

Socialist Challenge

Frank and Sid share a joke at the TUC. But they didn't get it all their own way... See page 4



OUT TO WIN

Back the 24 hour strike on September 22

Join the Health workers Grand March:
September 22.
Assemble Jubilee Gardens, (behind County Hall) London SE1 11.30am.
March to Hyde Park for rally 2 - 4pm.



SEPTEMBER 22
STRIKE

'The Fire Below'

THE RESULTS of last week's Trade Union Congress reveal two striking features of the labour movement today.

The first is that there is a tremendous fire below in the ranks of the trade unions — a burning desire to see a fight with the Tories and to score some victories.

Only one trade union leader, Frank Chapple, dared to openly defy the overwhelming desire of the trade union movement to back the healthworkers through his dumb insolence from the Congress platform.

The second cardinal feature is that there is a rumbling crisis of leadership of the unions. The vote to change the composition of the General Council to favour the right wing; then the vote for 22 September; the rejection of incomes policy followed the same day by the acceptance of the TUC/Labour Party plan which implies that very policy.

The trade union leadership is being forced to face both ways on nearly every single aspect of its policy — caught between an embittered membership and a ferocious Tory government.

Only one of the trade union leaders — Scargill — who dominated the platform of the TUC came near to approaching the type of strategy needed against the Tories.

Arthur Scargill however represents a tiny minority of the trade union leadership who are prepared for a fight with Thatcher. And the odds are that over the next period this section will become even smaller.

The changes in the General Council mean that many of the potential allies for a 'broad left' on the leadership of the TUC have been eliminated. A strategy which relies on gradually increasing the influence of the left in the high command of the union movement is at the very least an impractical one for the foreseeable future.

No, the eyes have to be on the ranks. The only way in which the threats made by Scargill against the Tory government can be translated into reality is through the systematic organisation and mobilisation of these forces in the unions willing to fight.

The potential for such a conference was revealed by the rally called in defence of the Militant at the Wembley Conference Centre last Saturday.

Unfortunately Militant, both by inclination and capacity, were unable to translate the occasion into anything more than an impressive showing of opposition to the witch-hunt.

Both Scargill and Tony Benn do have the ability to call a congress of the left, both to fight the Tories and the right wing of the movement who are acting to obstruct the fight.

This is the next step for the Bennite movement. At the TUC conference Tony Benn unveiled his strategy of not challenging the leadership of the party before the next general election and exposing the manoeuvres of the right to dump Foot in favour of Shore.

The question that should be asked on the left of the Party is not whether this tactical ploy is correct, but rather how has the left become so weakened that its leadership is forced to support the man who leads the witch-hunt against it.

Similar considerations apply as in the trade unions. Benn's influence is growing weaker and weaker in the leadership of the party — in line, albeit after a lag, with changes taking place in the trade unions. But Benn's support inside the rank and file of the party remains undiminished.

An intransigent attitude towards the inevitable introduction of the register — namely a refusal to tolerate expulsions on the basis of the register can only be backed up by organisation of the left, starting at the rank and file basis, both in the Labour Party and in the unions. Refusal to organise on this basis has meant that Benn has been forced to retreat.

Both the Militant conference and the conference initiated by Hackney CLP to discuss action against the register are steps in the right direction, but as isolated events they cannot start to turn the tide in the labour movement.

Joint trade union and Labour Party action to force the Tories from office is not a pipe dream, as the support that is building up for 22 September shows. But the principle of joint action between both arms of the labour movement must be extended towards the principle of organising the left's.

Then the fire below will start to take on an organised expression. And then the Tories will really start to sweat.

Labour Party

2,600 against the witch-hunt at Wembley

Militant show of strength

By Brian Heron

'I CAN reveal the source of financing of the Militant,' said Ray Apps making the financial appeal at the September 12 Labour Movement Conference against the Witch-hunt. 'We are financed by the aims of industry. They are so desperate about the state of the British economy they have come over to the nationalisation of the 250 monopolies.'

Apps' cracks were a welcome relief in what was becoming a ritual denunciation of the Tories 'and their terrible capitalist system.' Almost every speaker selected from the 2,600 strong rally was a supporter of Militant.

Pat Wall, prospective parliamentary candidate for Bradford NE, opened the conference after remarks from the chair, Tony Saunois. He referred to previous witch hunts in the Party, flourishing a photocopy of the front page of the Express from June 1950. Sir Thomas Williams of the GMWU had described Foot and the Tribune Group as 'wreckers and destroyers.' Williams feared for the future electoral prospects of the Party.

Dirty

'But the witch-hunt will not succeed,' said Wall. 'Today the ranks are far more left and far more socialist than they were in the 1950's.' He went on 'there are over 50 delegates from Bradford North here today and that is no accident.'

Tony Mulhearn, the next platform speaker, told his audience that 'it was no accident that Peter Shore was getting his hair cut. When Foot has done the dirty work he will be cast aside like a squeezed lemon.'

Mulhearn read from two letters he had received from Foot after Foot's visit to Toxteth last year. 'Dear Tony' chimed Foot, 'I hope it is not too long before I can visit you again...' 'Now he's going to expell me' said Mulhearn.

Kevin Roddy of Washington East CLP, the recent victor in the CPSA elections, drew conference attention to the

trade unions. Together with another speaker from the floor — Alan Shaw from East Kilbride AUEW — he pointed out that the witch hunt was also underway in the unions. A later speaker from the POEU explained that he was under ban not to attend. 'But I'm here, I'm fighting and I'm with friends.'

Bans

In later speeches from the platform Les Huckfield and Ken Livingstone made plain that in their view 'Constituency Labour Parties must commit themselves now not to implement any disciplinary measures flowing from the register.'

This pressure proved important, as earlier in the proceedings Militant speakers had said that it would be wrong to press the struggle to the point of disaffiliation.

Amendments including this point were passed to the statement put in front of Conference by Militant. The original statement called for

- 'A fight for a united struggle against the Tories to secure the election of a Labour Government committed to socialist policies.'
- 'Campaign for total opposition to the register at the forthcoming Labour Party Conference and beyond.'
- 'Oppose any expulsion of Militant supporters or any socialist from the Labour Party for the ideas they hold, and the introduction of any bans, proscriptions or any other witch-hunting activities, and defend the right of CLP's to select parliamentary candidates of their choice.'
- 'Secure the election of an NEC opposed to witch hunts committed to fight

for Conference decisions and Labour's socialist aspirations as stated in clause 4, part 4, of the party constitution.'

Amendments were accepted to include support for CLPs who refused to implement disciplinary measures, and to expand the completely Militant dominated steering committee. The amendments, from Brent East CLP, included support for Hackney North's Conference which is scheduled for 30 October and backed by 15 other CLPs.

This was opposed by Mulhearn, summing up for Militant, as 'premature' and 'Too close to this conference.' This point of the Brent amendment was overwhelmingly defeated.

Most of those I spoke to who were not supporters of the Militant agreed that the Conference was a tremendous show of strength, and a real blow to attempts to uproot Militant from the Labour Party.

Estimates offered on attendance at the lunchtime press conference by Tony Saunois were: 1,622 delegates from various types of Labour Party bodies, 412 delegates from trade unions, and 642 visitors. But despite many platform references to the idea that what was assembled 'was the real Labour Party,' we saw an alarming lack of ideas and perspectives in the Conference proceedings.

Calls

There was much in the way of the need for 'decent holidays for working people' as the Isle of Wight delegate movingly explained — but little in the way of a clear cut statement of the battle plan.

Militant appeared reconciled to some level of expulsions. Several speakers explained the policy. 'The great majority of Militant supporters will remain inside the Labour Party...if they expel one, ten will take their place...those expelled...will continue to fight for Labour candidates.' (Peter Taafe, Militant editor.)

The message coming from Conference, not least in the way it was organised, appeared to be that the way to combat the witch-hunt was to join Militant. 'Without the Militant supporters the Y.S. is nothing' said Theresa Wrack from the YS National Committee. The witch-hunt, it seemed, was really a contest between the Militant and Labour's leadership.

But such a contest would in the end be no contest at all. Despite the size of the Conference, the witch-hunt in the Labour Party and unions will proceed. The power to throw



Ken Livingstone

'Constituency Labour Parties must commit themselves now not to implement any disciplinary measures flowing from the register.'

Left wing organises

The following leaflet was widely distributed at the Wembley Conference

UNITE AGAINST THE WITCH-HUNT!

The undersigned CLPs met on September 4th to discuss the fightback against the witch-hunt. The meeting decided on the need for the broadest possible response to the attempt to implement a register and force through expulsions. To this end we are organising a conference on October 30th at County Hall, of CLP delegates and delegates from constituency branches, affiliated trade union branches, YS branches, womens sections and other affiliated organisations.

ORGANISE THE LEFT!

We appeal to everyone attending this rally today to go back to their labour movement bodies and start to campaign for a united response throughout the left, to bring together all those who want to fight the witch-hunt.

This is not the time to 'keep our heads down'.

We must clearly fight to defeat the register, to resist any attempts at expulsions, to maintain the right to publish, to organise and to fight for socialist policies.

The left must be clear — reject the register! No expulsions!

SUPPORT THE OCTOBER 30TH CONFERENCE!

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Hackney North CLP | St Pancras South CLP |
| Newham North West CLP | Newham North West CLP |
| Hackney North CLP | Peckham CLP |
| Wood Green CLP | Croydon North East CLP |
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| Richmond, Barnes CLP | Islington South CLP |

p.p. Labour parties against the witch-hunt.
60 Ferndale Rd., London SW4.

it back is there: but it calls for an alliance that stretches across all the labour left and beyond to the mass movement now in struggle against the Tories, who have much at stake in the policies of the Labour Party Conference in recent years.

One simple measure would go some way to reaching out to the mass movement, and several CLPs have already taken it: the calling by CLPs of rallies of all local affiliated organisations to win support for intransigence in the face of the witch-hunt. The Militant conference was a very successful show of force — but has not yet begun to construct that alliance.

A second vital step is to build now for the conference on 30 October in the local parties, unions, womens' sections and YS's.

Leaflets advertising the rally are now available from: 60 Ferndale Road, London SW4 or 28 Beatty Road, London N1



'Unregistered Socialist' BADGE

Black and white on red background 25p plus p&p; orders over 50, 15p post free. Send your orders in now to PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Cheques and POs to Brent Readers Group.

Photo: GM COOKSON

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If you would like to be put in touch with Socialist Challenge supporters in your area or would like more information fill in the form below

Name.....

Address.....

Age.....

Union/CLP (if any).....

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WITH OVER a week still to go before the 'Jobs not bombs' youth march starts its trek to the Labour Party Conference in Blackpool, 119 marchers have signed up to go. Many others are only awaiting their sponsorship from a labour movement body to be finalised. Sponsorship has accelerated since the announcement of the 22 September day of strike action.

This is a North West event, but it has attracted marchers from all over the country. Protestors will be arriving from as far apart as Brighton and Glasgow. And large numbers of trade union, factory, Labour Party and CND organisations are backing them. The latest to come include the Transport and General Workers' No1 branch (who are sponsoring two marchers), Massey Ferguson, Manchester, workplace CND branch (two marchers), South Lancs Trades Council (1 marcher) and the ASTMS 827 (ICL) branch (two marchers).

The organisers also report that a number of areas in the country are providing transport to ferry people to either the Saturday or Sunday leg of the march to boost the mass Labour CND lobby which will provide the culminating point of the march.

The march begins on 23 September but nearly all the marchers will be down in London in their bright orange jackets for the mass TUC demonstration in solidarity with the health workers on the Wednesday. The march organisers will be providing transport to take health workers to the lobby of the Labour Party conference.

The final details for each day are now being finalised. On the Friday when the march reaches Preston, the Greyhound stadium has been booked for a welcoming gig. Help force Labour leaders to act. Join us on the march.

● Phone or write to: UMIST, Students Union, Sackville St., Manchester 1 (061-236 9114 ex48) or Jim, 48 Swindon Close, Gorton, Manchester (061-236 9114).

On to Blackpool

By Brian Grogan



Youth have been in the forefront of protesting the siting of cruise missiles in Britain

YOUTH MARCH
jobs not bombs

Manchester sept 23
> Blackpool sept 26.

Slave labour 'super' - Tebbit

By Brian Grogan

NORMAN 'on your bike' Tebbit, Tory minister for creating unemployment has just released further details of his new youth training scheme, which replaces YOPs next year. 300,000 youth are to be paid £25 per week to produce cheap products for sale in special factories. Tebbit quipped 'I instance this as part of the ingenuity that is being devoted to finding new concepts'.

The 'new concept' of course, is not new at all. It's called making a quick buck off the backs of young people and undermining trade unions into the bargain.

Undercut

Tebbit originally billed his new youth scheme as a way of giving youth 'high quality college and work experience'. But now some bright spark who refuses to be named because he is so proud of his 'new concept' has proposed that the youth be set to work in sweat shops to undercut Taiwanese and South Korean products. Tebbit has described the scheme as 'super'.

The Tebbit 'idea' matches perfectly Tebbit's previous 'idea'. Youth are unemployed, Tebbit has opined 'because in asking for a living wage, they price themselves out of the market'. Unemployment in Tebbitland is the result of grasping youth and strong trade unions. He should tell this idea to Taiwanese and South

Korean workers who are also facing massive unemployment through something called the world recession. That is, through the inevitable workings of an economy based on production for profit.

What is needed is stronger trade unions, to which all the youth in training schemes should belong. Because stronger unions can increase the confidence of the working class to the point not only of defending themselves against slave labour conditions, but of taking the economy out of the hands of the capitalists and planning production for need instead of profit. In such a situation we would all have a job and a decent standard of living.

Unionise

The message of the North West youth march for 'Jobs not Bombs' will be for the labour leaders to fight to implement their policy for full unionisation of these schemes and also for union rates for the job.



Thatcherite wrecker, Norman Tebbit

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Trade Unions



Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Moss Evans and Arthur Scargill get great greeting from striking health workers.

A likely pair: Chapple & Weighell

At the 1982 TUC Congress, miners president Arthur Scargill echoed the feelings of thousands when he thundered 'We need actions not words'. Speaking against the Tebbit bill he declared 'We don't want a debate on the clauses but about mobilising and organising to defeat it.'

It means taking direct action not passing resolutions. There is only one response we can have and that is to defy the law. If we build strike action for 22 September we will be showing we are not prepared to accept the legislation'.

With other debates at the Congress, this registered a mood of defiance and frustration with the toothless record of the TUC General Council.

Moving the successful anti-Tebbit resolution that 'industrial action is imperative', Tony Dubbin of the National Geographical Association said, 'We've had our publicity campaign. This motion calls for a change of direction in how to fight. What disturbs me was the silence in Congress House over Sean Geraghty. The movement expects leadership from you and it deserves it.'

Cuts

These sentiments were echoed throughout the Congress as delegate after delegate declared 'enough is enough' in the face of redundancies, closures and wage cuts. POEU delegates reported a one day strike of telecommunications workers in October against privatisation. Mick McGahey announced 'We will go into action if necessary to save jobs and I hope the Triple Alliance will stand by us.'

Even the lily-livered TUC Steel Committee reflected pressure for action by calling an unprecedented meeting in Sheffield on 6 October of shop stewards and branch officials from every union, in every steel plant to coordinate country-wide resistance to the latest British Steel Corporation redundancy plans.

Best

The high point for these fiery speeches was the General Council call for solidarity stoppages with health strikers on 22 September. The visitors gallery, packed with lobbying nurses, domestics and ambulance drivers inspired delegates to a new-found militancy. The emotional scenes, punctuated by three standing ovations found even right wingers falling over themselves to be the health workers' best defender.

Geoffrey Drain, NALGO General Secretary announced 'This is a landmark in the history of the trade union movement and we'll do it better than 1926. It's the first time since 1926 that

the TUC General Council has given a lead in action of this kind'.

Repeating the slogan of lobbyists 'One hour is a lunch break, we want a one day strike', Arthur Scargill raised loud applause from delegates when he stated 'The only language this government understands is the one they practice, the language of muscle. We can best support the health workers by coming out on strike for the day and instead of going to rallies going to picket lines'.

Of course the TUC General Council, who sold out the ASLEF strike and left Sean Geraghty out in the cold, have not had a sudden conversion on the road to Brighton. What the Congress is showing is that working people are not yet crushed by the Tories.

Pressure is mounting in the trade union leaders to head up the anti-Tory struggle. Frantic efforts by right wing leaders like Murray, to force contentious issues off the agenda, failed as left leaders pushed for the record of the right to be spotlighted, openly debated and rejected.

The Construction Section of the AUEW refused to withdraw a resolution which rejected 'any discussion on pay restraint with this or any other Government'.

Steel

The steel union, ISTC, sought through amendment to 'support the TUC-Labour Party Liaison Committee Document which states that earnings and incomes would be embraced in any national economic assessment carried out jointly by the TUC and a Labour Government'. This amendment was rejected by over a million and a half votes. Congress later voted to support the Labour Party-TUC document on economic planning, but the support for the AUEW resolution confirmed rejection of another Social Contract. It also repulsed the attempts of right wingers like Sirs, Chapple and Weighell to force a retreat on left policies by raising the spectre of a Labour electoral defeat.

Weighell was howled down when he bellowed

'At a stroke you will destroy any chance of winning the next election because people will not believe we can run the country. You'll end up destroying the chances of the next Government just like you did with the five percent last time'.

To strong applause miners' leader Mick McGahey knocked this on the head. 'Whatever you call it, wages policy or social contract, this has been the achilles heel of our movement. It has alienated people from a Labour Government.'

So please address yourself to the creators of unemployment, the Tories and not the workers of the trade union movement. And let's be clear, having carried this resolution, it superseded the LP-TUC document'.

Lose

There were some significant setbacks. By the slimmest of votes, Congress voted by a majority of 446,000 to change the method of electing the General Council. Left leaders like Buckton, McGahey and Sapper are likely to lose their seats

next September under the new rules. But for this year at least the balance has shifted to the left with the replacement of the NUM moderate Chadburn by Mick McGahey.

Deeds

The Congress also defeated an attempt by the left to withdraw from talks with the Tories in the National Economic Development Council (Neddy). But even here, over a third of the delegates voted for a radical break from TUC tactics of concession.

Bill Keys of SOGAT argued, 'Let's translate the words into deeds. How much longer are we going to sit around tables with ministers who have decimated our industries? I'm for pulling out of NEDC, not because I'm a quitter, but to put ourselves in a position to fight. We have to do everything we possibly can to get rid of this Government'.

Fire Brigade Union General Secretary, Ken Cameron expressed the response of the left to this set back, 'This is the beginning of a rank and file

groundswell against collaboration with the Government'.

The weeks' events show that pressure from the workplaces and union ranks is forcing TUC leaders to act. It is pressing left officials to challenge the record of the General Council. These left leaders must now turn their own words into action by driving home the advantage of the TUC call for industrial action to defend the healthworkers.

Bluster

This TUC call has increased expectations that militant and united industrial action against the Government is on the agenda. Within a week, TUC leaders are backtracking on this call.

The left should now be organising in every union and workplace to make sure that more than words are made of NUPE General Secretary Bickerstaffe's proclamation, 'If Fowler and his bunch don't move after 22 September, then this Congress will say we'll be out again. And if they don't move then, we'll be out again. And if they don't move then we'll be out again'.

The threatened battles of pit closures, privatisation, steel closures and low pay provide other opportunities to make sure that fine and fiery TUC speeches become more than bluster but champion the action needed to defeat the Tories once and for all.

'TUC have failed to lead' - staff nurse.

Interview with a staff nurse at Nether Edge hospital, Sheffield.

How much do you take home?
£62-3 per week after reductions.

What has been the level of support for previous actions in Sheffield?
It's been very good. The laundry and sterile supplies have been kept out for some time on full pay. During the days of action accident and emergency are the only services which have been maintained in the major hospitals.

What's been done to build for the 22nd?
In Nether Edge we're having a series of 2-hour pull-outs with no notice to management. On the 22nd itself everyone will be out. For the national rally in London we have 1,000 places booked on special trains.

Do you think solidarity helps?
It does a lot of good. It shows what we're looking for. It strengthens morale among health workers, and makes people see that the rest of the working class are on our side, and we're not on our own.

Do you think Tebbit's law will have an effect on solidarity action?
It should be ignored. People expect it to be. If someone were sent to jail it would immensely popularise our cause - and they wouldn't stay in jail long.

Do you think that the TUC have given good leadership?
I think it's really useless. They are looked to for a lead - and they are failing to give it. They've forgotten what it's like to be a worker.

Workers speak out at Brighton

Throughout the week, workers taking action against the Tories lobbied the TUC for support. In contrast to the Congress concentration of middle aged, white and male faces, these workers were largely young, black and female. Here we print just a few of their comments:

Ross Innes, ISTC member from Clydebridge Steel Plant, Scotland:

We're here to show we're going to fight steel closures, not only at Clydebridge but in the whole of Britain. It's up to Sirs to get the ball rolling. There's no point us going it alone, it needs a national strike with backing from the Triple Alliance. On 22 September we'll be out on strike for the day. They're trying to privatise the NHS like they are us. As far as we're concerned we're taking on the Government.

Ethel Edwardes TGWU Shop Steward, Kings College Hospital:

'What the Labour Par-

ty should do is to stop the internal bickering and unite to support us. They must come together like a strong link in a chain. I'm a supporter of Tony Benn because I think his policies will change the tune in the Labour Party. We should have an all out strike for 3 days to bring down this Thatcher Government. She's killing and mugging this country.'

Horlet Lewis, Kings College Hospital:

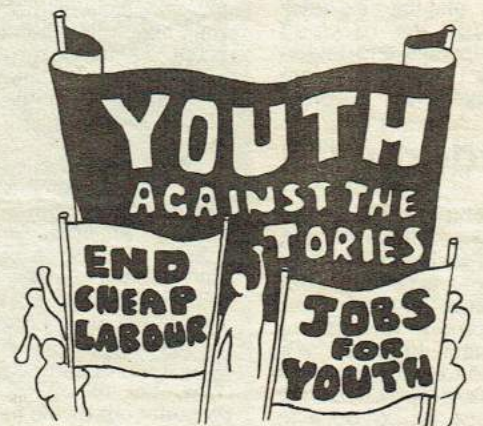
'When I was in Jamaica I was earning £5 as an office maid. When I came here in 1959, I was earning £4.50. We came here because they encouraged immigration then. Now we're still low

paid. It's about time they gave us a good wage. They should support us better on 22 September. One or two hour action is not enough.'

Fyruz Darawalla, Chairperson of the Air India Strike Committee:

'We're asking the TGWU national executive for a public appeal supporting us. We've got to generate a fighting spirit in our leaders, though it should be the other way round. The TGWU have promised action and we need support from the Fire Brigades Union. We are also demanding cooperation from the AUEW who are crossing our picket line.'

Labour Party Young Socialists



DEMONSTRATE LIVERPOOL, OCT. 16

Festival. 10.30 am - 12.30 pm
Sefton Park, Liverpool
March to Pier Head
Speakers include: Dennis Skinner MP, Laurence Coates (LPYS), Kevin Roddy (President, CPSA)

BUILD THE LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS

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Washington's war of lies exposed

By Brian Grogan

A CORNER of the curtain of lies against revolutionary Cuba was raised last week by Wayne Smith, the top US diplomat in Cuba until last month. According to Smith, the Reagan administration has either rebuffed or failed to respond to at least three initiatives to normalise relations made by Fidel Castro's government.

Smith who resigned last month as head of the US interests section in Havana also blasted administration lies about supposed Cuban arms shipments to the El Salvadorean FMLN 'evidence on arms shipments had never been solid', Smith acknowledged, 'if the guerrillas had received all of the arms reported by US intelligence, the Salvadorean army would have been outgunned by 20 to one.'

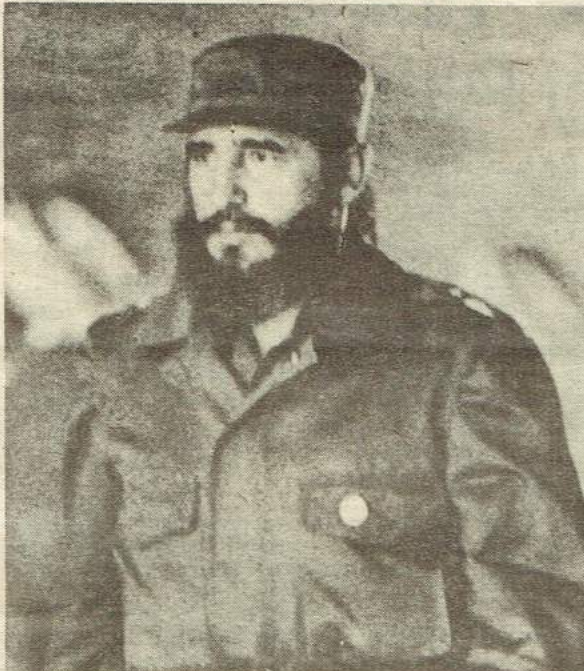
The idea that tiny Cuba could be responsible for 'aggression' throughout the region is of course laughable when you compare its size and military strength vis a vis that of Washington. But the continued propaganda campaign of the US has a very dangerous objective. In August, the US Congress passed the 'Symms' resolution which contained the threat 'to prevent by whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms, the Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba from extending by force or the threat of force its aggressive or subversive activities to any part of this

hemisphere'. Senator Charles Percy, an opponent of the resolution, dubbed this measure a 'Gulf of Tonkin resolution for Cuba'. This is an allusion to US contrived incident in the Gulf of Tonkin which gave legal cover for US imperialism war against Vietnam.

Threats

Despite such open threats by the US against a sovereign nation, Cuba's revolutionary government has refused to buckle under. On the contrary, every new US threat is matched by political mobilisation of the Cuban people and an extension of their armed militias. It is this intransigence overwhelmingly backed by the Cuban people that is creating divisions within the Reagan camp, evidenced by the Smith outburst.

Cuba is prepared to negotiate to normalise relations with the US. A lifting of the blockade would have enormous beneficial effects for the Cuban people. Cuba wants peaceful co-



Fidel Castro

existence with the US but not at the expense of principles as exhibited by the deals made by the bureaucrats in Moscow and Peking. As leading Cuban government foreign minister Raphael Rodriguez recently explained: 'The US imperialists claim that we should accept their idea of peaceful co-existence between themselves and the Soviet Union. This is totally unacceptable. They view peaceful co-existence as an agreement leading to a division of 'spheres of influence' or a commitment

obliging people fighting for national independence and for socialism to water down and even end their struggles. Such struggles — in which imperialism is the main enemy — will not only continue, but must continually become more intense ... Cuba has the duty to carry out proletarian, revolutionary internationalism'.

This is why Cuba refuses to remove its teachers, doctors and construction workers from Nicaragua in order to get a deal with the US. It is also

why it refuses to place its troops in Angola on the negotiating table. Cuba's refusal to capitulate to US imperialism is also demonstrated by their attitude to the struggle of the PLO in Lebanon.

In a letter to Yasser Arafat, Fidel explained: 'The Palestinian combatants are fighting in the same trench as the Central American peoples, who are today threatened by the direct intervention of US troops, and in the same trench as the African peoples who are under attack by the racists from South Africa.'

Trench

'It is the same trench as the one occupied by our people, who are bravely confronting US imperialism's threats of direct aggression.'

'By defending their national rights, the Palestinians have defended the rights of all the world's revolutionaries, and the blood spilled by their sons is like the blood of our own peoples'.

Fidel then offered 500 places to refugee Palestinian children in a school in Cuba to be named 'Battle of Beirut school'.

It is such a stance which sends the US into such paroxysms against Cuba which, as Wayne Smith lamented, 'works against the best interests of the United States'.

communications between Nicaragua and military units that are combating counter-revolutionary terrorists in northern Nicaragua. Swar Islands served as a radio base for the CIA backed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961.

A second US navy destroyer has been sighted 16 miles off Nicaragua's Pacific coast near the main port of Corinto. Another destroyer the USS Trippe has been operating in the Gulf of Fonseca between Nicaragua and Honduras for several months. Both warships regularly violate Nicaragua's territorial waters.

The CIA gangs of right wing Nicaraguan terrorist that operate from Southern Honduras have steadily increased their attacks.

Typical of these gangsters is Jose Francisco Cardenal who has been named by columnist Jack Anderson as the 'principle beneficiary of the reported \$15 million in covert CIA funds that President Reagan approved to destabilise Nicaragua. Cardenal is the chief of the so-called Nicaraguan Democratic Forces, which slaughtered 14 Nicaraguans in the town of San Francisco del Norte in mid-July.

'You don't win a war by talking, you win it by killing', boasted this 'democrat' to Anderson, 'and that is what we are doing, every day, inside Nicaragua'. This is what the US would like to see more of.

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Socialist Challenge Events

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE POEU Supporters. Day School and National Fraction — 'The Fight Against Privatisation', 12 September 11am-4pm. Cromer Street Community Centre, Near Kings Cross Station. For Information Contact: POEU Fraction C/O Socialist Challenge

MANSFIELD: Fri 3-4pm, Stockwell Gate, Sat 10.30-12 Westgate. Four Seasons Shopping Centre Sat 10.30-12.
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YORK: Community Books, Walmgate.

Dissident Honduras Colonel confirms aggression plans against Nicaragua

Behind hypocritical calls for negotiation, the US is stepping up its war against Nicaragua. One of the main sources of the attacks is Honduras — either through the thousands of mercenaries that are presently being trained by the US there, or even through an offensive by the Honduran army itself.

Commander Daniel Ortega, coordinator of Nicaragua's Junta of National Reconstruction recently accused Reagan of trying to provoke war between Honduras and Nicaragua, in an interview in the *New York Times*. There are numerous and conspicuous military preparations presently going on in Honduras which back up this warning. But independent confirmation has been given in a news conference in Mexico City on 31 August, by a top Honduran military officer.

Colonel Leonidas Torres Arias, a former head of military intelligence who was sent into 'diplomatic exile' last May, charged that Honduran armed

forces chief General Gustavo Alvarez Martinez is leading Honduras towards military confrontation with Nicaragua. General Alvarez is planning an 'adventure of madness' that Honduras cannot win, Torres said. The general, he said, 'threatens to lead the people of Honduras along the road of blood and fratricidal struggle'. Under Alvarez, the exiled officer told the *New York Times* for the first time in recent Honduran history, there have been cases of disappearances and political murders. 'Clandestine cemeteries have been discovered in the last five months', Torres said.



Fourteen-year-old at border post in Nicaragua

A considerable amount of evidence has accumulated to demonstrate the truth of these admissions:
● US military transport planes have ferried Honduran troops and equipment to a major new air base at Durzuna, just 25 miles from the Nicaraguan border
● 600 US marine troops landed at the Honduran port of Tela in early August, in preparation for larger joint manoeuvres set for November

● During the same period, Admiral Harry Train, commander of the US Fleet visited Honduras and inspected the port facilities at Tela, Puerto Castilla, and Puerto Lempira. While Train was in the country, Honduran authorities announced plans to build two new naval bases.
● US radio facilities on two Honduran islands — Ampala in the Gulf of Fonseca and Swan in the Caribbean — are being used to disrupt com-



'Peace' plans betray Palestinian people

By Phil Hearse

THE AFTERMATH of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon has seen the proposal of two 'peace' plans — from US president Reagan and from the Arab summit at Fez.

The most hypocritical of plan is that of Reagan. He proposes that Israel accept 'self government', in association with the Jordanians, for the Palestinian people on the West Bank of the Jordan.

He knows full well that this plan is totally unacceptable to the Begin-Sharon regime in Israel, which is determined to incorporate the West Bank as part of the 'Biblical land' of Israel.

Reagan's proposal has no sincerity whatsoever. He arms the Israelis to the teeth to ensure that they can do just what they like in the region, and then makes an unacceptable proposal to 'expose' them and make the US the 'moderate' and acceptable ally of the reactionary Arab states.

If Reagan had been sincere about this kind of solution he would have made some gesture towards effective restraint of Israel during the invasion of Lebanon. He failed to do that because Israel remains the best ally of imperialism in the region, and a strong and aggressive Israel remains the best bulwark against revolutionary change in the region.

Begin and Reagan may row on the 'phone, but when the chips are down Reagan will back the Israelis to the hilt.

The plan proposed by the Arab leaders at the Fez summit goes further than Reagan's. It calls for a withdrawal of Israel to its 1967 borders. It wants a Palestinian state on the West Bank. And it calls for the return of Jerusalem to the Palestinians, as well as interim US supervision of Gaza and the West Bank during the transitional period. In return the state of Israel is given recognition.

This of course is even more unacceptable to Israel than the Reagan plan. But the fact that it is unacceptable to the Israelis does not mean that it represents the interests of the Palestinian people, or the workers and peasants of the Middle East.

The originators of this plan are the reactionary feudal rulers of Saudi Arabia. It was successfully resisted last year by Syria, Libya, and South Yemen. But in the post-Lebanese war situation it has been forced through, and the PLO have been pressurised into agreeing to it.

The plan is a step backwards from the PLO position of a 'democratic, secular Palestine'. It is thus a betrayal of the national aspirations of the Palestinians.

While the Zionist state exists, a West Bank statelet will be effectively an Israeli-dominated Bantustan. It would be open to Israeli intervention at any time, and most probably economically dominated by Israel as well.

The Palestinians would be denied their right to their own homeland, and herded into a nicely controllable little enclave

By accepting the continued existence of the Zionist state, the reactionary Arab rulers are making a de facto recognition of continued Israeli-US dominance of the whole region. They want to make their own accord with this domination, and force the Palestinians to be satisfied with a few negotiated crumbs.

In this arrangement, the workers and peasants of the whole region would continue to be faced with a deadly triangle of enemies — imperialism, the Zionist state, and the reactionary Arab rulers.

Such a proposal comes as no surprise from the pro-imperialist regimes in the region. It is another important verification of the lesson that it is impossible to launch a successful struggle against imperialism and the Zionist state without mobilising against Arab reaction.

This means linking up the struggle of the Palestinian people with the rising struggle of the workers and peasants in countries like Egypt in a unified thrust against imperialism and all its allies.

This of course does not rule out making partial, tactical alliances with the Arab ruling classes when they too come into conflict with imperialism. But the unanimous acceptance of the Fez plan shows that such a strategic alliance is impossible.

The national struggle of the Palestinian people can only be won through dealing with Arab reaction. It involves a strategic alliance with the Arab workers and peasants. Such is the logic of permanent revolution in the Middle East, which collides head on with the proposals of the Fez peace plan.

ISRAEL'S

Interview with Emmanuel Farjoun

Emmanuel Farjoun is a leader of the Socialist Organisation in Israel (Matzpen). In this interview he explained the character of the latest Israeli offensive in the Middle East, the rise of the Israeli Peace Movement and the role of the United States. Farjoun is professor of mathematics at the Hebrew University.

Can you tell us what you think the aims of the Israeli invasion were? Does it amount to an abandonment of the Camp David 'process'?

You have to distinguish between the immediate and long-term aims. The short term aim is the annexation — at first de facto and then de jure — of the West Bank and the Gaza strip.

The war against the PLO was conducted because the Israelis were afraid that the PLO was getting more and more recognition around the world and they felt they had to deal with it, especially after the PLO's cease fire which has lasted for almost a year in the north and which the PLO kept to scrupulously.

The PLO have very wide support inside the West Bank and the Gaza strip — it is the only acceptable organisation. The PLO is recognised as basically a Palestinian government and parliament together.

It is as basically democratic and representative of different political trends as any government you can name. So the Israelis tried to reduce the credibility of the PLO by delivering it a fearful blow.

Once this is done they hope to install their own quislings — the Village Leagues. This is the first Palestinian organisation is the armed by the Israelis. They are attempting to make the Village Leagues an administrative organisation. This organisation is charged with the full spectrum of civil administration within the Gaza strip and West Bank.

The second aim is much more sinister in my opinion and can only be understood within the context of an attempt to inflict a genocidal blow on the Palestinians in Lebanon. I think that what Israel has done in Lebanon goes far beyond what was needed to inflict this blow on the PLO.

The level of violence used by Israel can only be understood only if it is a genocidal operation.

The objective is very clear. The Israelis consider the Palestinian fighters in Lebanon dangerous to their normal operation of a quisling government in Lebanon itself.

So their idea was to eliminate the Palestinian community in Lebanon, by mass murder and expulsion — eventually towards Jordan which they consider to be the 'natural' Palestinian state. So these are the short range aims of the war.

The long range aims of the war

have been discussed very extensively in the Israeli press for six months. In Israel it's called 'The Big Thing'.

This involved control of the entire Arab East — meaning Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Jordan. Of course this does not mean in all cases direct control although they would like to have this as well, but lines of control by military threat and direct control for neighbouring countries.

In particular it means turning Lebanon into an ally via a Phalangist dictatorship. They have succeeded in making Lebanon their stooge — what they call 'Haddad land', after Major Haddad who controlled the southern strip before the invasion. He was and is a simple stooge of Israel, as is the Phalangist army.

So we see that their aim in Lebanon is very clear. But this is only the first step in a much more ambitious plan to first turn Jordan into an Israeli puppet state. This is a bit more complicated because Jordan has for many years been a client of the United States.

They consider that it will be very magnanimous on their part to allow the Palestinians to set up an autonomous region on the East Bank of the Jordan — and in Jordan itself.

This is a much more sinister plan than their Lebanese plan. For them Jordan is the future Palestinian Bantustan for all Palestinians — including those Palestinians in Palestine.

So the long range plan is not to allow the existence of a Palestinian community of any substance outside Jordan — which means of course the expulsion of the Palestinians from Lebanon and then from Palestine itself.

What is the meaning of America's new proposals?

This is a difficult question. Up until this proposal American policy seemed a bit irrational. To allow Israel a complete free hand to do whatever it wants in the Arab East was crazy, because if you know the long term objectives of Zionism, you would know that Israel would go as far as it could go. For the United States it has always been important to retain a credible position in the Middle East. America's other allies cannot function if Israel is allowed to go on the rampage.

My own feeling was that the United States was giving Israel enough rope to hang itself, to allow the logic of Israel's murderous expansionism to play itself out and then to reap the benefits of it without sharing the full blame.

Nobody in the Middle East can be deceived into thinking that Israel went into this thing without total American consent. The United States could have stopped the war within hours if they had really wanted.

With the Reagan letter, American policy seems to be trying to expose Israel as a supposedly wicked force over which nobody can have any control. The US president will then have a free hand to persuade the Senate and the public to give him a license to apply considerable American pressure to Israel.

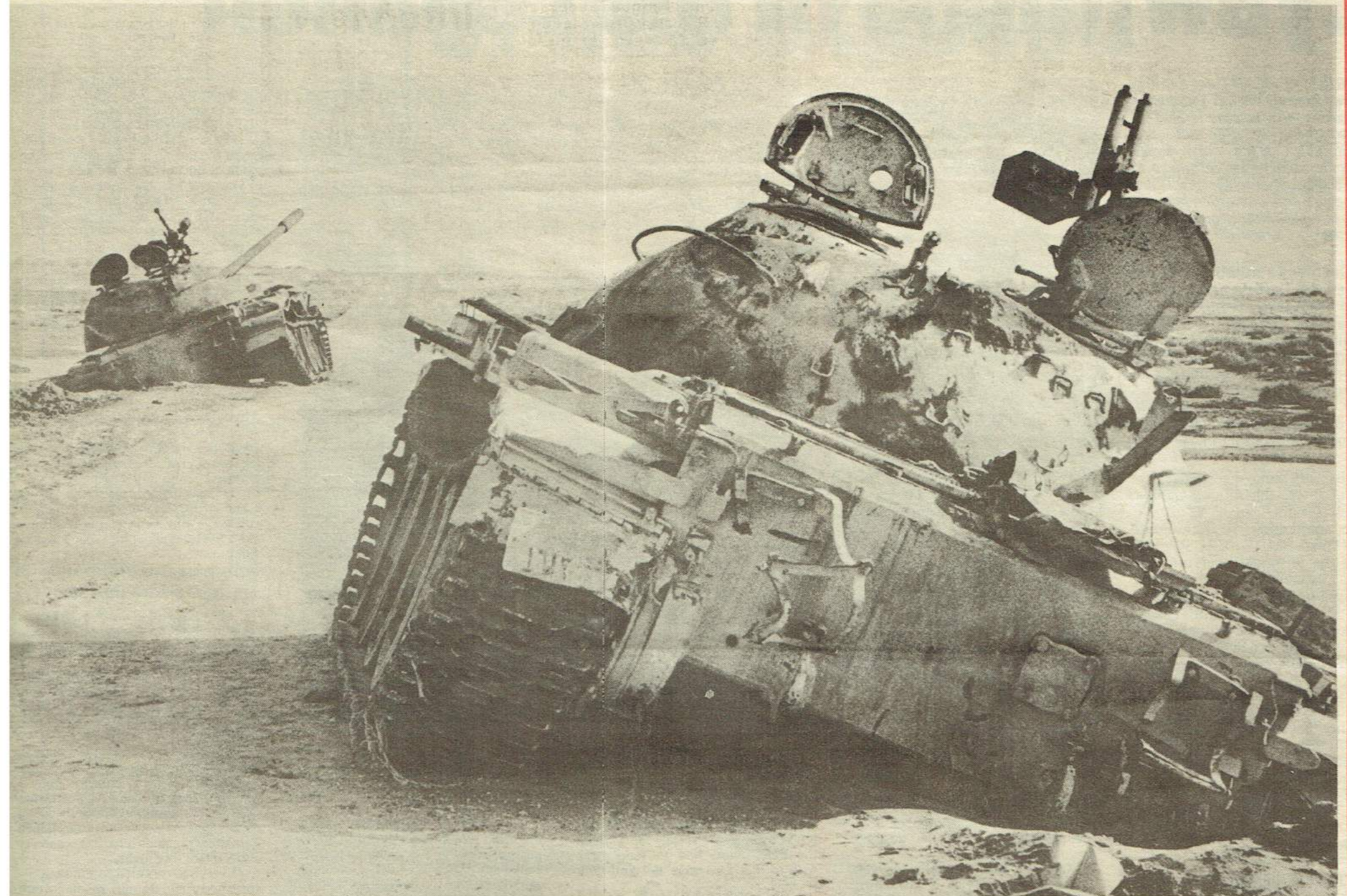
Now that the PLO is much weaker they hope to force Israel to return to a more rational and more moderate course. So the United States is also using this 'carrot and stick' policy. But whether it will work or not has yet to be seen.

Even with huge US pressure established facts cannot be reversed. When you have tens of thousands of Israelis now living in the Occupied Territories in very dense com-



The face of Israel: armed confessionism

NEW EMPIRE



Egyptian tanks lie smashed after the 1967 'six day war'. Israel's policy of trying to dominate the Arab East will ensure further wars in the region.

unities, this is very difficult to reverse. The same goes for Israeli domination of Lebanon.

The United States is deluding itself if it thinks it can easily control the situation. I think that overall American policy is quite confused and unpredictable.

What is the Peace Now movement doing against the war?

The Peace Now Movement is not the only peace movement, although it is as up to a year ago. The origin of this movement is the left wing of the Labour Party — a real supermarket of ideas. As you know, the Labour Party stretches from extreme right wing politics — even more right wing than Begin's Likud — to quite moderate Zionism.

The Peace Now Movement started with supporting the peace with Egypt, strengthening the hand of Begin against the extreme right in Israel for rational policy. They never even had a firm line on whether to evacuate the whole of Sinai or part of Sinai, but generally they supported the idea of changing territory for peace.

The idea goes back to 1967 — that you should exchange occupied territory for concessions from the Arab world. Today they are not even calling for withdrawal from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but they condemned the occupation as im-

moral and said 'something should be done' — some form of autonomy for the Palestinians perhaps.

The Peace Now Movement has thus been able to mobilise considerable forces. Initially they supported, half-heartedly, the first thrust of Israel into Lebanon as a 'necessary operation'.

But they came out against the massive bombardment and invasion of West Beirut itself. They were afraid during the first six weeks of the war to come out onto the streets. They were forced to by the appearance of smaller movements, one of which was quite strong — the Committee against the War in Lebanon.

This originates from the Bir Zeit Solidarity Committee. This had a very clear policy, namely that Israel should withdraw from all occupied territories including East Jerusalem, and total opposition to the war in Lebanon.

As a result of the successful demonstration of 15,000 people called by the Committee against the War, the Peace Now Movement eventually called its own demonstration attended by 50,000 or so. All this brought about a flourishing of anti-war sentiment in Israel.

This is the first war which has directly pitted Israel against Palestinian forces — in the previous wars they fought Arab armies. It brought to the consciousness of many people that the central problem is the Palestinians.

I would say the anti-war sentiment among the Israeli people encompasses perhaps 25-30 per cent of the population, which is quite considerable.

Is this a long term change in Israeli politics?

It depends if the government succeeds in its long term aims. If it encounters considerable resistance from the United States, the Arab world and the Palestinians then this opposition will not be short lived.

In fact I suspect it's not going to be so easy to carry it through, then the conditions for continuing opposition exist.

What has the censorship been like in Israel?

This war has brought a very considerable increase in the attempts of the government to censor the Israeli and foreign press. For example in Lebanon journalists have been very strictly controlled. They have not been allowed to circulate freely, to report the plight of the refugees, or to report on the concentration camps established in the south for the male Palestinian population.

So a whole range of issues are off limits for the press. This is a new development, and a similar situation

exists on the West Bank. They are purging very systematically the Israeli radio and television of any critical, objective — what they call 'leftist' — view.

The self-censorship of the private media has also increased tremendously.

How can Israel survive, with only a population of 3½ million without the Palestinians who live there. Can they really be expelled?

I didn't mean to suggest that the overall Israeli plan will be possible to easily carry through. But I outlined it to show that it is a real plan which determines Israeli policy.

The Israeli economy today of course depends greatly on Arab labour. It cannot function without 250,000 Arab labourers. But there are other aspects of their aggressive policy which will be economically beneficial.

For example Lebanon is a tremendous 'gate' for trade to the whole Arab East. Already Israeli control of Lebanon is aiding their attempts to penetrate Arab markets. Many Lebanese workers now work within the Israeli economy, and they can replace Palestinians expelled.

They can turn Lebanon into another 'West Bank'. The same holds true if they extend their control wider

in the Middle East. Amman today has partially replaced Beirut as the commercial capital of the Arab world, so if they have more control over Jordan this will aid them economically.

How does the overall plan work itself out in relation to Iraq? Has Israeli policy remained constant towards the Iran-Iraq war?

The Israeli policy has been to turn a completely blind eye to the anti-Zionist demagogue of Khomeini. Israel rightly sees the Iranian regime as an ally against the Arab world. This regime has collaborated with Israel from its first year.

But here Israel is in contradiction with American policy in the Middle East. They don't mind that, because it is interesting in diversifying its sources of support and power.

Israel has nothing to fear from Iran, whereas Iraq is considered by Israel to be within its ultimate sphere of influence.

Of course at first the Israelis lost some markets in Iran, but they recovered rather quickly using military exports to Iran.

I don't think the anti-imperialist verbiage of the Iranians has much meaning in the Palestinian context. The Iranian state has its own interests, and if they are to ally itself with Israel, then it will do just that.

Interview by RK, PH and SP

'At the Phalange rally they played tapes by Hitler. They said when the PLO had gone they would "purge" West Beirut.

Eyewitness in the Lebanon

CHRISTINE PLATT was a British nurse working in a Palestinian refugee camp when the Israelis invaded Lebanon. She told her remarkable story of Israeli atrocities and heroic resistance to Ros Kaplan and Phil Hears. When she came into our office her arm was covered with cigarette burns put there by Israeli paratroopers.

'I was in the middle of Sabra when the first planes came at 3.15 on 5 June. Nobody knew what was happening. I could hear the planes and buildings start to fall down around me. Everyone ran screaming and shouting. Women gathered up the children in the streets. Troops were moving and anti-aircraft firing started.

By this time the sirens were going in all the refugee camps. Fateh Arafat, Yasser's brother who commands the Palestinian Red Cross Society (PRCS), came into the hospital. Everyone had been evacuated down to the ground floor and all the men were in military uniform by this time. I looked over to the refugee camp at Sabra and just saw a huge column of black smoke, it was horrible.

Someone shouted the hospital's on fire that's where I worked. I got into one of the jeeps and went back there and stayed there. I couldn't get into my room — it had been destroyed in the bombing. We lived and slept and worked in the same place underground.

The hospital was evacuated — we had mortar shells fired directly at the hospital from Israeli tanks on 28 June. That's when the PRCS decided to evacuate most of the hospital. I stayed with about five male nurses, mainly Iraqi and Palestinian — and all the others were commandos. All the people from the refugee camp at Sabra left — many of them had relatives in the mountains.

Water at the hospital started to be a problem. The sanitary conditions were very bad. Eventually even the bottled water ran out. We had our own generator but could only use it at



Patient in a ward hit by a shell. He lay in the debris for two days.

certain times of the day or night. We got in victims from bombing raids from all parts — napalm injuries, phosphorus burns, a lot of traumatic amputations. Gradually we ran out of basic medical supplies. So it was decided to close the hospital down completely. We took over a hotel called the Triomphe hotel which is just down the road from the Britsol hotel. The tanks had occupied the airport road they had occupied Acca, they'd bombed Acca completely. The we took over the College of Theology and turned that into a makeshift hospital. Because of all the tanks traps built by the Palestinians it was very difficult to get the victims to hospital in the PRCS ambulances.

'I saw Israeli troops bayonetting Palestinians in their homes'

My husband, who is a fighter in the

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, took me out one night and we saw the Israeli paratroopers going into each house with their bayonets fixed and bringing out the Palestinians and just killing them. This was house by house. The only thing which the Palestinians had to fight back with in that area were B-7 anti-tank rockets.

At the College of Theology we worked underground again. We were in West Beirut itself which was now completely encircled. Then my husband said it would be better if I left. Just about then I went out to a place called St. Michel where there were some bomb victims. We couldn't get the equipment to get the blocks of cement away from the victims. The people were still alive underneath these blocks of cement. We could hear them, we could hear children crying. I went out in an ambulance to get more help, just me and a driver. We were stopped by Israeli paratroopers. They killed my driver, they shot him, and then they

took me away to one of their offices and took my Kalashnikov and saw who I was working for — it was obvious — and fooled around with me for a while.

They did some cigarette burns on my arm. When they saw I had a UK passport they let me go and I had to walk back to Beirut. And my husband said that it was too dangerous to stay. Eventually I got over to East Beirut.

'They begged me for my husband's name'

I was staying with a Phalangist family. Their son was in the Lebanese armed forces but really he was a Phalangist and his bedroom was just plastered with pictures of Hitler and swastikas all along the wall.

They took me to meetings at Phalangist headquarters and they had tape recordings of Hitler, and fascist songs and gave Nazi salutes.

They talked about purging West Beirut when the PLO had gone. As

soon as the Israelis had finished with the Palestinians they were going to move in and 'purge' the Muslims and make it a pure Phalangist state.

The son of the family who took me to the meetings begged me for the name of my husband. He said "Well, if you give me his name, when we move into West Beirut we'll spare him." He knew my husband was a Marxist and that he was a PFLP fighter.

My escape to East Beirut was arranged via one of the leaders of a Nasserite party who was owed a favour by this Phalangist family — they took me because I was an English girl.

After the Israelis had caught the ambulance I was in I was a patient myself for two days. I was told to cross into East Beirut at the National Museum area. Each time the Israelis told me my papers weren't in order. Eventually I got through. I had to run across, I just had a bag on my shoulder and a pair of jeans.

I ran and the Israelis started firing. I knew I was looking for a mustard-coloured Mini-Cooper on the other side. Fortunately I got to it and was safe.

'Some of the children who came in were limbless'

After five days in East Beirut I went by boat to Larnica in Cyprus. The boat was stopped five times by Israeli gunboats.

During the whole time I was nursing casualties of the war there were very few guerrilla casualties. Mostly it was old men and women and children.

Some of the children who came in were limbless. A lot of the casualties were just Lebanese citizens. Why I liked working for the PRCS was that they would admit anybody. I'll never forget one night when two Israeli lieutenants came into the casualty department one night.

Everybody wanted to kill them — they had their thumbs ready to pull the pins out of the grenades and their index fingers on the triggers of their guns.

They were from a captured tank, with just superficial shrapnel wounds. We treated them and sent them back. Fateh Arafat came to the hospital and stopped them being killed. He said we should send them back.

During the whole time we were treating victims I can't remember going to bed for a month. The conditions were appalling. There were patients in the corridors, with their families under their beds. All the time the patients cried out for water, but there was no water — the Israelis had cut it off.'

First Trident victory

By Martin Meteyard
A FIRST victory has been won in the campaign to stop the Trident nuclear weapons system coming to Scotland.

Faced with growing public opposition — including a policy of non-cooperation by the local authorities — the government has scrapped plans for a massive development of the Coulport naval base to service the missiles.

The maintenance programme will now be switched to the United States, at an estimated saving of £500 million.

The decision takes away the government's only selling point for Trident — that it would provide jobs for the people of Scotland. The obvious aim is to remove property and environmental concern. But it does nothing to reduce the threat of nuclear destruction which

Trident poses.

It seems that the Clyde will still be used as an anchorage for the submarines, with repairs to the subs carried out at Faslane. The Trident warheads will still be dismantled at Coulport before being taken to the US for servicing.

Certainly the campaign to stop Trident altogether will continue. Councillor Ian Leitch, chairperson of the Scottish Campaign Against Trident, pledged that, 'SCAT will not stop until the whole Trident project has been abandoned'.

Strathclyde Regional Council is also going ahead with plans to hold its own public enquiry since the Minister of Defence refuses to do so. 'The full implications of having Trident on our doorstep must still be made public', said deputy leader Charles Gray.

The next focus for the campaign will be the week

of action against Trident which SCAT is organising at the end of October. This will culminate in 'Stop Trident Day' on Saturday 30 October, when it is hoped that events will take place in every city, town and village in Scotland — with support from England and Wales.

A particular emphasis in the week of action will be on winning labour movement support. Plans for further developing the campaign in this area will be discussed at the trade union conference SCAT is organising on 13 November.

Further information from: SCAT, Third Floor, 420 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow G2.

A historic day

Wednesday 22 September is a historic day for the labour movement. Just 56 years, and four months after the general strike of 1926, the workers are once again downing tools.

The Tory government is going to get a lesson from organised Labour that should gladden the heart of every socialist and militant.

All those cynics in the media and those time-servers in the bureaucracies, who believe that people can only act from narrow self interest are going to get an almighty shock. They will see, with their own unbelieving eyes that working people care for the important things in life, like the right of the lowly paid to a decent wage and the right of all of us to have a health service that puts people before profit.

The 22 September is going to be an inspiring day. It will show that the sell outs in steel, the retreats in cars, the failures to fight closures and the betrayal of ASLEF have not squashed the fighting spirit of the working people. It can herald a great fight back.

We know that everyone of our supporters will be out on the streets from the beginning of that day, until the last demonstrator has arrived at their destination and the last picket line ends. To be anywhere else would be to miss out on the greatest fight back yet organised against the Tories.

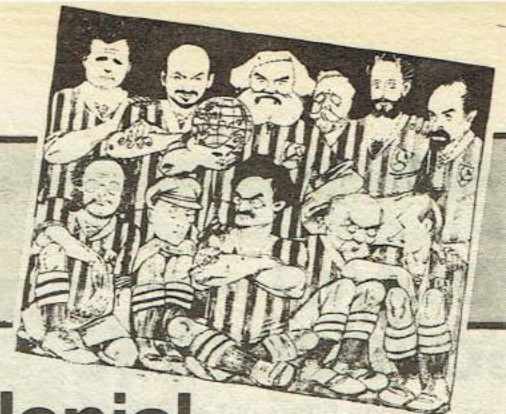
At the same time they should be out there selling their copies of Socialist Challenge because the most advanced and class conscious of their brothers and sisters will want to know how to take the strike of 22 September forward in the interests of socialism.

We are therefore producing a 16-page paper next week. It will be a paper which points the way towards not just a victory for the health workers, but charts a course towards socialism. On this day which brings out all the best in the workers' movement, our supporters should show that they are worthy of the workers' response.

We can do that by being with our fellow trade union members on the picket lines and on the demonstrations and by fighting to win as many of them as possible to the socialist ideas of Socialist Challenge.

March, demonstrate, picket and double the sales of your paper on Wednesday 22 September.

What is Trotskyism?



The capitalists in the colonial world

By John Ross

This week John Ross shows how the theory of permanent revolution is a guide to understanding what is happening in the colonial and third world countries.

The view that the capitalist class is no longer capable of playing a revolutionary role is one of the most crucial aspects of the theory of permanent revolution. But what exactly does it mean?

Does it mean that no capitalist force anywhere can ever take any progressive step at all? That would fly in the face of evidence of people such as Khomeini in Iran, who led a struggle which overthrew the Shah, or the regime in Ethiopia which destroyed the monarchy of Haile Selassie? This is a frequent accusation made against the theory of permanent revolution — in particular by members of the Communist Parties. We will look at this point through the career of one of the greatest capitalist figures of the twentieth century — Gamal Abdel Nasser.

The achievements of Nasser as President of Egypt in terms of anti-imperialist struggle make a contemporary figure such as Khomeini in Iran appear pathetic. Nasser seized not an American embassy but the then greatest symbol of imperialist domination in the entire Arab world — the Suez Canal.

He twice fought wars with Israel. In 1956, in the Suez invasion, Nasser engaged in a direct military struggle with British and French imperialism. He made the first great arms agreements between an Arab state and the Soviet Union. In 1961 he nationalised the majority of big industry in Egypt.

revolutionaries have to take to him and his regime?

The way to understand the apparent contradiction of the policies of Nasser is to grasp that he was a faithful representative of the interests of his class — the Egyptian bourgeoisie. As the ruling class of a semi-colonial country this bourgeoisie had two enemies. The first were the bourgeoisies of the imperialist countries which systematically looted Egypt and prevented even its own capitalist class taking the profits that were available. The second enemy was its own working class and peasantry which the Egyptian ruling class exploited.

Both these forces were obstacles to the interests of the Egyptian bourgeoisie but they were not at all equivalent enemies. The struggle between the Egyptian ruling class and the imperialists was over how to divide the cake of the exploitation of the Egyptian workers and peasants. Of course the Egyptian bourgeoisie tried to get a larger slice for itself. It wanted the profits from the Suez canal instead of them going to the British and French capitalists.

Bloody

For these actions Nasser enjoyed a popularity among the Arab people, and an influence extending outside them, unequalled by any other figure. His death in September 1970 led to the biggest funeral in history. Around 5 million of the poor of Cairo lined the streets at his death in unrestrained grief.

Yet today the Egyptian State bequeathed by Nasser has signed the Camp David agreement with Israel. It is the second largest receiver of US military and economic aid in the world. These Camp David accords were the direct prelude and precondition for Israel's bloody invasion of the Lebanon.

What is more this turn around in Egyptian policy was prepared by Nasser's regime itself. In July 1970 Nasser announced acceptance of the United States' 'Roger's Plan' for the Middle East — the direct predecessor of Reagan's latest anti-Arab initiative.

What is the relationship between these 'two sides' of Nasser? What attitude therefore did

Spoils

The clash of interests between the Egyptian ruling class and the imperialists on this was a very real one culminating in war. But the question of how to divide up the spoils of exploitation in general was an issue which could be decided between the Egyptian bourgeoisie and imperialism on a common basis.

Both had a common interest in the exploitation of the Egyptian workers and peasants. The Egyptian bourgeoisie wanted the largest possible slice of



Egypt's former president Nasser



Bevan speaking at mass Labour Party demonstration against Suez War, 1956

the cake for itself but it could still get by with a smaller one.

The contradiction between the Egyptian ruling class and its working class and peasantry was, and is of an entirely different type however. A victory of the imperialists means a smaller slice of the cake for the Egyptian bourgeoisie. But a victory of the working class and peasants would mean its total destruction.

From this flowed the different attitudes of the Egyptian bourgeoisie and therefore of the Nasser regime, to its different opponents. To imperialism it could engage in struggles like Suez. But it could also arrive at a compromise or a capitulation — as with

the Rogers plan.

Towards the workers and peasants it was a war to the death. Particular concessions could be made to them, if necessary, but fundamentally the Egyptian bourgeoisie had to control and destroy the class aims of the overwhelming majority of the Egyptian people.

Using terms which I will explain in detail later, the Egyptian bourgeoisie had a relative contradiction with the interests of imperialism but an absolute contradiction with the interests of the Egyptian workers and peasants.

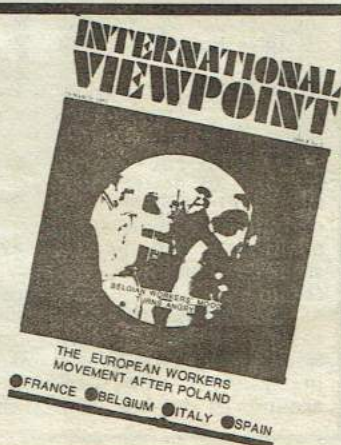
Next week I will show how this worked out in practice.

International Viewpoint

First autumn issue now out

Contains a major article by Ernest Mandel on 'The threat of World War and the Struggle for Socialism'. Also an interview with Bernadette McAliskey and leaders of Peoples Democracy on the present stage of the struggle in Ireland.

Subscriptions: Six months, 95 French francs or £9: one year 175 French francs or £16. Send money orders made out to 'PEC' to International Viewpoint; 2 rue Richard-Lenoir, 93108 Montreuil, France.



POLAND Solidarnosc debates tactics

As information filters out of Poland, the size of the 31 August confrontations is becoming clearer. It now seems that as many as 250,000 braved armed police and tanks to take the streets. Solidarity is discussing its tactics. An argument is developing between a 'moderate' current, dominated by the intellectuals, which seeks reform through decentralised resistance, and a radical current that wants a centralised movement to prepare a general strike. Here Jacqueline Allio reports on these debates and the aftermath of 31 August.

'The underground must create favourable conditions for social agreement through pressure on the authorities; at the same time conquering positions through which it can extend social and political rights. The movement should be decentralised.'

This extract from the draft declaration-programme published at the end of July by TKK, Solidarity's provisional national committee, shows the moderates are gaining ground. No mention of a general strike appeared in the text. This view has been dominant in the recent clandestine press:

'We must defeat the myth of the 'big coup', we must shatter the illusion that August 1980 can be repeated and

those in power forced to sign a new agreement...Even a well prepared general strike, together with active defence of the factories, cannot change what has happened on 13 December. There will only be more victims...The general strike cannot be won, even with the support of a majority of factories.'

But Z. Romaszewski (recently arrested) and W. Frasyniuk, who lead a radical current, reply that 13 December didn't happen because of a general strike but because Solidarity's leadership did not prepare for confrontation. This view is echoed by many workers' articles in clandestine bulletins.

'The general strike seems the best way to fight, provid-



Riot police used massive repression to break up nationwide demonstrations marking the birth of Solidarnosc, 31 August. This is part of the Warsaw action.

ed it is meticulously organised: the form of strike must be decided in each factory and enterprise. It will be worth it even if it takes months to prepare. Through the church we must set up a network to distribute food and medicines, so that people are

not at the generals' mercy...And we have to make propaganda in the army and police,' says one article signed 'the trade unionist'.

Would this worker have changed his mind after 31 August? Many moderates have become more defeatist

than ever: on 4 September the French Solidarnosc representative told *Liberation* that Solidarnosc had lost control and was in a 'cul-de-sac'. But he could only propose more moderation to solve the problems.

The evidence suggests that

workers are becoming more exasperated and that their radicalisation is growing. The economic situation is getting worse. The cost of living has gone up 104 per cent in six months. And no-one believes the government's will end the state of emergency after the

wave of repression of 31 August.

The danger is that without a centralised and collective response, repression will escalate against Solidarnosc militants. Four-year prison sentences are being handed out to leaflet distributors.

The lack of concrete perspectives to meet this repression is aggravating the differences, and even leading to splits. In Wroclaw a number of impatient militants have set up 'Combative Solidarity' with part of the local apparatus. It emphasises street fighting. Its undeniable appeal to young workers will only increase the disorientation of many other workers unless the national leadership can respond to the urgent problems of today. As one militant says: 'A peaceful understanding is impossible. Since an agreement can only be reached if we make concessions, and as we have nothing to concede, then they would have to make concessions. But these must be torn from them, and any agreement must not be a national agreement but a simple armistice between the people and a foreign power which is against them.'

MEXICO

The crisis after the election

For the last month the financial world has been rocked by anxiety as to the consequences of Mexico being unable to repay its international debt.

Measures taken by the Mexican government to stem the crisis have taken the form of a combined package of austerity and nationalisation of the banks.

Heather and Raquel, two militants of the PRT (Revolutionary Workers Party, Mexican section of the Fourth International), now the country's fourth largest party, explain what has happened since the July elections and their party's attitude to the government's latest measures.

THE ELECTIONS showed a massive increase in the overall amount of votes cast. This surprised everybody.

The increase did not go to the governing PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party), but to the opposition.

The main reason was the economic crisis and the crisis in the PRI.

The economic crisis this year was of gigantic proportions even before the spectacular results of the international crisis of this month.

We had a projected inflation rate of 100 per cent. Probably a million people will be fired this year, making our unemployed and underemployed rate 65 per cent of the workforce.

In March this year there was an eight per cent cut in public spending which followed six years of austerity. This cut included all construction that was not directly linked to production; which means that buildings and roads were left half-completed.

On the other hand the PRI has failed to pacify the rank and file of the union and peasant movement and a new movement in Mexico — the shantytown dwellers.

These movements have escaped PRI control and have formed a national coalition.

The PRI was looking for a mandate, and not just a majority vote. Their failure meant they had to commit fraud.

Fraud is very normal in Mexican elections. But it was very blatant this time.

But the PPS and the PST — the former an old Stalinist party, the latter 'Marxist-Leninist' supporters of the PRI — were 'given' votes.



Lopez Portillo

This raised the amount of minority votes and in particular raised the votes of those minority parties who supported the PRI and therefore in proportion lowered ours.

They also lowered the PRT's votes so that we only had 1.47 per cent of votes, not enough to get any members of parliament even though we got more than 2 per cent on the presidential election campaign — enough to get registered.

We feel, of course, that we got the same amount on the votes for members

of parliament but were denied them because of this juggling.

We are the only party which is nationally registered but does not have any members of parliament.

The PRI cannot risk having revolutionary members of parliament to expose it. On the day the fraud was announced the prices of bread, tortillas and gasoline and cooking gas and of electricity were increased by 100 per cent.

On the same day the government announced that they have contracted a \$400 million loan from the

USA and that they will sell double the amount of oil to the USA at the old fixed price.

This of course was the price of the loan.

This whole period was summed up by President Lopez Portillo in his state of the union address on 1 September when he announced the nationalisation of private banks with their debts.

This was accompanied by a move to get a mass base by decreeing the unionisation of 140,000 bank workers.

This nationalisation of the banks is a progressive

step of course, but it was also a ploy.

Its objectives are to control the financial situation. But the devaluation will lower the cost of labour and investment will be much more attractive for foreign capital, thus speeding up the 'dollarisation' of our economy — in spite of control of dollar exchange.

Portillo says that nationalisation will prevent the flow of dollars out of the country; but most of the dollars that leave the country are in payment of the national debt.

Nationalisations are

completely tied up with a policy of smashing independent organisations of the working class despite the unionisation decree among bank workers.

You also have firings, sometimes of 2000 workers in a single factory from one day to the next; and we say that there is a danger — not yet crystallised — of a certain conservatism if the bosses are forcing workers to choose: either we fire you or you go on short time working.

There have been some reactions: there are three

anti-austerity coalitions, but they organise only the vanguard of the vanguard of the working class. Our policy is to unify these three coalitions.

Portillo also called for 'political austerity'. This is a new term, but not a new policy. It means and immediate increase in repression which began straight after the electoral fraud.

Our comrades have been harassed, picked up and terrorised particularly where they play a leading role in struggles — and this is obviously not confined to us.

PRT Aims

We asked Heather and Raquel what the PRT is doing now.

We think it is much more difficult for the PRI to get a national base than in the 1930s when they nationalised the oil industry. We therefore want, first, to consolidate the gain of the election. We have doubled our membership, to 1,600, and we want to triple the sales of our paper which are still low.

We also have expanded the number of states where we have members. Before the campaign we existed in 19 states and now we exist in 29 out of 32 states, which obviously means we have major new organisational problems. So we also aim to expand our apparatus: we have added more professionals, we now own a headquarters and press, and we are stabilising regional centres.

But it's also important to become a pole of attraction to other revolutionary organisations who came around us in the cam-



Peasants at a PRT rally

paign. There is a small group of about 100 members with whom we expect to fuse soon; and there are larger organisations of a Maoist tradition

who have now, for the first time, been forced to take us into account, work with us, and discuss with us.

The third thing we want to do is expand our

mass work. In the peasant movement we have an organisation which we have been building since 1976, a mass peasant organisation with

16-25,000 people which now says that it recognises the PRT as its party. We want also to expand mass work amongst women and amongst shanty town dwellers. We want to organise the turn to industry much better, although this is difficult during a recession; but it includes organising national fractions for workers who have joined during the campaign — petroleum workers, auto workers, electricity workers, and so on.

Lastly, our major campaigns are to expand. There will be local electoral campaigns, but our major national campaign will be against austerity. We will be calling for a programme of anti-capitalist measures such as nationalisation, tax reforms to tax profits and cancelling the national debt; the basic campaign, however, will be to fight attacks on our standard of living.

Our second national campaign is in solidarity with the Salvadorian revolution; and we have a finance campaign to raise 15,000,000 pesos — including a raffle of a house and car!

Photo: TIM WRIGHT

Jobs for the boys

When they voted at the TUC to support the health workers by taking solidarity strike action, Mr Frank Chapple, president elect of the TUC could hardly get his hand in the air. Not that he was suffering from arthritis. He and his union just could not bring themselves to break the law.

The fact that the NHS is being bled to death by a rapacious Tory government did not move Mr Chapple, but then he has taken out insurance against the health service falling apart. Being an enthusiastic supporter of the welfare state he has got his members in a private health scheme.

So obviously some of his union executive can't understand what all the fuss is about having a free health service for all. Surely that's just a romantic notion held by daft

socialists and militants like Sean Geraghty.

Anyhow he was in a very small minority, and some naive people even thought that his action could cost him the presidency of the TUC. But they did not understand trade union solidarity. Whatever else happens the brothers stick together through thick and thin. As one the TUC dutifully next day voted him into the presidency.

The leaders know that jobs, prestige and position are far more important than principles. What's free health service and a wage claim involving over one million low paid workers compared to their right to run the TUC as and how they think fit.

If they start giving people like Chapple the heave ho, what could happen to them?



See no Health Strike

Right wing organises

The following letter has been circulating EETPU branches in the Oldham area.

TO: MEMBERS IN OLDHAM AREA
Dear Colleague,

At the local elections in May, Labour performed better against the SDP/Liberal Alliance than expected. However even in those local elections, as well as in recent by elections and in the opinion polls, Labour, whilst still remaining a major Party, is not doing nearly as well as should be against the Conservative Government. It is also interesting that the only by-election where Labour has done well was in Coatbridge and Airdrie where our candidate was a traditional Labour moderate.

There is obviously widespread concern amongst traditional Labour Party supporters at the activities of the Far Left in the Labour Party, at their attacks on the Parliamentary leadership and the British Forces in the Falkland crisis. There is, therefore, a major task to be undertaken to ensure that Constituency Labour Parties in particular reflect the views of ordinary Labour voters who do not wish to see the Party they have supported taken over by extremists and years of effort and work squandered. They would like to get involved and help the fight back.

It should be clear that this does not involve attending endless meetings, just making a small effort. If you would like to assist the Union in the battle to restore the Labour Party to being representative of ordinary Labour voters please fill in the attached form and return it in the envelope provided to Head Office.

Yours fraternally,
F.J. Chapple,
General Secretary

For a woman's right to benefit

By Jude Arkwright

THE TORY ATTACKS on women's rights to go out to work are being extended to attacks on women claiming benefit. Two weeks ago Socialist Challenge reported on the startling proposals of the Rayner report whereby women will lose benefit if they don't prove they are 'available for work'.

But how many of us are aware of the daily misery which single mothers claiming benefit — especially women who have been battered by their husbands — have been going through since another set of proposals were sneaked through by the government in November 1980?

Wandsworth Womens Aid have just published a pamphlet which tells the truth about women driven out of their homes by violent men.

Single mothers, especially women who have been forced to leave home because of battering, are dependent on supplementary benefit for their main source of income. When they leave home because of violence, they are able to take very little with them. They are afraid to go back for their belongings. Because of this they need Emergency Payments and other lump sum benefits to help them start off a new life.

Under a new law, pass-

ed in November 1980, such payments are being drastically reduced. Payments are no longer made at the discretion of the officers but according to a new set of rules which lay down what can be paid and to whom. Clothing and fuel allowances in particular are now expected to come out of the regular benefit payment.

For these women this means a choice between food or clothing since the paltry benefit payment will not stretch to both.

This is typical punitive behaviour of a government which wants every woman to be a patient and long suffering wife looking after hearth and home — and seeks to introduce petty punishments for women who don't do as they want.

These vicious, mean and spiteful attacks must be brought out into the open and fought against.

A Womens Right to Benefit. Available from Womens Aid, 374 Grays Inn Road, WC1.

The frame up that bodes ill for the Paradise Island

The glossy brochures of the government seeking to attract foreign tourists portrays Sri Lanka as the Paradise Island. However, like most other underdeveloped countries Sri Lanka is wracked by high unemployment, massive external debts, unbridled inflation and widespread malnutrition.

Besides this the policies of successive governments have alienated the Tamil community and driven them to the conclusion that they will never get equal rights of justice in a state dominated by the Sinhala political parties.

Even the leaders of the government admitted that the demand for a separate state by the Tamils was based on real and deep felt grievances about discrimination they have suffered in the spheres of University Education, colonisation of land in Northern and Eastern provinces and the right to use their language.

They pledged that if they were elected to power, they would convene an all party conference to resolve these problems. The government has disregarded this pledge and instead encouraged anti-Tamil racism and increased repression.

This policy of the government and its consequent escalation of state repression and Tamil resistance has led to the frame up of two Tamil youths, who have been sentenced to death for allegedly killing a policeman. This sentence is entirely based on the 'confessions' made by these youth whilst being held in custody by the Army and the Police, and according to them exacted by means of torture. If carried out, it can only worsen the tensions between the Tamils and Sinhalese.

These two youths — Kuttimani and Jegan — were supporters of the Tamil Eelam movement which calls for a separate state for Tamils in their traditional homelands in the Northern and Eastern province of Sri Lanka.

After the Sinhalese judge passed death sentence on Kuttimani and Jegan both youths again reiterated their innocence saying that killing them would not destroy the Eelam movement.

In Kuttimani's own words, 'I am not guilty of any offence. I am innocent ... The verdict of this Court given in this case today will provide a new impetus, fertile manure and an encouragement for the establishment of Tamil Eelam. This will not be the only case. There will be other Tamils who will be brought before this court on similar false charges ... the punishment imposed will encourage the liberation of Tamils'. In weeks and months to come these defiant words will become the war cry of hundreds of Tamil youth and Kuttimani and Jegan will become their heroes.

The policy of racial



discrimination and repression followed by the UNP government is one part their attacks on the Sri Lankan workers, peasants and other oppressed people. It is hoped by these means to set the Sinhalese and Tamil workers and peasants against each other.

That is why the Revolutionary Marxist Party (SLFI) has opposed the racist policies of the Sri Lankan capitalist class and stands for the self-

determination of Tamil Eelam up to and including secession. The RMP calls for a halt to the execution of Kuttimani and Jegan and demands the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act which encourages torture and frame up of oppositionists.

In Britain a campaign for the release of Eelam political prisoners in Sri Lanka (CREPP) has already been formed and seeking to build a

broad based movement to —

- Stop the execution of Kuttimani and Jeganathan
- Procure the release of all other political prisoners and
- Repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Telegrams calling for release of these prisoner should be sent to Mr J.R. Jayawardene, The President, President's House Colombo 1, Sri Lanka.

Air-India official strike Eleventh week

WE HAVE recently lobbied the 1982 TUC Congress with the aim of generating wider support and publicity for our cause.

To this end, we are now calling upon the Labour Movement to assist us in our struggle, the issues of which are fundamental to the principle of workers unity and erosion of Trade Union rights.

Air-India's UK management has launched a flagrant attack upon trade unionism within our company and seeks to create the repressive working conditions which are currently in force in India.

A number of our members having succumbed, through fear, to management's propaganda and intimidation are being actively encouraged to provide a blackleg labour force within the

company. The remaining one hundred of us, who refuse to be forced back to work until the dispute is fairly settled, have now been sacked.

Despite the adverse political and economic climate, we are committed to continuing the battle for justice, fair treatment and the hard-won rights of working people in this country.

It is now more imperative than ever that we

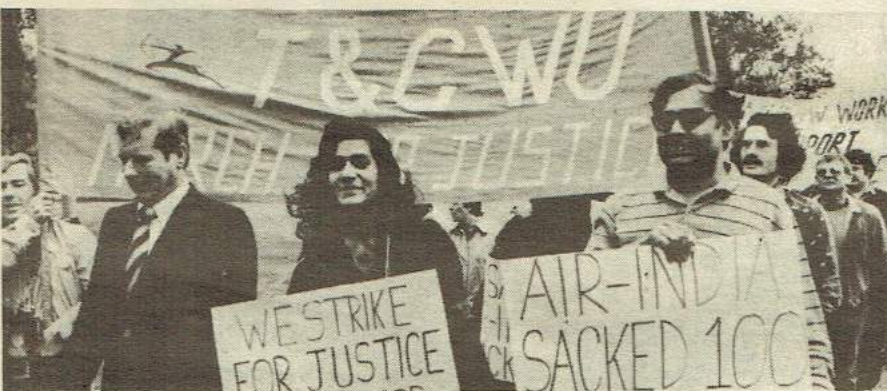


Photo: MORNING STAR

have the full backing of our Labour and Trade Union colleagues if we are to resist the actions of a management inspired by the devious policies of the present Tory Government.

Below is a brief outline of our dispute:-

1. Management breaks agreement signed on 29th May by 2nd June.
2. Suspends Shop Steward on 3rd June.
3. Work-to-rule and Overtime Ban called on 7th June

4. Union invites management to ACAS. Management refuse.
5. Shop Steward is sacked at end of June. Branch vote to take strike action 2nd July.
6. Management calls strike 'illegal' and 'unauthorised' as per Indian law.
7. All workers told in future new contracts of employment will be issued containing Indian disciplinary and work procedures — no industrial action or strikes

allowed. Union told at least 20 strikers would be dismissed even if we did capitulate and return to work — reasons for dismissals would be for taking 'illegal strike action'.

8. Certain other airlines at Heathrow form strike support group as they feel dispute is not only Air-India issue but overall struggle of workers against repressive managements.
9. 100 strikers sacked on 4th August.

October Banquet East London Socialist Challenge

Splendid food, auction, Disco and bar. Guest speakers from Central America

Tickets from M Martin PO Box 36 136 Kingsland High Road, E8 (986 6439) Cheques to Hackney Book Club

10 March on Indian High Commission in London took place on 16th August.

We would ask you to specifically assist us in the following ways:-

Express support and concern publicly, both in the news media and by writing to the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Gandhi, the High Commission of India and Air-India's Regional Director in London.

Publicise our dispute wherever possible within the Trade Union Movement,

particularly with workers and bodies associated with Civil Air Transport

Help us with fund raising and financial support.

For further information and donations to the Strike Fund please contact the Air-India Shop Stewards/Strike Committee on:

Tel no. 01-848-343 01-673-7922 01-674-8874 or c/o Transport and General Workers Union, Branch 1/1305, Transport House 7/9, South Road, Southall Middlesex.

Socialist Challenge

Public Meeting

NO WITCHHUNT! NO REGISTER!
DEFEND THE RIGHT TO ORGANISE IN THE LABOUR PARTY

MONDAY 20 SEPTEMBER - 8pm BRIXTON TOWN HALL

Speakers: JO RICHARDSON PETER TATCHEL JOAN MAYNARD TED KNIGHT
TERESA WRACK (MILITANT) AUEW AND EETPU SPEAKERS

Sponsored by Lambeth Central and Norwood Labour Parties
Organised by Lambeth Labour Campaign against the Witchhunt

Last chance to help Red Trotter

SUNDAY 19 September will see another glorious page written in the annals of socialist history. That's the day when the Red Trotter, Socialist Challenge supporter Steve Faulkner, runs a total of 26 miles 385 yards to raise money for your paper.

You may have watched on TV last weekend the women's and men's marathons at the European Athletics Championships: the sweat and tears of more than two and a quarter hours' running. Well, our Steve has been running sixty miles a week in training paced by four Revolution comrades on bicycles just to get fit for this fundraiser.

So while you're noshing your Sunday lunch just think of the Red Trotter pounding mile after mile, think of those blisters all in the aid of filling our coffers!

Better still, think of how you can feel less guilty by rushing your sponsorship for Steve to the address below. Remember, just 10p per mile will bring Socialist Challenge £2.60. If Steve can run 26 miles for us, surely you can afford the paltry effort of sponsoring him. Write to Marathon sponsorship, Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Renew your sellers' sub now!

Many of our regular readers and sellers took out subscriptions six months ago. Many of these are now falling due for renewal. Next week's Socialist Challenge will be 16 pages packed with articles and interviews on the healthworkers' day of action and the battle at Labour Party conference against the witch-hunt. If you don't want to miss your copy of this crucial issue of the paper, then rush your renewal subscription to us immediately.

Rally round the paper!

WITH A FRONT PAGE that will proclaim the need to kick out the Tories and to win a Labour government pledged to socialist policies, we are expecting big sales of the paper and subscriptions in the week of the National Strike.

* On the big day itself, teams of Socialist Challenge sellers will be travelling up to London on Wednesday, distributing our statement, selling the paper and subscriptions.

If you want to join your local team phone Distribution on 01-359 8371 and we'll put you in touch.

In London, sellers will be meeting at the Belvedere Road entrance to County Hall at 10.30am to sell along the route. All supporters welcomed.

* On the Young CND 'Jobs not Bombs' march Socialist Challenge will be sold all along the route in Salford, Bolton, Preston and on arrival in Blackpool itself. With its interviews with marchers, the review of this year's CND conference and a look-back at the Malvinas war, Socialist Challenge is vital for every anti-missile activist. Contact 061-236 4905 if you can help with sales.

* At Labour Party conference Socialist Challenge will be alongside those delegates fighting the witch-hunt.

With an issue-by-issue guide to the conference, in depth coverage of the witch-hunt, and with Ron Brown MP previewing the issues at the conference, Socialist Challenge will be indispensable reading for this cross-roads conference. Contact Brian Smith on 01-359 8371 if you want to join our sales team at Blackpool.

Let's rally round the paper!

Leadership prepares expulsions

Fight the witch-hunt

MICHAEL FOOT and the labour leadership have made their plans for the witch-hunt abundantly clear. First the register of organisations within the Labour Party will be passed by the conference, and then the leadership of the Militant tendency will be expelled.

The first targets will be the eight parliamentary candidates who support Militant, then other named leaders of Militant will be expelled - anywhere between 20 and 70 people.

Last Sunday Foot said that he expected local constituency parties to 'deal with' the Militant candidates. The organisation sub-committee last Monday agreed that in future prospective candidates will be expected to publicly renounce Militant in order to get NEC approval.

There should be no illusion that the witch-hunt will be limited to a small group of Militant supporters. If the expulsion of the Militant leaders is accepted, the ground will be prepared to take the expulsions further. Other groups will come under fire. The right wing will not be satisfied with a few token scalps.

At the present time the Militant itself seems prepared to 'roll with the punches' - to accept limited expulsions in return for the opportunity to build up their support. This is a foolish policy which allows the Labour leadership to get away with murder in return for a promise of future compromise. But if witch hunter-in-chief Foot comes for the Militant leadership today, he will be back for the rest of their supporters and other left-

total opposition to the register and refusal to implement or co-operate with either.

The decision of the Labour leadership to lunge ahead with this full scale witch hunt is a devastating blow to the struggle against the Tories and the prospects of a Labour victory at the next general election. Michael Foot said at the weekend that they key thing for the Labour Party is to get over

its internal differences and 'direct its attention to the fundamental issue of unemployment' and the fight against the Tories. But their action in trying to expel Militant supporters has ensured that this is impossible.

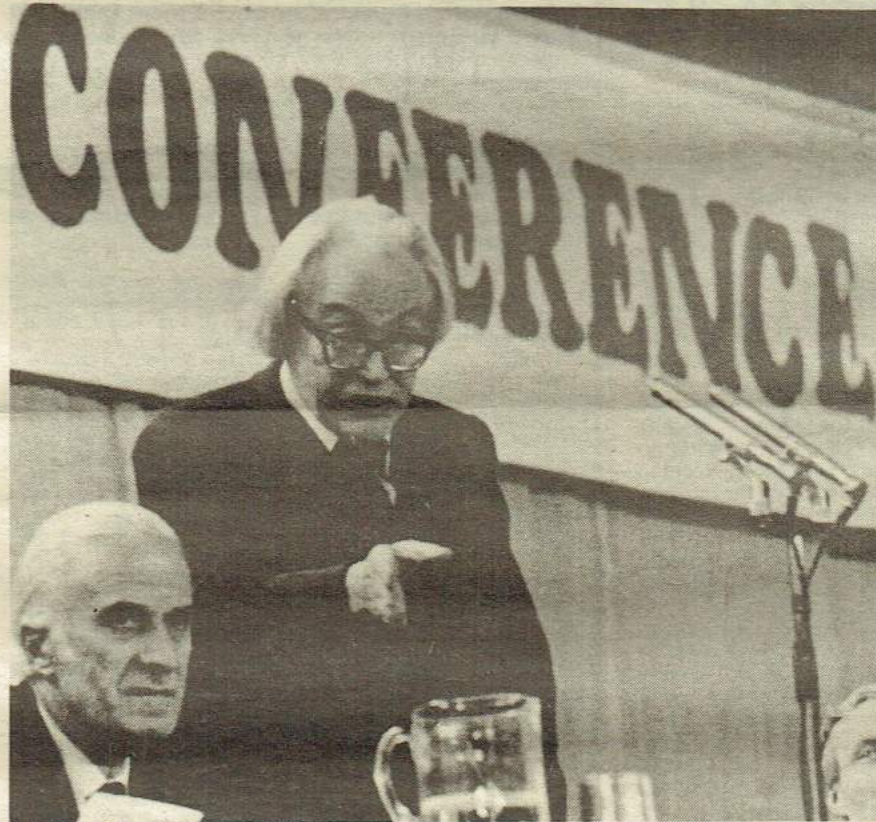
After the Labour conference a huge battle against constituency parties who refuse to accept the dropping of their parliamentary candidates and the expulsion of

members. It is on the cards that local parties will be dis-affiliated. No internal peace is possible while the parliamentary leadership is determined to expel socialists from the party.

It is now very obvious that Labour's leaders have given up any hope of winning the election. The prospect of forming the government while the left in the party and the unions is very strong terrifies them. They want to blame the left, and the Bennite left in particular, for electoral defeat. They are prepared to plunge the party into disarray in order to defeat the left once and for all.

The hypocrisy and betrayal involved in these actions is incredible. Foot, Shore, Healey and company have no compunction whatever in walking over the aspirations of millions of working people to ensure that Labour is made 'safe' - for the ruling class. If the consequence is another five years of Thatcher, or five years of Tory/Alliance government, then so be it.

To prepare all-out opposition to the witch hunt, Hackney North CLP with the support of 15 other constituencies is organising a conference for 30 October. All labour movement bodies should send delegates. For details write to: Labour Parties against the witch hunt, c/o 60 Ferndale Rd., London SW4.



Foot; will not stop at Militant leaders

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