but by assembling the greatest numbers in a common organisation to pressure the leadership of the latest 'mass movement'. For the IMG abandonment of the Marxist programme is cause for a split only when it is consummated in a betrayal of *world-historic* proportions. 'Lenin split from the Second International after the historic betrayal of the world proletariat in 1914', the IMG offers in the USec's defence. 'The Fourth International has committed no such betrayal.'

The banner of the Fourth International is unbesmirched by *any* betrayals; as for the USec, perhaps it can take solace in the fact that it has *never had the opportunity* to lead millions of workers to their slaughter. The ledger books of history may well record that the USec's *countless* betrayals -- like its tailing of Islamic reaction, its support for popular fronts, its abandonment to Stalinist persecution of Trotskyist militants in China and Cuba -- have all been 'little' ones. But what communist would want to have anything to do with them? ■

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French Trotskyists reply to thug attacks

OCI/LCR in frenzy

We reprint below a column written by our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF), originally scheduled to appear in the 23 November issue of Rouge, newspaper of the Mandeliste Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (LCR). LCR leaders Alain Krivine and Lourfon had promised to print the column, but changed their minds when they saw it contained 'political characterisations' -- ie criticisms of the LCR. Rouge had previously published its own account of the 13 November thug attack by Pierre Lambert's Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) on the LTF, for its own factional advantage.

Since the letter was written the OCI -- and the OCI-loyal leadership of the Ligue Communiste Internationaliste (LCI) -- have dangerously escalated their threats against the LTF, slandering the LTF and the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) as 'provocateurs'. As is well known on the left internationally, such slanders coming from the OCI are not idle threats but a cover for vicious hooliganism. Physical threats are the complement of political bankruptcy -- this thuggery must be repudiated and condemned by all who claim to stand for workers democracy.

In the most recent issues of Rouge and Informations Ouvrieres, one finds the LCR and the OCI denouncing each other for violating the democratic rights of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France. Of course, their reciprocal accusations are well-founded. At the November 13 meeting called by the OCI to defend democratic rights of Trotskyists in Nicaragua against repression by the Sandinista/bourgeois government, the OCI gave a concrete example of its own conception of workers democracy: as soon as a group of 14 LTF supporters started to distribute leaflets and sell our press, about 50 members of the OCI goon squad immediately intervened to violently drive off the militants, hitting several comrades and tearing up leaflets and

newspapers. All those who rose to our defence were also harassed. (These facts from the LTF press release of 13 November rectify the incorrect version of events printed in Rouge.)

If the LCR now suddenly finds itself concerned with our democratic rights it is not out of respect for workers democracy, but because the LCR seeks to exploit this incident in its factional confrontations with the OCI and LCI¹. The sanctimonious protestations in Rouge ring hollow since only one month ago a Krivine goon squad forcibly expelled a spokesman for the LTF from an LCR meeting on Nicaragua when he attempted to take the floor to criticise the USec's craven capitulation before the Sandinistas. The USec leaders have offered themselves for the sordid little job they think will warrant them a place in the Sandinista entourage: international goon squad against left critics of the petty-bourgeois FSLN and the Nicaraguan government.

Why the LTF and why now?

All the factions now competing with each other were unified at one point: together they bowed before the mullahs on Iran while the international Spartacist tendency called from the beginning for 'Down with the Shah, Down with the Mullahs!' Now, however, in pursuit of his wrecking operation against the rapidly rightward moving centrists Mandel and Krivine, the reformist Lambert (and his lackeys Nemo, Ulysses et al², along with the reformist-adventurer Moreno) has launched a carefully orchestrated programmatic attack against the USec's total capitulation and liquidation in Nicaragua. The result so far has been splits in the USec and the formation in France of the LCI.

As the weeks go by, the LCI becomes increasingly heterogeneous. Some militants now in the LCI split with the USec over Nicaragua and could, under the pressure of events, seek to generalise their leftist impulses into a consistent programme. This would present a

problem for Lambert and Nemo, for in that direction lies the Trotskyist programme of the LTF, which has over the years systematically demonstrated a coherent revolutionary programmatic alternative to both the USec and the OCRFI.

But political struggle is anathema to Lambert. So he seeks to cover his left flank in the only way he knows how -- physical intimidation, violence and vicious slander. Lambert should watch out, for ours is a revolutionary programme which has already found partial and contradictory echoes among leftish members of the LCI. The attack against the LTF is also a message to leftists in the LCI: in Lambert's organisation there is no room for political oppositionists. Lambert himself brags that there hasn't been a faction fight in the OCI since 1953 (Rouge, 25 May 1979)! The way they dealt with the bureaucrat [Charles] Berg³ and the dubious [Michel] Varga⁴ is the concrete proof of this.

Do you hate Mandel, do you hate Lambert, do you want to fight on the basis of the Transitional Programme against the union bureaucrats and the reformist leaders of the mass workers parties, fight for the workers to take power? Do you agree with the iSt programme on Nicaragua and Iran? THEN YOU HAD BETTER THINK TWICE AND THEN THINK AGAIN before making the decision to stay with these bands of cynical and worn-out revisionists, either in the LCR, or, by joining the LCI, ending up in the OCI.

For the rebirth of the Fourth International, destroyed by Pabloism! Join the Ligue Trotskyiste de France!

19 November 1979

¹Ligue Communiste Internationaliste -- the organisation set up by the French supporters of the pro-OCI Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency and Nahuel Moreno's Bolshevik Faction after their expulsion/walkout from the LCR congress on November 1.

²French leaders of the LTT.

³OCI ex-youth leader purged earlier this year.

⁴Hungarian OCI leader who in the late 1950s appealed to the US State Department for funds. Purged in 1972 for political differences with Lambert, Varga was suddenly discovered by the OCI to be a longtime 'CIA agent' (and later 'KGB agent' as well).

The ad Socialist Challenge refused to print

The following advert was submitted for paid insertion in the 8 November issue of Socialist Challenge. Although the IMG initially agreed to print it and accepted payment of £6.00, the ad did not appear in either that or the subsequent issue. While first one IMG member muttered that it had been omitted for lack of space, finally Phil Hearse admitted that it was not run for 'political reasons', explaining, 'I'm not one of those liberals.'

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WSL/Leyland...

(Continued from page 4)

no link to the struggle for power. Thus they gut the Transitional Programme of its revolutionary content. For example, Socialist Press (5 December) comments on the occupation of the Meccano toy factory on Merseyside: 'It is vital that workers use the occupation as the starting point for supporting action, and for opening the books of the giant Airfix corporation that owns the plant, exposing the necessity for its nationalisation without compensation and formulating on that basis a workers plan [!] for further production... A socialist planned economy is the only basis on which such productive forces can be utilised and developed and jobs protected.'

This is truly a 'comic opera' schema. The consciousness of the working class does not proceed in such neat linear stages, but in turbulent leaps. Despite the WSL's attempt to blur everything over, there is a qualitative chasm between social-democratic consciousness and communist consciousness: the latter includes the recognition that the existing state cannot provide a vehicle for the socialist transformation of society, that it must first be smashed, that the workers must seize state power. This is glaringly absent from the whole WSL conception. Yet it is the fundamental dividing line between Trotskyism and reformism.

Social-democratic cretinism

The social-democratic cretinism which underlies the WSL's methodology could not be clearer than in their real objection to our Leyland line. If someone bought a 'seized' factory, sneers Socialist Press, they would need a 'permanent and massive workers defence guard to protect it from the shareholders and the state'. And might not 'the forces of the state -- the

police fraud squad' be interested?

Horror of horrors, they might indeed, as might the bourgeois army. But this is an objection not to the misapplied subordinate tactic of a 'workers' auction', but to plant seizures! It is in fact an objection to anything else which might interest the forces of the state, like 'permanent and massive' workers defence guards to stop scabs, to ward off fascist attacks, to prepare and defend the seizure of state power. Socialist revolution is a nasty business, comrades. However from the WSL there is no hint that taking over bourgeois property, much less somehow magically establishing a 'socialist planned economy', might involve anything more than polite debate and a vote at a mass meeting. And that, truly, is a bankrupt perspective from the never-never land of social democracy. ■

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Stuff Duffy's sell-out!

Defend Robinson! Defend the unions! All-out strike now!

The following Spartacist League leaflet was distributed at Birmingham-area Leyland plants and on a December 5 protest lobby outside the opening of the AUEW executive's 'inquiry' into the Derek Robinson dismissal. ITV News at Ten covered the protest lobby on television that evening, showing Spartacist placards as it commented that the lobby consisted of 'hard core supporters' of Robinson's reinstatement.

When BL sacked Derek Robinson they attacked every worker at Leyland, every worker in the country. Derek Robinson was sacked because he is the leading shop steward in Leyland and as a Communist Party member a convenient target for anti-red witchhunting. It was a direct attack on shop-floor organisation and an important step in Edwardes' plans for 'saving BL' on the backs of the working class.

Behind Sir Michael Edwardes stands the entire ruling class, waiting to see if the union movement will smash this anti-union provocation. And if the Leyland bosses get away with it, it will encourage every employer in Britain to think he can cut wages, slash jobs and weaken working conditions by breaking the back of the trade union movement.

They must not be allowed to succeed! And all workers must stand with Derek Robinson! The fact that Robinson himself has refused to support key union struggles -- like the tool-makers' strikes of 1977 and 1979 -- cannot be allowed to obscure that task. An injury to one is an injury to all!

Workers at Longbridge set the example -- they downed tools as soon as Robinson was dismissed on November 19. They were followed by workers at Canley, at Cowley, at Jaguars,



Spartacists at lobby of the AUEW 'inquiry'

at Castle Bromwich. Duffy has tried to smash the whole fight, ordering everyone back to work to await his 'inquiry'. Stuff this sell-out! Everybody should be brought out again -- now! -- and the strike must be extended to every Leyland plant in the country. Shut it all down! Build mass pickets at every factory to make sure not one scab, not one supervisor sets foot inside until Derek Robinson is reinstated with full back pay! Edwardes says, 'It's Robinson or me'. Fine! Show him that the workers are not about to tolerate such vicious ruling-class despots.

The workers movement must put into play the

full power of its industrial muscle to make sure this attack is reversed. Any moves by Edwardes and his mob to implement threatened closures must be met by immediate occupation of the plants. If that had been the union leadership's response to Edwardes' job-slashing 'recovery plan' in the first place, Robinson and other Leyland workers wouldn't be in this mess right now. Any refusal by the bosses to give in must be met by deepening and extending the strike action. Remember the Pentonville 5! It took the threat of a general strike to get them freed. Today preparations must be made to extend the Leyland struggle as necessary throughout the motor industry and the rest of the union movement, up to and including a general strike to bring down the Tory government and find a road towards actually putting the workers in power.

Duffy tells Leyland workers to 'wait' for the results of his scab inquiry. There is only one thing to 'inquire' about -- why Duffy is unable to defend the workers from the bosses' attacks. The answer is that he -- and the rest of the pro-capitalist labour leaders -- are too busy trying to 'save' this rotting capitalist system instead of fighting to destroy it. No inquiries, no closed-door negotiations! Strike now!

There is only one way to end these attacks for good -- through the construction of a revolutionary leadership of the working class which has the programme to fight the ruling class and not 'save' it, the programme to smash capitalism and the decay, poverty and war it stands for.

Reinstat Derek Robinson -- All-out strike now!

Prior Bill...

(Continued from page 1)

and five were jailed for illegal picketing in July 1972, the union movement responded with a wave of militant strike action. Miners, printers, lorry drivers, car workers, airport workers, all joined the dockers in sympathy strikes. Under growing rank-and-file pressure the TUC was forced to call for a one-day general strike. The Tory government quickly backed down, with a face-saving ruling that it was the Transport & General Workers Union which was responsible for the picketing, and had the five dockers released. The bureaucracy in turn called off the general strike, relieved at avoiding a head-on confrontation.

But today the TUC 'leaders' have barely issued a verbal challenge to Prior's attack. General Secretary Len Murray astoundingly labelled the bill 'irrelevant', expressing his 'absolute' conviction 'that this legislation, if it becomes an Act, will have to be removed by Parliament itself' (*Times*, 8 December). With such open abdication of responsibility to his membership, Murray might just as well advise trade unionists to pay their union dues direct to Westminster.

This legislation must not be allowed to become an Act! Now is the time to roll back this, and all the attacks! Derek Robinson remains sacked, while the AUEW leaders are complicit and the TGWU chiefs sit on their hands; 40,000 Leyland workers are still slated for the chop, to be joined by 40,000 civil servants and tens of thousands more steel workers; the miners -- confronted with a mealy-mouthed strike call by a leadership prepared to accept a post-strike settlement only 5 per cent more than the employer's offer -- have just agreed to accept a settlement less than one-third of their original claim without a strike.

But the sentiment and opportunity for a fight are there. Even as Prior was introducing his bill, a strike by Shell tanker drivers had shut down 34 of the petrol company's 45 terminals, while Esso drivers were working to rule. And on the same day, the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation announced it was calling the first national steel strike since 1926 ... but not until January 2.

Call them all out -- now! And make this the

first general strike since 1926. The Pentonville Five weren't freed through appeals to Parliament; the Heath government was certainly not brought down in 1974 by union 'inquiries'. The time is long-since overdue for an all-out struggle by the workers movement to reverse the bosses' offensive -- and to bring down the government which is orchestrating it.

The November 26 Birmingham Day of Action in defence of Robinson could have provided a staging area for such a struggle. The militancy of the demonstrators -- who included contingents from Leyland, Ford and Rolls Royce, as well as seamen, metal workers, chemical workers and others -- was palpably evident. One of Robinson's co-workers at BL Longbridge heatedly denounced the scabs who went into work that day, 'crawling like rats through a hole in the fence'. Workers at Rovers Solihull argued that the union take disciplinary action against the scabs who had kept the factory going that day.

Had every factory in the area been shut down through flying pickets and the strike action extended throughout the country, hundreds of thousands of workers could have been brought out in a powerful show of force which would have put the bureaucrats on the spot, turned back this ruling-class assault and warned the bosses not to try any more. But across the board the reformists refused to deepen and extend the initial strikes.

At Rovers, Robinson's fellow CPer and factory convenor Joe Harris saw to it that the only resolution brought before a November 21 mass meeting was a call to ... take the rest of that day off. Supporters of *Militant* and the International Marxist Group who hold leading positions on the stewards committee did not raise a word of protest during this key mass meeting, despite their paper positions for an all-out strike. And when Duffy announced his sellout on the morrow of the Day of Action, there was no alternative leadership, from the CP or anyone else, to lead a fight for staying out and extending the strike through flying picket squads in defiance of the bureaucratic betrayal.

Who shall rule?

Derek Robinson was betrayed by the same kind of sellout policies he has advocated for years. Along with the rest of the Stalinists and social democrats he has supported one class-collaborationist 'participation' scheme after

another, promoting reactionary protectionism and selling ever more jobs down the river to 'save British industry'. Now the pay-off is coming. These policies have paved the way to the potentially disastrous situation now confronting the working class -- at Leyland and elsewhere.

Workers in this country have been taking it in the neck for too long. This hated government and its austerity plans must go! The breadth of the Tory offensive extends to practically every sector of the population except the ruling elite: ever-more racist immigration legislation, massive cuts in education and social services (while another £4 million is given to the Secret Service), vicious increases in VAT, spiralling inflation, unemployment, attacks on the unions.

But the Tories aren't the only party of capitalist austerity and strikebreaking. The answer is not to replace them by another five years of Labourite social con-tricks, but through a struggle which leads the workers on the road to class power.

The miners' heroic strike of six winters ago won them a massive victory. But while Heath went it wasn't the workers who replaced him in power; it was Wilson/Callaghan's gang of social-democratic strikebreakers. Now Thatcher's government too must be buried by a massive industrial upsurge, but the answer is not the Labour Party of Callaghan -- and Tony Benn -- which only last winter was trying to slash wages, smash strikes and weaken the unions.

Only a revolutionary leadership of the working class can lead Britain out of its morass, through socialist revolution and the rebuilding of the economy in a rational proletarian order. The alternative is bleak. For behind the social democrats' schemes to salvage a dying capitalist system, behind the Tories' designs to 'legally' maim the working class, behind the numbing stalemate in the class struggle, stands a force which is prepared to crush the working class, without any pretence of legality, without any shred of democracy. Today the Tories are leading the attack, but the real choice facing Britain is very simple. It will be communism ... or fascism.

- Smash the Tory offensive -- for a general strike!
- Not Callaghan/Benn but a workers government to expropriate the capitalist class!

Iran...

(Continued from page 12)

usually eager to thumb their noses at Yankee imperialism, and whose 'socialist' rhetoric is proportional to the savage tyranny generated by an aspiring capitalist class struggling to consolidate itself under conditions of extreme economic backwardness -- having been noticeably reticent. Diplomatic immunity and territorial sovereignty of embassies are seldom violated even by nations at war, though every diplomatic office conducts its share of spying and intelligence gathering. These diplomatic rules of the game are necessary to maintain international relations between nation-states, until the nation-state itself has disappeared in a socialist world.

In order to undercut the international disapproval which greeted the Tehran embassy occupation, Khomeini has released women and black hostages who are not suspected of being spies. This he 'explains' as an expression of Islam's 'regard' for women and the oppression of racial minorities in the US. Nonsense! Islam's 'regard' for women is expressed in the *chador*, the head-to-toe veil which is the symbol of their enslavement and imprisonment within the home. Islam has also given institutional support to the slave trade, and to this day black chattel slavery exists in Islamic countries on the Arabian peninsula. And Khomeini's 'regard' for Iran's ethnic, national and religious minorities is demonstrated by his savage persecution of the Kurds, Arabs, Baluchis, Turkish-speaking nationalities and minor religions (notably the Ba'hais).

Chauvinist backlash in the US

The mullahs claim that their action is directed against the US government which granted the shah 'medical asylum' and not against the 'American people'. But that is not the way the American people have viewed it. Hearing the fanatical ayatollah calling for a purge of all 'American-loving rotten brains' (intellectuals), watching American tourists and American contractors working in Iran dragged out of hotels and offices and thrown in with the hostages, the US population has responded with a wave of national chauvinism. Pro-Khomeini Iranian students marching through the streets of American cities soon discovered that they were not living in Tehran or Abadan under the mullahs' rule. In Houston a November 7 Iranian student march was followed the next day by 1500 angry demonstrators at the Iranian consulate, chanting 'Take your oil and shove it', burning Iranian flags, waving Old Glory and signs reading 'Camel Jockeys Go Home'.

On November 10 Carter ordered a chauvinist round-up and re-registration of Iranian students, in order to deport those who do not meet stringent visa requirements. While students who hailed the ayatollah should have no complaints about returning to join the 'Islamic revolution', such expulsion orders would also be applied against those who opposed both the

shah and Khomeini. If deported they would face 'revolutionary tribunals' no less sinister than the shah's vicious Savak. Such racist measures as Carter's decree also lay the basis, for example, for an internal passport system, and must be flatly opposed by all those concerned to defend democratic rights.

'We are ready for martyrdom'

In threatening show trials of the American embassy staff for spy activities, the Khomeini regime has pointed the finger at one of the shah's longtime friends: the CIA. It was the CIA which saved the Peacock Throne for Reza Pahlavi after he had been displaced by the bourgeois nationalist Mossadeq in 1953. The US backed the shah for the same reason the British had backed his father: as the best hope to create a strong, centralised Persian anti-communist regime on the Soviet Union's southern flank.

The same concern led the Carter administration to seek an understanding with Khomeini, despite Washington's earlier backing of the shah. After the embassy takeover the *New York Times* (9 November) editorially complained about Khomeini's ingratitude:

'He knows that Washington tried to appease him by discouraging the Shah from settling here in the first place. The Ayatollah also knows that the Carter Administration gave him military aid to crush various rebels and encouraged American business to help rebuild his economy.'

But what the *New York Times* finds so hard to understand is that Jimmy Carter, who talks as if his every act is ordained by god, is a 'born again' phoney, while the ayatollah actually believes in what he says, and acts on it.

It is US imperialism which created Khomeini, by helping the shah crush the labour movement and the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party and thereby leaving the mullahs an open road as the main organised opposition to the bloody autocrat. The shah's attempts at modernisation alienated all sections of society from him, especially the clergy who opposed his half-hearted reforms for going too far.

As for the deposed monarch today, we are in favour of him getting his just deserts, with as unfair a trial as possible, and oppose any attempt to grant him asylum anywhere in the world. But the tyrant-in-power is no less guilty of crimes against the Iranian working people and oppressed than his predecessor.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini is an 80-year-old religious fanatic convinced that he will soon be greeted by a special delegation from Allah, and ready to take everyone with him in a fiery twilight of the gods. He is determined to impose a theocratic 'Islamic Republic' which is closer to Jonestown, Guyana than Calvin's Geneva; and if the Iranians are not ready, they deserve to perish. To Carter's threats he responds: 'We are a nation of 35 million and many of these people are looking forward to martyrdom... After they have all been martyred, then they can do what they want with Iran.' This apocalyptic vision and programme offers no future to the Iranian masses. The ayatollah, like the shah, deserves to be handed over to his victims to receive justice: Send the shah to Tehran, and send Khomeini to Kurdistan! But only through proletarian revolution, led by an Iranian Trotskyist party, can the oppressed break the chains of imperialism and Islamic obscurantism and emancipate themselves from the shahs and the ayatollahs for ever.

adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 244, 23 November 1979

Klan...

(Continued from page 3)

race riots and pogroms. In this centre of America's most important industry, hundreds of thousands of black youth are trapped in an endless cycle of chronic unemployment and crime. Many thousand more depend for their livelihoods on a bankrupt loser, Chrysler. But it is also the city where, more than any other, the social power of America's blacks as workers is palpably evident. And it is a union-stronghold, whose labour movement was forged in the heroic factory occupations of the thirties.

Among the unionists who helped initiate the November 10 demonstration were militants dedicated to resuscitating such class-struggle traditions -- committed to a full programme of

Cambodia...

(Continued from page 5)

installed regime to the unspeakable atrocities and starvation under Pol Pot. Today, almost a year later, it appears that Heng Samrin's government is, at least for now, preferred by the Cambodian people. And it is increasingly obvious that the active alternative to the Vietnamese army is capitalist counterrevolution.

Should an imperialist-backed alliance launch a military assault against the Phnom Penh regime, Marxists would be duty-bound to call for military victory to the Vietnamese army. Not because of any political confidence in the Hanoi Stalinists, who would like to make Cambodia into an economic satellite and rice basket in order to build up Vietnamese industry. The destruction of the Cambodian economy, first by imperialist bombing and then by peasant Stalinism run amok, points to the crying need for an international socialist order. Those who are moved by the sight of starving children in Cambodia must not be taken in by Jimmy Carter's 'humanitarian' plots. Reformist schemes which rely on imperialist handouts and 'aid' as the solution for every backward country are ultimately reactionary traps.

The answer to famine and misery in Asia is working-class revolution throughout the capitalist world, and particularly in the imperialist centres, in order to rationally redistribute the productive resources of mankind; and political revolution by the Indochinese workers (together with the proletariat of all the degenerated/deformed workers states) against their Stalinist misrulers, to undercut the poisonous nationalisms which still rack the area.

adapted from *Australasian Spartacist* no 69, November 1979

anti-capitalist demands -- an exemplary alternative to the minimalist fake 'mass work' of sundry reformists. One, a laid-off black Chrysler worker, told the rally:

'We fought for sit-down strikes against the layoffs, just like Flint in 1937. That's how the union was formed and that's how it's going to be saved. If Chrysler's going broke, we should take it -- take it over and sell it and divide the money. Because it's ours. The stockholders want to take the money and run. Well, I say, let's not beg. Let's take it. It's ours.'

It was a victory for all those who deeply want to smash the KKK that this 500-strong labour and black rally took place in the industrial powerhouse of the US. This was a long way from the tens of thousands that were urgently needed. But November 10 showed that it can be done. It was a demonstration with a powerful programme, which pointed the way forward to an America free from organised race-hate murder and mass unemployment. As Don Alexander said in concluding his speech:

'So I am with the Spartacist League. We are America's last, best chance. There isn't much choice. It's either fight along with us, along the lines that made the Russian Revolution, or sink with the capitalists.' ■

Witchhunt in Oxford

Five Oxford leftists, among them supporters of the Workers Socialist League, have become the target of a vicious witchhunt. Alan Thornett, Pat Lally, Tony Richardson, Peter McIntyre, and Dave Simpson were among several hundred marching in defence of political prisoners in Northern Ireland on a demonstration in Oxford on 20 October. Now their photographs, names, home addresses, telephone numbers, workplaces and union positions appear on thousands of expensively produced posters and leaflets which suggest that the five are members of the IRA. The leaflets have been mailed to their neighbours and massively distributed at their workplaces by paid leafletters.

Whoever is running this campaign -- fascists, orangemen, an employer's organisation, right-wingers in the unions or whatever -- it is an obvious incitement to attack and a provocation aimed at the entire workers movement and any opponent of British imperialism. These militants must be unconditionally defended against any attack or victimisation stemming from this provocative hate campaign. Down with the witchhunt!

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SPARTACIST

BRITAIN

Khomeini fanatics provoke imperialist threats

Iran embassy crisis

The seizure of the American embassy and staff in Tehran has locked the most dangerous imperialist power in history in diplomatic/economic warfare with a priest caste of Shi'ite mullahs who want to return to the seventh-century puritanical desert 'paradise' of the Koran. In Iran, the embassy occupation and taking of hostages by well-organised Muslim 'students' demanding the extradition of murderous ex-dictator Shah Reza Pahlavi from America has revitalised waning popular support for the theocratic regime of Ayatollah Khomeini. From the United States has come a backlash of chauvinist 'national unity'. Reacting to a feeling of helplessness, right now many Americans would approve of nuking Qom, the religious capital of Khomeini's Persian-chauvinist sect. The Iran embassy crisis has accomplished the feat of temporarily bolstering the image of the desperate Jimmy Carter and, ominously, of stirring up mass support for American imperialist war preparations.

With every passing week the confrontation has deepened. Khomeini has called for a *jihād* (holy war) by the entire Muslim world against the US and urged Iran's 20 million youth to take up arms to 'serve Islam'. He has charged that the Tehran embassy was a 'nest of spies' and threatened to have the hostages tried before his 'revolutionary tribunals'. This accusation predictably elicited no comment from the State Department and the White House -- and for good reason. Under the shah, the US embassy was notorious as a branch office of the CIA, a coequal and sometimes predominant seat of power with the Niavarán Palace. High CIA officials, including Richard Helms and William Sullivan, were posted to Tehran as US ambassadors. We shed no tears for the imperialist



Two faces of the Iran crisis: clerical fanatics declare: 'We are ready for martyrdom'; jingo frenzy in the US



diplomats, NSA/CIA agents and professional soldiers captured by the Islamic students, just as we militantly oppose any US imperialist intervention to 'save' them.

But the Iran embassy seizure was by no means analogous to the heroic Vietnamese Tet offensive of 1968, which besieged the US embassy in Saigon, nor the 1958 rock-throwing attack on Vice-President Richard Nixon in Caracas -- both clearly blows by left-wing forces against US imperialist strongpoints and rulers. The mullahs have not been waging a struggle against imperialism at all. On the contrary, Khomeini's government was only recently negotiating with Washington for the resumption of billions of dollars in military aid to be used against Kurdish rebels, Arab oil workers, Iranian left-

ists and the Soviet Union.

The Tehran embassy seizure and hostage-taking was a *diversion*. It was fundamentally an attempt to refurbish Khomeini's anti-shah credentials in a period of growing disillusionment with, and opposition to, his clerical-reactionary rule. The recent constitutional referendum which formalised the ayatollah's one-man dictatorship was overwhelmingly boycotted by the Kurds and Baluchis, just as the voting for the 'Assembly of Experts' had been several months ago. The seething unrest among the national minorities has been complemented by growing ferment among the unemployed. And even within the Shi'ite hierarchy Khomeini has been confronted with open opposition from the Azerbaijani religious leader, Ayatollah Shariatmadari.

Yet the fake-lefts who cheered the butcher Khomeini's every step on the road to power have been working overtime to help him refurbish those credentials. Even while its Iranian comrades of the HKS continued to rot in Khomeini's jails, the International Marxist Group (IMG) hailed this latest 'anti-imperialist' action and offered helpful hints on 'How to deepen the revolution' (*Socialist Challenge*, 6 December). Calling for 'international solidarity with the embassy seizure' the IMG lauded the 'anti-imperialist slogans' raised there, including 'The permanent struggle against imperialism is key to the unity of Iranian nationalities.' Which is exactly what Khomeini has been hoping: forget the brutal slaughter of the Kurds and join us in the 'fight' against the Americans!

International opposition

Internationally, the Khomeinists' action has met with disfavour from governments of almost every stripe. The USSR (which no doubt figures its Tehran embassy could be next) voted in the United Nations Security Council to condemn the seizure. Even radical-bonapartist 'Third World' regimes -- which are

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US hands off Iran!

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November 20, 11.30pm -- US President Jimmy Carter has now threatened military retaliation against Iran. Today the State Department announced that the aircraft carrier Midway and five other warships are standing by in the Arabian Sea, while the carrier Kitty Hawk is sailing from the Philippines. Is Washington getting ready to write off the hostages?

The Khomeini-led Muslim fanatics have violated diplomatic prerogatives in a way that not even the Nazis did. But Carter is invoking the felt outrage of the American people in order to get back into the White House over the bodies of tens of thousands of Iranians, whose just desire to take their own country back has been mobilised by a clerical-mediaevalist fanatic.

The essential thrust of American policy

toward Iran for decades has not just been to plunder the country but an anti-Communist crusade against Russia. The US imperialists started sending machine-gun bullets to the mad mullah Khomeini in order to get the Soviet Union. And as was demonstrated by John Kennedy in the Cuban missile crisis, when it comes to taking the world to the brink of a nuclear holocaust, the US bourgeoisie is no more rational than the ayatollah of Qom.

Meanwhile Carter is giving this tin-pot 'Imam' just the excuse he needs to justify the privation of the Iranian masses for a generation: blame it on the Americans.

The American working class must militantly oppose these war threats. In the event of actual US armed intervention, workers and socialists must stand for military defence of Iran against imperialist attack, while opposing the reactionary mullah rulers, and stand ready to offer revolutionary defencism toward the Soviet degenerated workers state as well.