

2pm. Charing Cross. Saturday 20th September

DEMONSTRATE

NO ECONOMIC BOYCOTT ■ BIG BUSINESS, NATO, CIA - HANDS OFF PORTUGAL
■ PORTUGAL MUST NOT BECOME ANOTHER CHILE ■ SOLIDARITY WITH THE
WORKERS' AND NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMITTEES ■ SOLIDARITY WITH M.P.L.A.

HANDS OFF

PORTUGAL!

ORANGEMEN SPLIT OVER STRATEGY AS CONVENTION COLLAPSES

Has the Convention strategy of the British government for Northern Ireland broken down? The massive vote of the UUUC (with only one for and two abstentions) against "power sharing" in a coalition with the SDLP would seem to wrap up the Convention and bring down the curtain, for now, on attempts to find a 'solution' within Northern Ireland.

It remains true that the in-built sectarianism of the Northern Ireland state rules out a 'solution' within that state. But it is far from true that the charade of the Convention is over. The manoeuvres continue. Having effectively wound up its deliberations and pronouncing a verdict of futility on its own continued existence, the Convention hesitates to do away with itself and meets... to pronounce on "security".

The United Ulster Unionist Coalition, having made its position clear, hesitates to make it the formal official majority Convention recommendation. And the SDLP stays away from the debate to allow the 'Loyalists to get on with their demands.

Brink

The UUUC is clearly split — and Craig represents far more than his one vote in favour of an 'emergency' coalition with the SDLP (for, perhaps, 5 years) seems to suggest. The support expressed for his position by the UDA, the major paramilitary group, is a partial indication of his potential strength, as big elements of the Orange side draw back from the brink of civil war.

There is no reason to disbelieve Craig, former almost cranky hardliner, when he says he's changed his ground because he is convinced of the 'sincerity' of the SDLP as anti-fundamentalists. In the primitive fundamentalist world of Northern Ireland Orange politics, Craig probably did previously believe the SDLP were a republican Trojan horse, rather than the most subtle grouping linking together in one party the interests of the Southern and Northern Irish ruling classes, and the British ruling class.

The UDA line is also a partial answer to the central

question of this whole episode — would the paramilitaries allow the politicians to do a deal? It appears that some of them, anyway, will. The Ulster Workers Council has opposed Craig's position; but it is enormously difficult to gauge the importance of this, so intermeshed are the memberships of these two umbrella groupings, the one industrial, the other military.

Craig's stand and the so far limited rallying to it suggests the following scenario: Vanguard will swing behind Craig. The SDLP will 'accept' that the coalition should be for an emergency period. The stand of the more 'extreme' Vanguard group will allow the major element in the UUUC, the Official Unionist Party, to 'reconsider'.

The prospect is then open for an attempted re-run of the 1973/4 rule by a coalition of Unionists and SDLP, with Craig probably playing the role previously played by Faulkner. A political regrouping and realignment of the "centre" would then have to face the Northern Ireland electorate.

Present indications, such as the obvious jockeying between Paisley and Craig — bringing out the very real differences in the background, experience and even conception of politics between the arch demagogue Paisley and the old-line Unionist ex-minister Craig — suggest violent opposition from at least a sizeable section of Unionists. But Faulkner faced this and handsomely in mid-1973 — a Faulkner already discredited heavily as a weathervane opportunist.

Re-run

Craig stands in Unionist mythology as the Minister of Home Affairs martyred and dismissed for dealing brutally with the famous Derry civil rights demonstration of October 1968, right at the start of the present 'troubles': a 'man of stout Orange principle'. A re-run of the '1973 Show' with Craig instead of Faulkner would be far more of a reliable instrument for

Contd. back page

Workers' fight

5p

No.109 — September 13th to 20th, 1975

WAGES - CUT JOBS - AXED SERVICES - SLASHED

COUNCIL WORKERS ARE IN FRONT LINE

"QUITE CLEARLY WE ARE GOING TO GET THE SIX POUNDS" said Jack May, assistant general secretary of the National Union of Public Employees, after a meeting on Tuesday 9th September to finalise the council manual workers' claim.

The government will face a demand for a "not a penny less than the £6" on behalf of over a million workers, right away. The slightest hesitation on the government's part over payment will expose its "help the lower paid" line totally, for as Jack May went on to say, "We expect the employers to be reasonable. Because we represent so many lower paid workers we cannot possibly afford to settle for any less than six pounds a week".

The same line was taken by the other two unions present at the meeting, the General and Municipal Workers' Union and the Transport and General Workers. The Transport and General Workers Union was, of course, the initiator of the £6 flat rate plan and its strongest advocate on the TUC, where it was supported by the GMWU. There can be no confusion about interpretation. The TGWU worked out the policy in the first place, fought for it in caucuses, in the general council of the TUC, and finally at the TUC Congress.

The TUC majority is clearly taking the line that the £6 is an entitlement and not, as the government and employers would have it, a ceiling. (Whether the TUC

leaders will turn their declaration into action is another matter).

The wage demand comes only three days after the government circular to local authorities announcing the need for massive cuts in spending. At the time the circular, from Anthony Crosland, the Environment secretary, was met with storms of protest from the authorities and from the unions alike.

NUPE general secretary Alan Fisher declared, "We are not going to take this lying down", and added, "Not content with reducing the standard of living of the workers by the £6 wage policy, the government is also intent on slashing the social wage. These staggering cuts will create redundancies. They will mean

dirtier roads, and dustbins emptied when the government feels like it. They mean thousands of children in the rising fives at home rather than at school. They mean misery for workers who have to use public transport and longer waits for pensioners for council homes."

The council workers are in the front line of the fight both against wage cutting and poorer social and public services.

The government hopes to be able to split up the council workers' fight by putting the responsibility on the councils it is starving out. But the responsibility is theirs. Not only for the economic situation but also because they can solve the problem at once by the rate support grant through which they pay councils.



Crosland decrees — things will get even worse for her

Benn plan leaves government leaders cold

THE LETTER which Anthony Wedgwood Benn has sent to his constituency in South East Bristol set the headlines aflame and provoked palpitations in the Stock Exchange, particularly among the "small investors".

Certainly it is radical in tone. Referring to a "long, deep and serious slump to which no clear end is in sight" it speaks out against the slashing of public

service expenditure called for by the Department of the Environment's notorious circular 88/75. "We have got to defend" Benn says "essential public spending which corrects some at least of the present inequalities in the distribution of wealth. These are the benefits and services — the social wage — which the British people must have... Democratic local government services are still

inadequate, when set against housing, educational and social needs."

On unemployment it reminds that "our manifesto pledged us to full employment and contained policies to help us to get it. The British people will probably judge this government more by our success in cutting back the number of jobless than by any other single issue." The present crisis must be used "as the occasion for fundamental change and not the excuse for postponing it."

Little effect

But if this sharp talking set the press on fire, it had little effect on the leaders of the government when, the following day, at a meeting of the Labour Party's Home Policy Committee, these ideas were considered in the form of a document to be presented to

the National Executive Committee.

The document, called 'Labour and Industry: the Next Steps', goes much further than the already government-gutted Labour Programme of 1973.

'Wear and tear'

It admits that the Industry Bill not only "falls very considerably short" of the original proposals but that the original proposals themselves were too restricted. The National Enterprise Board, it says, needs a budget of £1000 million a year and the power to buy up viable companies. It calls for the government's hand to be strengthened to include powers to direct investment, buy companies compulsorily, remove directors, control prices and appoint 'Official trustees' to run a company. Planning agreements

should be compulsory and there should be a consortium to direct institutional investment and a share of company profits to be set aside for the purpose.

The reaction of the government leaders in the meeting? They didn't even bother to have it voted on. As the Financial Times put it "They were apparently content to leave the document to the wear and tear of time and events."

Agenda

These "events" of course will not be the democratic processes of the Labour Party, like the deliberations of the coming conference. The agenda for that shows massive support within the constituency parties for various versions of Benn's capitalism-with-enlarged-state-control proposals.

Paul Adams

TUC: ALL CAUGHT UP BELIEVING IN THE 'INEVITABILITY OF CAPITALISM'

SPEARHEADING the opposition to the General Council's report and recommending acceptance of the £6 ceiling on wage rises, Ken Gill of TASS, the super-vidory and technical section of the AUEW, catalogued the huge list of Labour's failures since the Social Contract.

In 1974, he reminded Congress he had withdrawn a resolution opposing the Social Contract to help the Labour Party win the next General Election. That way the Labour Government was given the opportunity of fulfilling the promises it had made to the trade union movement. "But there has been no redistribution of wealth, members' living standards have fallen, and under the new package they will fall even more". Ken Gill "plays innocent", as if he really believed that agreeing to Social Contract wage restraint would not pave the way for sharper wage curbs later. His indictment of the Labour government's record was weakened by his failure to challenge outright the notion that workers should "give a chance" to the government to salvage something out of the crisis of capitalism; but it was still damning.

record a government of liars and traitors to the working class. But what made Gill's speech lose all its punch was that he still relied on pressing the Government to tinker with capitalism in this or that way.

RADICAL

In his speech on behalf of the General Council, Len Murray stole some of Ken Gill's fire by snatching most of his argument. "The general council has been putting strong pressure on the Government to reflate the economy selectively and introduce selective temporary controls on imports... Those who argued for a strategy of radical industrial change as an alternative

missed the point that that was an essential part of the general council's programme".

Once caught inside the logic of tinkering with capitalism, the left are in a weak position. The combination of terms like "import controls" (as a protection for industry) and "planning" are heady incense inside the cathedral of Conference. It is the language of National Fabianism.

The fact that it is the common tongue of British trade unionism doesn't lend any particular strength to the proposals. All it does is allow the most 'left' of the reformists to undergo a conversion so 'radical' that he becomes the prime mover for the right wing on all

essentials of policy... without changing the terms of his argument at all.

Such is the fate of Jack Jones.

SHIFT

But he isn't the only one. In an assessment of the elections to the General Council the 'Morning Star' noted seriously and in a way quite correctly that the elections had produced "a swing which has increased the number of left and progressive members on the new council". It is quite true that the candidates the capitalist press touted as "moderates" — that is, outright right wingers — were defeated in favour of the ones the press labelled "men of the left".

And yet, will this "left shift on the General Council" result in any difference of policy on essentials?

Did the earlier and much more substantial "shift to the left" produce anything of the sort?

No. This is Jack Jones's conference, not because of Jack Jones's scandalous and infamous selling of the Government's anti working class line, but because it is a conference full of Jack Joneses — full of people so ensnared in the inevitability of capitalism and the impossibility of a society regulated by workers' control that they call their scabbing 'statesmanship'.

Dave Roberts

TUC '75 and the £6 sell-out

Planning our own downfall

DEMOTED

Instead of a massive increase in house building, thousands of building workers were still unemployed. Prices had risen 26%, profits were up 40%.

Instead of improved social services as promised, there had been cuts in health provisions. He might have added that the same was true for education. Cuts in defence spending had been promised, but there had in fact been increases.

As far as plans for nationalisation and state controls were concerned, these now amounted to promises — sinking lower and lower on the Government's list of priorities — to nationalise the aircraft and shipbuilding industries. The Industry Bill had been emasculated and Wedgwood Benn had been demoted.

Worst of all unemployment had not been kept down as promised as "their side of the bargain", but had risen to a million and a quarter.

The list was not exhaustive, but it ought to have been enough to brand any Government with that

"WE HAVE been promised", announced Len Murray, "a major initiative from the Government in October in this whole field of economic and industrial planning".

We are told by the press that this and other remarks were a reference by the TUC General Secretary to a new plan "The Path to 1980", the first drafts of which are to be discussed at the National Economic Development Council immediately after the next Labour Party conference. All this was confirmed by Sir Ronald Mackintosh, the chairman of NEDO and one of the City's leading warriors against the ideas of Wedgwood Benn.

Poverty

Since the fall of the Tory government every package of anti working class measures has been sold with the same sales pitch: swallow this and you'll be closer to the source of power. Thus the Social Contract — whatever some trade union leaders' misgivings — was sold with the same message on the tag. Instead of seeing poverty and a vicious government strategy, the trade union

leaders saw partnership, Harold Wilson's chummy, chubby arm around them



MURRAY

guiding them to the bench just to the right hand of the seat of power.

So not surprisingly Len Murray justified acceptance of the £6 ceiling in the same way. "Planning", he reminded the TUC Conference with his customary demagoguery, "must be brought down from the rarified heights of Millbank Tower [headquarters of the National Economic Development Council] to the decision making level of the company, with trade union involvement there."

"We want a strategy for jobs, for industry and investment, and for prices. We want to sit down with the Government to discuss and monitor developments

in output, employment, investment, exports, imports, public spending, prices and dividends, as well as pay".

Of course, "sitting down with Government" is a hell of a lot easier than standing up to Government. Still, some people do believe that the TUC's warm breath on Wilson's neck will result in a rational plan being imposed upon capitalism... if only the working class cooperate. The snag is that while the trade union and Labour bureaucracy are supposed to sustain the "rationality" of the plan, it is the rank and file who are supposed to sustain capitalism. After all, Brothers Murray and Jones would argue, you can't impose rationality on a corpse.

Savaged

After the fall of the Tory Government the TUC's illusion of being closer than before to the seat of power depended on the high and influential offices of Anthony Wedgwood Benn, Eric Heffer, and Michael Foot, and their respective projects, the Industry Bill and the Employment Protection Bill.

Now the Industry Bill

has been savaged beyond all recognition. Certainly all those parts that would have given trade union leaders a bit more strength to their arm have been gouged out of it. Wedgwood Benn has been demoted and made Minister of Energy with a special mandate to keep his manicured radical hands off North Sea Oil and let the oilmen make a mint. Heffer, seeing the writing on the wall, decided to make a stand for a sadly mistaken principle, opposition to Common Market entry, and was duly sacked. That left the forlorn Foot, whose Bill, after persistent delay, looks like being savaged even more viciously than the Industry Bill.

Given the fate of this approach to the seat of power — or the little bench to the right hand of it — it is not surprising that Len Murray should cast his sights a little lower, to where influence can be exercised directly, to the individual board room.

The politics, however, are the same: the politics of partnership. Class collaboration. And the most persuasive broker for this, as usual, is the Labour Government.

Jack Price

CUTS CUTS

The same unions that dominated the council manual workers also organise the hospital ancillary workers. They will be meeting on 19th September to finalise their claim and it is expected they will adopt the same formula as the council workers' claim.

COHSE, which was due to put in a £10 claim, has announced that it will go for only £6 now to bring it into line with TUC policy (which it was quite willing to flout in order to scab on resistance to the Tories' anti-union laws).

"What is the point of building new schools when we cannot employ school leavers?". With this argument Sir Fred Catherwood, chairman of the council of the British Institute of Management, tried to justify the proposal to cut public expenditure by a stunning £3 billion — which would be handed to the country's bosses instead to boost 'efficiency'.

Logical? For capitalism, yes! By the same logic you wouldn't feed the aged because you can't stop them from dying.

The announcement of cuts in the rail service together with rising fares emphasises the total hypocrisy of the government. Far from blocking state industry price rises — which they said they would do when the railmen struck earlier this year — they are encouraging them. Far from standing against unemployment, they are stimulating it.

Secret plans have been revealed to axe 1600 Greater London Council staff.

One of the first things that will go if local authorities begin the cuts demanded in the Department of the Environment circular will be nurseries.

Thus in International Women's Year, in the year that will end by the coming into force of the Equal Pay Act and in which government announced a new anti discrimination bill, women's freedom will be cut back.

Talk of equality is pretty meaningless unless women can go out to work, or continue studies. To do this they need nursery facilities. And they need them extended, not cut back!

OPPOSE THE SOCIAL DEMOCRAT CONNECTION HANDS OFF PORTUGAL!

HEINZ used to buy tomatoes from Portugal. Now it goes to Chile for them. Whether or not the money spinning Paramount film "Jaws" has yet reached Lisbon, Portuguese workers are already familiar with the sensations it is said to evoke. For well over a year now, the sharks of international capitalist reaction have been circling Portuguese society.

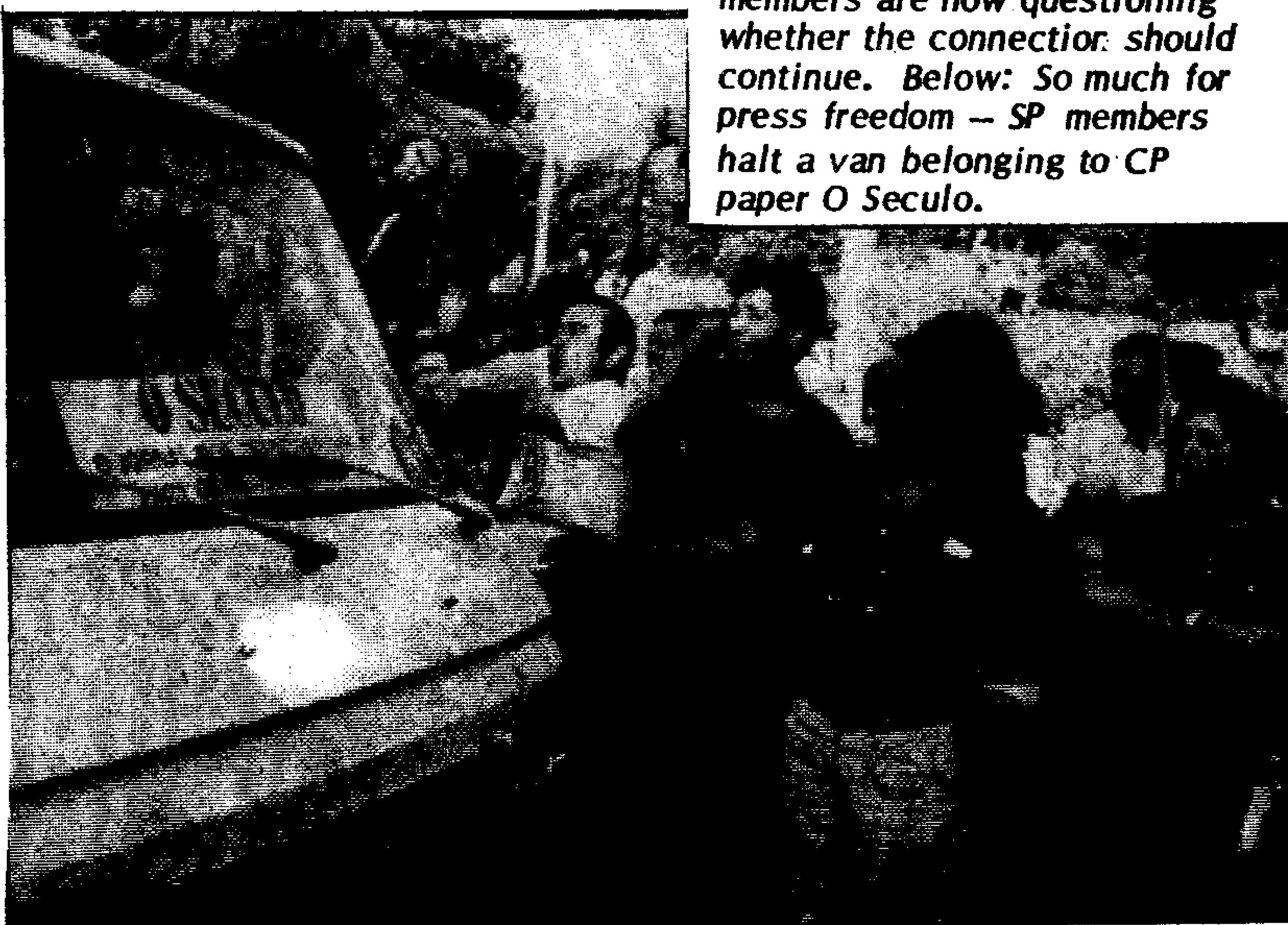
They took two swipes at Portugal, last September and in March. More insidious are the economic nibbles: funds and essential spare parts cut off, subsidiaries closed down, work quickly shifted from what was a haven of cheap, police repressed labour, and import controls slapped on Portuguese goods. European capitalism organised through the EEC has threatened a total economic blockade.

According to a leaflet published by the Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class, "NATO manoeuvres in Portuguese territorial waters, the movement of NATO and US troops in readiness to enter Portugal, the detection of a US intelligence centre aboard a ship anchored off Setubal, are facts that point to the involvement of the Western Powers in the preparation of the two attempted coups. A fortnight ago Lisbon newspapers published an open letter exposing some of the staff of the American Embassy, including the Ambassador, as active members of the CIA, and that through the Embassy, the CIA has been pouring money into the church, the right wing parties, and into the electoral campaign of the Portuguese Socialist Party".

Now the British Labour Party's International Committee has decided to commit the Party to join

the pack, and sink its teeth in. This follows a meeting on Friday 5th between Harold Wilson, Socialist Party leader Mario Soares, and five leaders of European social democracy. They agreed to intervene in Portuguese politics on behalf of the SP, in the interests of "democracy and socialism".

**demonstrate
saturday
20 september**



This company of "socialists" who have zealously maintained capitalism in Britain, Germany, France, Austria, Sweden and Holland, have if anything ganged up with an even more dangerously anti-working class party than themselves.



Above: Ron Hayward embraces Portuguese Socialist Party leader Mario Soares. But Labour Party members are now questioning whether the connector should continue. Below: So much for press freedom - SP members halt a van belonging to CP paper O Seculo.

of grass roots working class democracy.

Only four months later, SP rallies attract a modest gathering of increasingly middle class adherents.

Portuguese workers have watched as the SP mounted a hysterical, demagogic campaign, shouting about the "killing of democracy" by military rule: yet at the start of the campaign, the very same SP signed a pact with the AFM agreeing to 3-5 years of military overlordship; and three months later, Soares gave whole-hearted support to Antunes' "Document of the Nine", which also proposed army control over the 'political process'. When the Popular Assemblies, one of the most important forms of the active workers' democracy which could replace military rule, were proposed, the SP denounced them as "unconstitutional".

Meanwhile, the SP had opened up the road for the extreme right. It chose to hold mass rallies in the north, where its anti communist campaign would fall on the most primitive, priest ridden, ignorant

ears. As an article in the latest issue of *Our Common Struggle* describes it, the right wing "began to organise support for the SP rallies. During the period of maximum SP activity in the north, the right wing parties, such as the PPD and CDS, did not even bother to hold any public meetings of their own - they would merely turn up at SP rallies. The anti communist atmosphere left in the villages and towns in the aftermath of these rallies provided a breeding ground for the fascists and neo fascists. Taking advantage of any public concentration of people due either to religious festivals or markets, groups of 60 to 80 people would incite the crowd to attack the offices of the local Communist Party. It was noticeable that these attacks never occurred simultaneously in several neighbouring towns, but on successive days. The same group of agitators would move from town to town.

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"The work started by the SP in the north was continued by the Catholic Church, with local

contd on p4

THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT I.S. SHOULD KNOW BETTER

by Chris Reynolds

"Its political logic... would tend to make the 'united front', not a body which would defend the CP against the right while allowing revolutionaries to condemn the criminal class collaborationist and bureaucratic policies of the CP, but a body helping to give credit to the policies of the CP....."

That was how we assessed the 'revolutionary united front' of the Portuguese left in last week's *Workers' Fight*. Since we wrote that article, the text of the political platform of the 'revolutionary united front' has been published, in *Red Weekly* (paper of the IMG) of 4th September and in *Rouge* (paper of the French Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire) of 29th August.

That text fully confirms our condemnation of the 'united front'. It is a statement of support for the policies of the Communist

Party and support for the pro-CP 5th Provisional Government.

Popular Assemblies and other bodies of workers' power are springing up in Portugal. The task of revolutionary socialists should be to orientate those bodies towards complete political independence from the disintegrating Armed Forces Movement, towards national coordination, towards the arming of the workers and towards the seizure of power. But the 'revolutionary united front' supports the government document 'Line of programmatic action...', and says the "way forward for the revolutionary process" is unity between revolutionaries, the whole of the AFM, and the party dominating the 5th Provisional Government, the Communist Party. And this just at the time when the discontent among CP worker members against their party's bureaucratic

and class collaborationist policies is at its highest.

In *Red Weekly* and in *Rouge*, the text of the 'revolutionary united front' agreement is accompanied by an article by Ernest Mandel, a leading member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, to which both the IMG and the LCR are affiliated. The article condemns the 'united front' quite clearly and correctly.

A resolution of the Central Committee of the LCR, printed in *Rouge* of 5th September, also condemns the 'united front'. (In addition it opposes, as WF has done, the slogan 'Dissolve the Constituent Assembly Now').

However, the USFI seems to be trying to have it both ways. The LCI, Portuguese affiliate of the USFI, supported, and by all accounts still supports, the 'revolutionary united front'. *Red Weekly* describes this as a "tactical

error", though clearly it is more than tactical. Nor is it an error which can be put to the account of inexperienced comrades in Portugal; just because the LCI is very new (it had 22 members in April 1974) and has to face crucial revolutionary events without having had a chance to create and test a leadership organically evolved from its own ranks, the USFI has an exceptional responsibility to give it immediate practical direction.

Further, the same issue of *Rouge* that carries the Central Committee resolution condemning the 'united front', also carries a joint declaration of the LCR and the PSU (a French leftist party), saying: "The PSU and the LCR... rejoice at the relations of unity which exist today between various revolutionary organisations and the Portuguese Communist Party..." Trying to set the balance right, the sentence is reduced to nonsense: "... despite judgments which they [i.e. the PSU and the LCR] may make on the content of the agreement which has been made"....

However, when we turn to the pages of *Socialist Worker* (paper of the IS group), these examples of the woolliness and federalism of the USFI seem like minor quibbles.

Socialist Worker of 6th September devotes an article to the 'united front'. The 'united front', it says, could have opened the way to workers' power. But, as it turned out, the CP spoiled it by their tactics on the 'united front' demonstration. (Apparently the 'united front', with its pro-government platform - which SW does not mention - would have been all

contd on p4

WHAT THE PORTUGUESE LEFT AGREED ON

In the presence of representatives of the Armed Forces Movement, who simply convened the meeting, representatives of the following parties and organisations met together: Popular Socialist Front (FSP), Internationalist Communist League (LCI), League for Unity and Revolutionary Action (LUAR), Movement of the Socialist Left (MES), Popular Democratic Movement (MDP), Portuguese Communist Party, Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat (PRP-BR), Group of 1st May. This meeting approved the following points:

1. The Copcon document and the document entitled 'The line of programmatic action and tasks of the transition' constitute a valid basis of work for the elaboration of a revolutionary political programme.

2. Such a programme represents the indispensable instrument for uniting and elaborating the actions of the political forces engaged in the revolutionary process, and of the popular masses.

3. The document 'Line of programmatic action and tasks of the transition' constitutes the basic guiding document for the activity of the government until the necessary conditions for the formation of a government of revolutionary unity are met. 4. The creation of a front which groups together the parties and other revolutionary political organisations, revolutionary militants, the Armed Forces Movement and the autonomous organs of popular power referred to in the guiding document of the People-AFM alliance constitutes a way forward for the revolutionary process.

5. The undersigned hereby decide to establish a provisional secretariat charged with elaborating actions which allow a joint offensive against reaction and which take forward the revolutionary process. The undersigned declare that this platform is open to all organisations and all revolutionary militants and organs of popular power who wish to join it.



Egypt ditches the Palestinians

THE excitement shown by the Western powers over the agreement signed by Egypt and Israel seems at first sight a big fuss about nothing. Certainly the land area and the military arrangements directly affected are insignificant.

There has been no agreement to evacuate the land Israel has been occupying in the Sinai peninsula since the June 1967 war; no agreement to leave the Gaza strip, the West Bank or anywhere else. The Israelis have agreed to move about 30 miles east of where they have been encamped and thus let go of the strategic Gidi and Mitla passes and the rich (but nearly worked out) Abu Rudeis oilfield. In other words, a stretch of land little larger than the old demilitarised zone has been handed back to Egypt.

In return the Egyptians have

made a statement calling off all hostilities, both economic and military, and together with Israel have agreed to call on the US to man the monitoring stations in the buffer zone.

Why the western powers, the fawning "free" press with its Kremlinologists and Kissingerologists, are cheering is because they feel that this agreement means that their strategy can start rolling again: and if it's only a few inches now, it will, they hope, soon pick up pace.

That strategy, which came to an abrupt halt with the October 1973 war, had four main interlinked points: to supplement Israel's pro-US military power in the area with that of Saudi Arabia and Iran while neutralising Egypt; to open

up Egypt for imperialist investment; to supplant any remaining Soviet influence in the Middle East — in particular Syria and Iraq — after having routed it in Egypt; and to liquidate the struggle of the Palestinians for national liberation (either by total suppression or by the establishment of an impotent statelet under the guardianship of Israel and Jordan).

Of course, the objective of this strategy is the safeguarding and extension of imperialist investment and supplies, in particular of oil.

The on-off nature of the negotiations never called into question the general line of growing agreement between Egypt and Israel. Rather it was a reflection of the pressures on Sadat of the anti-

Zionist Egyptian masses, and on Rabin of the ultra-expansionist Zionist right wing in Israel.

That the deal did get signed has a lot to do with the economic gains it promises both sides. Egypt will immediately benefit from both US and Saudi Arabian investment. For instance, when King Khaled of Saudi Arabia visited Cairo in July — a good time to slip Sadat a sweetener — he gave Egypt a grant of \$600 million to pay off short term debts. In all, \$1.3 billion has been promised since the 1973 war. Now Sadat may get his hands on the rest.

Israel will receive not only investment funds but a massive arms delivery. This will considerably relieve the arms spending burden of the Israeli budget.

Both governments are hoping to stave off any internal dissidence — much more explosive in Egypt — with a big jobs-and-money programme.

Sadat's confidence that he can get the Egyptian masses to accept the settlement is best shown by the open publication of the details of the pact. At the same time the government is taking no chances: the whole of the daily press is keeping up a barrage of propaganda hailing the new pact as being the best possible deal, and playing down furiously any hints that it is any kind of sell-out.

This has been accompanied by press attacks on the Palestinians, because it is quite clear that they are the losers in this deal. 105 nations may have recognised them, but Egypt itself goes ahead with a settlement which leaves them out entirely.

Yassir Arafat has spoken out against the agreement (see inset) and so he has come under attack from Al-Ahram, the official Egyptian newspaper.

The press attack has also coincided with a wave of arrests and trials to further intimidate dissidents. (See below.)

Syria remains opposed to the deal, and its President Assad has been in Prague trying to muster support for the position he has taken: no separate agreements, and a complete withdrawal by Israel from all the land occupied since 1967, at least.

Despite the Russo-American detente deals — and the Middle East situation cannot be seen outside this context — Russia and its satellites are likely to give reserved support to Assad, not wanting to risk losing one of the few areas of its influence and economic penetration in the Arab



Yassir Arafat

PLO tells 'HOW WE WERE BETRAYED'

THE Sinai agreement will bring another war — that was how Yassir Arafat, the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, summed up his organisation's reaction to the new pact.

In an interview in the US magazine Newsweek he gave three reasons for this estimate. First the US cannot sustain financial support at the rate implied by the agreement: "the most modern arsenal supplied to any foreign country since you flooded Vietnam with weapons ... (in exchange for) Israeli withdrawal from a few miles of desert."

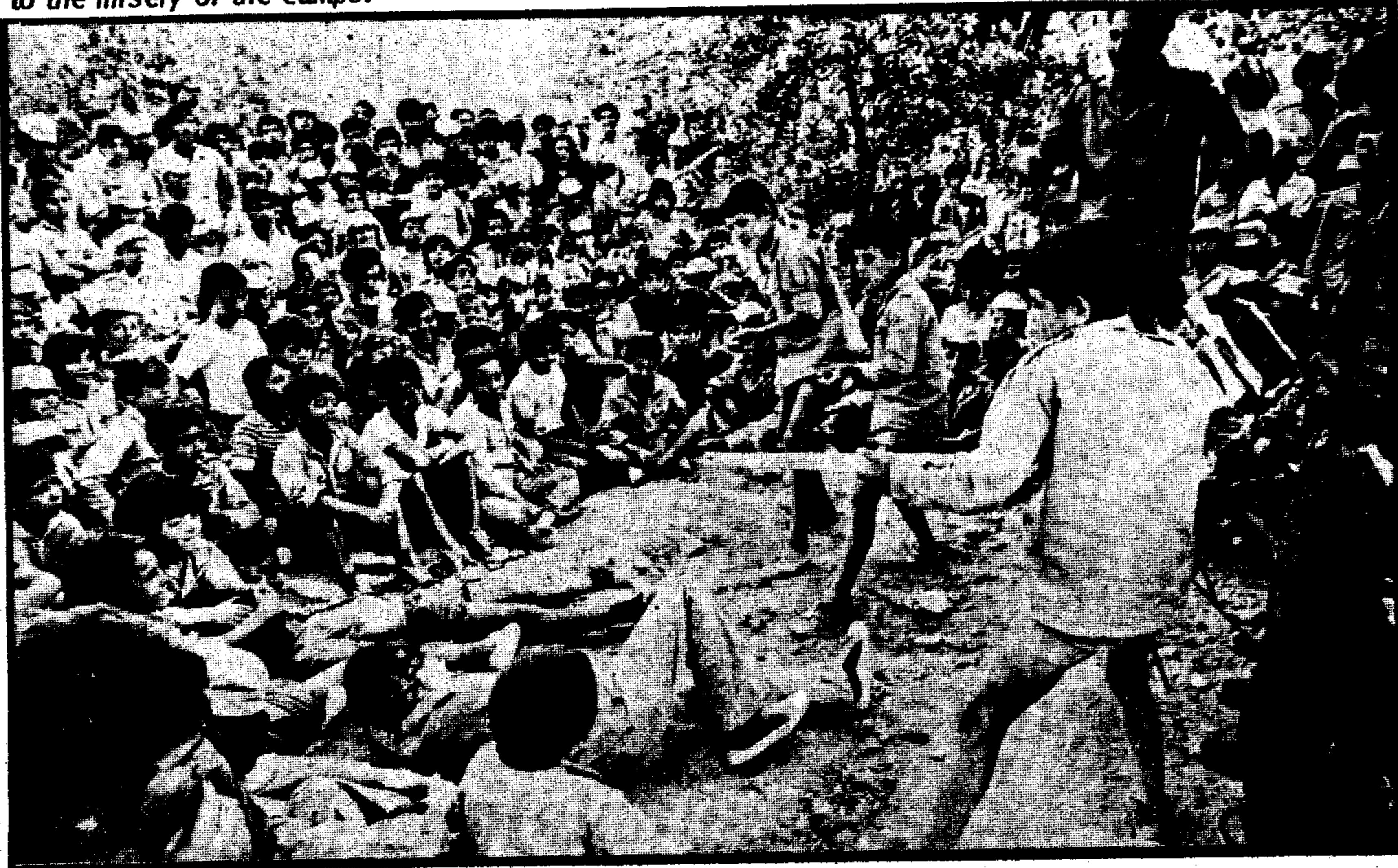
Second, "the Arab people will not be able to accept, even less digest, an agreement that ignores completely ... the rights of the Palestinian people, now recognised by 105 nations."

Third, the US, he felt, could not repeat an involvement which smacked of the "experts and advisers" with which US involvement began in Vietnam.

world now that Egypt will be able to pay its debts to Russia and thus sever any outstanding economic ties.

One problem still remains — though that too should be ironed out soon. The US Congress is very suspicious of the arrangements by which the monitoring stations are to be manned by US personnel. They realise that this could lead to direct American intervention in the area — ironically something which both Egypt and Israel have tried to get in the past. After Vietnam, American politicians have become very wary of that. Despite this, the overall importance of the deal in going some way towards safeguarding US oil interests and other US investments, present and potential, should be enough to assure Congressional approval.

These children were born in the Palestinian refugee camps. The Israel-Egypt pact, in endorsing Israel's existence in what was once Palestine, is a step towards consigning further generations of Palestinians to the misery of the camps.



Egypt's wave of arrests

The Committee for the Defence of Arab Political Prisoners, in Britain, has been set up after yet further news we have received of arrests of socialists and communists in the Arab East. The latest waves of arrests have been in Egypt, where twenty workers, students and lecturers have been charged with treason, as well as membership to an organisation known as the "Mustapha Khamis Communist Group". The Committee also has news of the hanging

of five militants alleged to be members of the Arab Communist Organisation, in Syria.

We find these arrests an indication of the mounting repression of Egyptian workers and students carried out by Sadat to ensure the success of his internal and foreign policies. These arrests have followed large working class mobilisations in the industrial district of the Mahala Al Kubra outside Cairo. Several hundred militants were also arrested follow-

ing the January demonstrations of this year. These arrests form part of Sadat's campaign to stop any real form of opposition to his plans for a 'peaceful settlement' and the 'Egyptian opening' (for foreign capital to exploit cheap Egyptian labour).

Information from: Committee for the Defence of Arab Political Prisoners, 18 Finsbury Park Road, Finsbury Park, London N16.

From p.3 Portugal and the social democratic connection

bishops themselves calling demonstrations in support of the Church and against communism. Such demonstrations in Braga, Viseu, Aveiro and Leiria were held, all ending in the burning of local left wing party headquarters."

One of the aims which Wilson's "committee of friendship with democracy and socialism in Portugal" has set itself is the "free flow of information". Doubtless, they won't see fit to protest against this week's censorship decree, which seeks to filter out all news of political currents within Portugal's army. The SP didn't raise a murmur against censorship measures by the First Provisional

Government — but then, they were members of that Government!

Clearly the social democrats refer to the hue and cry which the SP raised when most of the printworkers on the independent paper *Republica* stepped in to stop the SP taking it over. The SP are demanding that this genuine independent working class paper be 'liberated' back to the SP, to join the numerous other papers it controls.

Disillusionment with the SP has reached right through to its leadership. On August 7th, three members of its National Secretariat were suspended after pub-

lishing a dissenting statement accusing the Party of acting against its programme. Resignations of several National Committee members followed. One of the SP's handful of working class Constituent Assembly deputies walked out of the Party, and its youth branch at Evora split en masse.

The British Labour Party is not unanimous in its support for the unstable and treacherous Portuguese 'Socialist' Party. Judith Hart, who has just returned from a visit to Portugal, Joan Maynard, and Alex Kitson voted in the International Committee against inviting Soares to the Labour

Party Conference. For the Conference, York Constituency Labour Party has put down an amendment to the EEPFU's motion supporting the SP; the amendment supports the development of workers' democracy in Portugal and protests against the anti-communist activities of the SP. Many Labour Party members will be supporting the demonstration on September 20th which will say "Hands Off Portugal".

But too many people are ill informed about Portugal. They know nothing of the revolutionary bounds forward made by ordinary workers and soldiers, who have created vigorous, democratic

committees, councils and assemblies, which are controlling massive areas of industrial and agricultural production and organising workers' housing and welfare. They are fed with phony analogies, and given the impression that the SP and the Constituent Assembly are the sole repositories of democracy.

Next Saturday's demonstration will be a vital start in the education of British workers on Portugal. It should be the impetus to the formation of local solidarity groups which can help to spread real knowledge and understanding of the Portuguese situation in the labour movement.

Portugal's united front

From p.3

right, if only that demonstration had gone off smoothly). Socialist Worker endorses the 'united front's' expulsion of the CP because it was "calling political discussions with the Socialist Party leaders"; but concludes by saying — "It remains to be seen

whether the rank and file of the Communist Party will allow the leadership to abandon the revolutionary left...."

All this would be very well from an impatient, naive, uneducated revolutionary, who thinks the Communist Party might well turn to a revolutionary socialist policy, who hopes that unity in a broad 'revolutionary front' can short-cut the painstaking work of building a sharply demarcated revolutionary party, who scorns any attempts to win over the more backward workers following the Socialist Party.

The PRP, the Portuguese group which IS supports (or rather,

fawns on), is a very new organisation, and probably very largely made up of such revolutionaries. It is possible to respect the PRP comrades while criticising their policy in the 'revolutionary united front'.

But for the IS leadership we can have no such respect. The IS leadership are neither naive nor uneducated. They have spent 25 years attacking mainstream Trotskyists for "capitulating to Stalinism", for forgetting the basic principle of the political independence of the working class, for having illusions in 'left-wing' military regimes.

And now we find IS endorsing a

policy of support to a government which is maintaining the capitalist order. We find IS proclaiming that a united front with the Stalinists can be an adequate substitute for a revolutionary party. We find IS endorsing attitudes to social democracy reminiscent of third period Stalinism. To exclude the CP from the 'united front' for talking with the SP leaders! Is that really the worst thing the CP has done? Would Marxists even oppose the CP leaders discussing with the SP leaders? Not at all — though we would put forward our own ideas on what they should discuss (not patching together a 6th Provisional Government, but joint

action against the right wing mobs, joint commitment to build Popular Assemblies, etc.)

On the pediment of the temple of "IS theory" there are written many noble principles. But when the rough breath of revolution intrudes into that temple, all it finds inside is the stench of rotteness. To the Portuguese working class it matters a great deal whether those parties attempting to work out a revolutionary socialist policy are able to orient correctly to the 'united front'. To IS it matters not one bit... as long as they still have their chance to bask in 'reflected glory' from 'the revolution' in Portugal.



Vorster sets up camps for pass law offenders

THE establishment of "rehabilitation centres" for African pass law offenders is the latest item in the lengthy list of repressive measures directed against blacks in South Africa.

In June the government declared that a number of these centres are to be set up in the Bantustans. Anyone who contravenes the pass laws — and some 10.5 million Africans were prosecuted for doing so between 1948 and 1973 — is liable to detention in the centres for up to three years.

Government spokesmen have made it clear what the purpose of this new move is. Pass offenders will have their "physical, mental and moral condition" improved, so as to "prevent derelicts, idlers, loafers from becoming hardened criminals." "Our purpose is to rehabilitate them into being useful members of society," said the Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration.

This naturally means "compliant members of apartheid society", for a major emphasis will be on "instruction" in the traditions, culture

and customs of the "national" unit to which the detainees are deemed to belong.

The regulations make it plain that only Africans may be detained in the centres; they need only have been arrested (but not necessarily charged or convicted) for breaking the pass laws; alternatively they must have been declared "idle and undesirable".

The same regulations on secrecy which currently apply to prisons in the Republic will govern the centres, so there will be no obligation on the government to report on conditions there.

The announcement of these new plans raised some protests within South Africa. Despite government claims, the homeland leaders said they had never been consulted. But as usual, these protests are being brushed aside by the Nationalist government — who must be very relieved at the mute reaction of Western governments, and with certain exceptions, the western press.

from Anti-Apartheid News

To go out without this passbook can now mean three years in a prison camp

Out of work and on the box

HOW do you "talk about the state of the nation from the point of view of the unemployed" in an unstructured discussion lasting 35 minutes flat? Answer — it's impossible.

And it's all the more impossible when that discussion takes place on BBC2 Open Door Forum ('Unheard Voice', 8th September), amongst Ellesmere Port (Merseyside) unemployed of different ages and views, with the aim of recording whatever they want to say to us and each other without so much as a [BBC] reporter or chairman to guide them.

How "they" were chosen out of Merseyside's 80,000 unemployed was a mystery. They were mainly men, with the two women squeezed out in the cross talk. They chatted as if in the pub, but without the relaxation, and with local Communist Party member Roy Jones as chairman. They told us that unemployment produced boredom and lack of money. It produced puzzlement and disillusionment. "How can we give a year for Britain?"; "We all sit here moaning". Local Labour MP Alf Bates' achievement may have got him some publicity, but not on their issue — "he kissed a baby's arse a few weeks ago".

The main thing they agreed on was that "nobody cares" about the "problem". "Nobody" includes particularly the unions and the government. "The Trade Unions are not doing the job they were set up to do" — they are accepting unemployment.

Of course they were right to "moan". Where they were wrong was in themselves accepting unemployment. "You are always going to have one part of the country unemployed". "Nobody seems to be speaking for us" (My emphasis). And the solution? Perhaps older people should have to retire so that the young can work. Perhaps imports should be stopped. One man complained about overmanning in industry.

All 'solutions' in terms of this or that section of workers seeking benefits at the expense of others, with the overall position of the working class seen as absolutely unchangeable. No solutions seeking a path through the unity of all workers — young and old, British and foreign, women and men, employed and unemployed — and through fighting, not against 'overmanning', but against the loss of jobs, for reductions in hours, for work or full pay, for socialism.

Unemployment has been fought before — in Merseyside and elsewhere — and it can be fought again. But not by relying on publicity for confusion and apathy from the BBC.

Margaret Hope

Massive campaign to stop the Spanish executioner

TEN SPANISH revolutionaries, members of the Maoist group FRAP, have been brought before the military tribunal and are likely to get death sentences. Meanwhile the death sentences already imposed on the Basque nationalist militants Jose Antonio Garmendia and Angel Otaegui may be carried out any day.

The already bloodstained hand of the Franco regime, doomed to be stopped forever when the Portuguese revolution finds its inevitable reflection in Spain, is lashing out with increasingly grotesque brutality.

The 'trial' of Garmendia and Otaegui lasted just five hours. Garmendia's conviction was based on a confession, regarded as valid even though his treatment since he was arrested has reduced him to a mental age of six years. Otaegui was sentenced to be garrotted

simply for sheltering Garmendia after his alleged killing of a Civil Guard.

100,000 workers struck in Euskadi (the Basque country) immediately after the death sentences were handed down, an one province, Guipuzcoa, virtually all the workers not currently on holiday joined the strike. In France, especially, a whole series of demonstration have taken place in defence of Garmendia and Otaegui.

1000 demonstrated in Bayonne on 27th August; 1000 in Toulouse on 1st September; a demonstration of 3000 and another of 2000 in Paris on 30th August — larger demonstrations again on 1st September and 9th September, and an occupation of the towers of Notre Dame on 1st September. In Britain so far there has been one major demonstration, 1000-strong, on



Garmendia

7th September. The Iberian Airlines office in Regent Street was also occupied on 10th September. After being evicted by police, who made about 12 arrests, some 100 demonstrators continued a picket on the other side of the street. We must join our forces to any further protest, to forestall Franco's murderers.



A LOT OF space in both the left press and the Fleet Street papers has been devoted to events in Portugal. On the other side of the world is Chile, a former revolutionary centre, of which we hear little. This week marks the second anniversary of the military takeover in Chile.

Two years during which the military junta has attempted to 'stabilise' the economy at the expense of the working class. Two years during which the junta has attempted to smash all fighting spirit out of the Chilean workers by maintaining the harshest repression — "putting in order", as the junta spokesmen euphemistically described it. Over those two years Chile's economic and social problems have increased rather than decreased — and to an unprecedented level.

The massive repression, during which more than 30,000 have died and many more have been imprisoned and tortured, continues today. The junta, despite its attempts at a new world image, cannot hide the prisons and the prisoners, and that is why it recently refused entry to the U.N. Human Rights Commission. The introduction in April of a new "recovery programme" has increased the severity of earlier junta policies but has done little else. Bankruptcies and unemployment have leapt upwards from already high levels: but the balance of payments has continued in deficit, and inflation has got worse instead of better.

Despite massive cuts in Government spending and workers' wages, inflation has continued at consistent record levels throughout the junta's rule. During the first seven months of this year, it reached 195% compared with 173.9% last year. But these figures hide the real effects of inflation. They hide the fact that prices of necessities have gone up most, and that inflation has hit hardest at the low paid. For instance, bread rose in price by 13,536% as compared with the overall inflation figure of "only" 3,307%. Out of the estimated average wage of about 50,000

escudos (about £4.50) a week, a loaf of bread costs £1.10; two pounds of sugar cost £1.75; two pounds of pasta, about £1.30.

Normal Chilean consumption of bread for a family of five would cost just over half the estimated weekly wage. And then there is rent to pay, at an estimated £4.10 per week for one room...

The health of Chileans declines because they simply cannot afford to eat. Neither can they afford medical help or the cost of medicines. The Chilean Pharmaceutical Union complained that more than 50% of prescriptions were not bought. It's not that they are concerned about the health of Chileans, it's just the declining profits which result from the junta's so-called recovery plans.

Many Chileans do not actually have a job. The world recession, the collapse of the internal market, and the inevitable failure of the junta to defeat inflation by monetarist policies, have devastated Chilean industry and agriculture. For instance, in the metal industry, it is reported that companies have sacked 50% of their workforce. Many are applying for permission for further sackings and many are on short time working and producing under capacity. In the textile industry, 60,000 workers have been sacked with the rest on a minimum wage.

The situation looks bleak. There is no state relief system of benefits, and those who do not work either beg or starve.

In the countryside, the land,

which had been taken over legally and worked collectively, has been divided among individual families. But because there is no system of credits or loans, people cannot buy seed or tools, so often they have to sell the land back to the landowner and work it for him. People who complain are thrown off the land and either shot or imprisoned.

Recently the Churches set up relief kitchens to give one meal a day to children of families where the father is either dead, in prison, or out of work. A woman working in one of these reported that in her area — by no means a poor area — at least one child a week died of malnutrition.

The regime is harsh but resistance is beginning to crystallise as the parties which were smashed by



Two years of hell

the coup function again "underground". Passive resistance and sabotage in the factories — such as leaving taps and machines running, or lights on, to waste power — and the agitation of political parties at grass roots is preparing for the overthrow of the junta, not now maybe, but in a much shorter period than the 48 years it took to crack Portugal's Salazarist dictatorship.

Some union leaders have been arrested along with staff and students at Santiago University for "subversion" and participating in "an unauthorised meeting in which political topics were discussed" (Decree-Law 198). The most impressive act of protest came over the murder of 119 militants. The junta claimed that they died in battle as guerrillas, though all sources except Santiago denied the junta's claims. As a protest against this outrage, 80 political prisoners at the Puchuncavi prison camp went on hunger strike.

A British visitor to Chile is quoted in *Chile Lucha!*: "Once I was eating in a restaurant and a child came in and snatched the piece of bread left on my plate and started eating really ravenously". Such is the effect of the junta which aimed to "stabilise" and "cleanse" Chile. The capitalist class through the junta aims to stabilise profits and the system has been bathed in workers' blood. The choice rests between Socialism and Barbarism; between the construction of a socialist system and the continuation of capitalism.

MARK TRAQUIR

Death in jail possible if Sabri Genc is deported

ON MONDAY 8th September, there was a very small picket of the Home Office to protest against the victimisation of Sabri Genc, a T&G shop steward facing deportation, and against similar victimisation confronting other militant immigrant workers under repressive legislation such as the Immigration Act and the so-called 'Prevention of Terrorism Act'. The picket was called by the Sabri Genc Defence Committee, and others were present from the Campaign to Repeal the Immigration, from Workers Fight, and from the International Socialists.

Sabri Genc is in Pentonville Jail awaiting deportation on the pretext that he previously worked without a permit. It becomes clear that this is not the real reason when one considers the fact that the same Home Office has agreed to 'regularise' the position of most of his fellow workers.

Racist tactics

The real reason for his deportation is not difficult to find. Sabri Genc is a militant trade unionist who fought for his members against criminal exploitation and bad conditions in the London Eating Houses. For example, before joining the union some workers earned only 25p an hour.

Bro. Genc was also responsible for organising the May Day strike of London Eating Houses workers in support of the

Shrewsbury Two. It is this militancy which neither the London Eating Houses bosses nor the British Government can tolerate, particularly during a recession period. It is for this militancy that Sabri Genc is being deported to face probable death in a jail in Turkey.

The message the bosses and their government want to put is clear: "illegal" immigrants (their definition) will be tolerated providing they accept gross exploitation. To demand a decent standard of living and work conditions, to demand normal trade union rights, means possible deportation... so keep quiet.

Sabri Genc and others like him must be defended by the trade union movement. To let him be deported, as to allow the Shrewsbury pickets to rot in jail, is to weaken the position of militants taking a stand in the future. It is also to strengthen the hand of bosses using racist tactics of victimising immigrant workers. And a working class internally weak and divided cannot stand up to the hammer blows which the bosses will rain down on it.

Laws like the Immigration Act (1971) and the "Prevention of Terrorism Act" (1974) have been directed selectively against black and against Irish workers. But such legislation used against immigrant workers today will certainly be used against the rest of the working class tomorrow. That is why it is important for trade union-

ists to defend militants like Sabri Genc, as Franco Caprino, an Italian immigrant militant trade unionist, threatened with deportation under the 1971 Immigration Act, was successfully defended and freed from Pentonville jail some months ago.

Resolutions of support for Sabri Genc should be sent via the Campaign to Defeat the Immigration Act, c/o 45 Kensington Park Road, London W.11.
MARK TRAQUAIR

Recently a national ad hoc committee was set up to launch a campaign for the repeal of the present (1971) Immigration Act. This Act has been used to discriminate on a racial basis against black immigrants. The powers of the Home Secretary under the Act, including deportation of any immigrant considered to be a threat to the 'public good' or a 'security risk' (and this without any right of appeal), violate any basic code of civil rights. They turn immigrants into second class citizens.

In order to build the campaign, it is important that as many individuals and organisations affiliate to the campaign as possible, and that they pledge support for its activities this coming autumn (particularly the National Conference planned for the beginning of November).

Contact: Campaign to Repeal the 1971 Immigration Act.

from p1 CONVENTION COLLAPSES

Britain — a right Unionist bloc with the SDLP would have the sort of value for Wilson that Michael Foot and other 'lefts' in his cabinet have for him in Britain.

The concomitant to any such scenario would be all-out war on the IRA and the Catholic community. Given a choice, the British government would like to let the ceasefire continue, so as to lessen the problems of the SDLP. But it won't have a chance. In face of the developments outlined above the IRA would feel obliged to launch a new offensive. And the relatively conciliatory line of the British government on the IRA, the trickle of released internees, designed to lessen tension during the Convention experiment, has produced serious strains in the bipartisan Labour/Tory Northern Ireland policy.

Tougher "security" against the IRA would be a pre-requisite for protecting the flanks of any Orange politician who tries again to tread the tightrope that Faulkner tumbled from. In that case, not least of the British government's problems is the effect on the SDLP of such an anti-IRA, anti-Catholic community

onslaught, and the almost inescapable — given Britain's cossetting of the paramilitary gangs thus far — round of Orange savagery and assassinations if the hardliners are again reduced to impotence as in 1972/73.

In Northern Ireland politics, the scene changed almost daily within the fixed boundaries of the murderous 6 County state that perpetuates the sectarian conflict. There is tremendous volatility, an explosive unpredictability.

Especially when trying to

understand the manoeuvres, we must not forget that an uncontrollable eruption of sectarian pogroms is still an only too real and near possibility. And before breathing any sighs of relief that 'doomsday' may have been postponed, we should remember that what is proposed is a new form of institutionalised sectarianism which the best elements in the republican population will fight. They will be right to fight it — and they will be entitled to our support.

No re-modelled sectarian 6-County state!

Peaceful protest not enough to stop NAZional Front

In another attempt to gain support with a 'respectable' patriotic campaign, about 1000 stalwarts of the National Front marched through the back streets of Hackney on Saturday 6th September, in favour of heavier sentences for black, especially West Indian, 'muggers'.

The leading banner had a picture of a young black man 'mugging' an old white woman. At this blatant attempt to incite racial antagonism, the police told the National Front organisers they probably contravened the Race Relations Act. But with only the small addition of the word 'censored' over the black man's face, the banner was given the OK and the march went ahead.

A sinister insight into the psychopathic world of the fascists is given by the slogan on their banner: "80% of muggers are black, 85% of victims are white". Facts such as these give some semblance of credibility to the dungheap of petty prejudice that nurtures the fascists. But where, in British law, does one find the crime of 'mugging' defined in precise legal terms? Where is there a category for which one can have detailed statistics? Even if there were such a category, how does one distinguish 'white' and 'black' "muggers" in the figures? The figures obviously come from the 'round file' — that is, from the Front's feverish imagination. Starved of other consolation, the frightened little men of the Front can enjoy at least some vicarious violence by urging on the police against young black people.

The nature of the Front's agitation about "mugging" is shown when, at the same time, they advocate and carry out harassment of black people. Brian Hosie, Glasgow NF member, has been sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of a West Indian, an act which he described as "an over-enthusiastic programme of reprobating our Commonwealth citizens". A black bookshop in Brixton has been burnt down, with strong indications of NF involvement. In June this year, the NF paper Britain First stated that if "racist movements (sic) like the National Front" are curbed, "all good nationalists who wish to continue the struggle will be forced to join their local gun club".

The counter demonstration

of several thousand, organised by Hackney Trades Council, marched well away from the Front march, obviously avoiding any confrontation. It was left to a smaller contingent of Workers Fight supporters and IS members to heckle and drown out the filth coming from the NF speaker van. Sooner or later it will be obvious that peaceful protests are not sufficient to counteract the protection racketeers of the National Front. I.W.

BRACKNELL LAUNCHES ANTI-FASCIST CAMPAIGN

Members of the Labour Party, Communist Party, Liberal Party, and CPB(ML), trade unionists, several members of the public, and two members of Basingstoke anti fascist group, met in Bracknell Labour Party rooms on 5th September to found the Bracknell Campaign against Racism and Fascism.

The Basingstoke comrades related their experiences of picketing, petitioning and leafletting against the Front during the October election. The fascists lost their deposit with a very low poll. The meeting endorsed the policy of actively harassing the fascists right from the start.

During the discussion, those who felt that the NF have little to gain in towns with few immigrants were reminded of the Front's prominence in Aldershot, and how the fascists use the EEC, Ireland, and the economic crisis to further their 'patriotic' politics.

Although some of us felt that the campaign should be open to organisations of the labour movement only, it was decided that for the present anyone who is against the NF can participate. One Communist Party member, one Liberal, and three Labour Party members including a Workers Fight supporter were elected to a committee.

The Labour-controlled Town Council has banned the Front from using rooms under its control, but the committee seeks to deny the fascists all other rooms in the area, and to alert the rank and file of the labour movement to the dangers of the NF. Cheung Siu Ming (Wokingham CLP)

B'HAM N.F. PICKETED

The National Front are finding life very difficult in Birmingham of late. The Labour dominated council have consistently banned them from the civic hall and other venues, and blacking by brewery workers in Birmingham has prevented them from using any of the pubs that are available for meetings.

They were reduced on Monday night to holding an "all Birmingham" meeting in a small hall in one of the outlying districts. They were not alone because, apart from the karate club and the slimmers' club, local socialists and militants mounted a very effective picket

of the hall, despite harassment from the police. About 40 pickets entered the hall and heckled the Front speaker, Tom Finnigan.

Only 40 or so people attended the Fascist meeting. After making their point the pickets left the hall. As the last of the pickets were going through the door, the NF thugs jumped on them and fighting broke out. The police in their anxiety to keep law and order arrested one of the NF thugs, probably by mistake. Quick action prevented the arrest of any of the pickets.

Len Glover

RETURN TO WORK AT SWAN HUNTER

AT A MASS meeting on Friday 5th September the 5,000 outfitting workers at Swan Hunters five Tyne shipyards decided to return to work the following Monday. After a two month strike challenging the government's £6 limit, they had gained no more than an inquiry into the running of the Swan Hunter group, especially with regard to industrial relations, and a promise of £10.30 increase when the government pay restrictions are lifted. Even for that the unions have promised increased productivity in return.

A spokesman for the shop stewards at Haverton Hill shipyard on the Tees, where outfitters had been on work to rule in a parallel dispute, pointed out that the company would probably never have to carry out its promise, because when the time came to pay the money, Swans would be nationalised. (Which also makes the offer of an inquiry even more feeble than it would otherwise be.)

L.D.

BP&M NUJ opt for 12 point plan

AFTER nine weeks locked out by the management, 250 journalists have returned to work at the Birmingham Post and Mail after accepting a 12 point peace plan.

They will share £13,500 between them over the next year, and management will make up the result of national negotiations on pay to the £6 permitted by the government policy from January 1976.

They have a six month guarantee of no compulsory redundancies and staffing levels remaining at no less than 25 below pre-dispute levels.

In other words, given that 20 journalists left or retired during the dispute, a substantial number of voluntary redundancies have been accepted, with only

very short term guarantees that more jobs may not be lost. There are going to be negotiations on future redundancy pay, which means that the Chapel are forced to admit in advance that their staffing levels will be further eroded.

LOCKED OUT

Management have agreed to restore the status quo with respect to Caters News Agency, which has consistently backed the locked out NUJ members and was threatened with its contract being ended by the Birmingham Post and Mail. Further the Chapel have gained assurances that there will be no victimisation and that pension rights will be as

before.

The Chapel will come out of this long dispute more experienced, but worse off overall than when it went in. Hopefully there will be certain benefits in terms of inter union solidarity, the lack of which bugs so many disputes in printing. At Birmingham SLADE printers refused to handle blocks throughout the dispute. NATSOPA workers obeyed an executive directive to support the NUJ chapel for one week before caving in. The one time when the NGA stopped work, because two NUJ blacklegs tried to get into the works, was the only time in 100 years that the Birmingham Post and Mail presses have stopped.

Naomi Wimborne

MEETINGS

London Workers Fight SOCIAL: Saturday 13th September, at the Sols Arms, 77 Hampstead Rd, London NW1. Bar till 1am, buffet, disco by Sounds Incredible. Tickets 50p.

London Workers Fight readers' meeting: "THE COLLAPSE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL AND THE TASKS OF WORKERS' FIGHT". Speaker: Sean Matgamna. 7.30pm, Sunday 21st September, at the 'George', Liverpool Rd, NI.

Merseyside International Women's Year Committee one day conference: Sunday 5th October, 10.30am to 4pm, at the SOGAT offices, 254 County Road, Liverpool 4. Tickets in advance, 25p from News from

Nowhere, 48 Manchester St, Liverpool 1. Creche provided.

LIVERPOOL Workers Fight public meeting: Bas Hardy on "Portugal: what next?". 8pm, Wednesday 24th September, at the Mitre, Dale Street.

OUR COMMON STRUGGLE Newsletter of the Portuguese Workers Coordinating Committee. No.10 now out: articles on Radio Renascenca, the 5th Provisional Government, a farm occupation, workers' control in a brewery; diary of August events. 7p from PWCC, 12 Little Newport St, London WC2.

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Permanent Revolution 3

Summer 1975

Communism and Philistinism: the two souls of the Comintern

(An obituary article on J.P. Cannon and R.P. Dutt)

Editorial: The Left and the Common Market

IS and the Common Market (A document of the struggle of WF inside IS)

Bukharin on the Economics of the Transition Period

Polemical: Chile: drawing out the lessons? A letter and a reply

30p