

## BL workers: Seize the plants!

# Don't pay for the bosses' mess!

With unemployment already aiming towards the two-million mark and inflation predicted to top 20 per cent next year, Sir Michael Edwardes' announcement in early September that British Leyland would die without massive surgery and another transfusion of government cash was hardly welcome news for the ruling class. The Ryder Plan instituted under Wilson's Labour government was supposed to have been BL's salvation, through a programme of nationalisation and rationalisation underwritten to the tune of £1000 million from the state's coffers. Four years and £775 million later, BL self-evidently remains the 'sick man' of a sick economy.

Since his appointment by Labour as BL chairman, Edwardes has added his own ruthless touch to the Labour rationalisation scheme: in the past eighteen months jobs have been slashed at the rate of 1000 every month. To no avail -- BL's sales have continued a steady decline, its share of the domestic market slipping to 20 per cent.

Despite the Thatcher government's proclaimed commitment to a policy of denationalisations and no more bail-outs, right now it is not likely to let BL just go by the boards. The chronically ailing balance of payments is already in the red; BL's demise would lead to the loss of another £900 million in exports. And the political consequences could be even more disastrous: hundreds of thousands more unemployed, with a particularly cataclysmic effect in the industrial heartland of the Midlands.

Edwardes' real message is union-busting blackmail. Leyland's workers will have to beg for 'survival' (illusory though it may be) -- and pay the price. If BL is to go to the government for the remainder of its subsidy and yet another handout, then BL workers have to acquiesce to Edwardes' proposal that the failing motor giant 'be streamlined in terms of plants and slimmed down in terms of people' -- at a



Leyland workers demonstrate against proposed sackings, London, 9 October

Mark Rusher, IFL

cost of eight plant closures, five more partial closures and a minimum of 25,000 redundancies (to hit upwards of 40,000 in the wake of yet another 'productivity incentive' scheme). And to make absolutely clear that he is out to snap the spine of militant trade-union defence of working conditions, Edwardes has singled out London's Park Royal bus plant -- with enough orders on the books to keep it busy another two years -- which he claims must be shut down 'simply because of the appalling lack of productivity'.

The bosses responded to some tepid verbal opposition from BL shop stewards by playing 'workers' participation' for all it is worth. A 'Secret Ballot on the Company's plan for the recovery of BL' was posted to every one of the 165,000 employees. Foremen were sent to proselytise for a 'yes' vote on the line, special appeals issued to the 'wives and families', even a piece of cinematic trash entitled 'The Big Decision' was churned out. 'We just do not have

a concerted outcry from MG faddists around the world; the bureaucrats have not lifted a finger in defence of its workforce.

On the contrary, the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions has actually come out in *open support* of the sacking of 25,000 of its members. The Transport and General Workers Union bureaucracy, representing half the BL workforce, followed by the small white-collar TASS, were more discreet -- but they are similarly doing next to nothing to fight Edwardes' proposals. Edwardes' plan was also rejected by a 13 October mass meeting of Leyland shop stewards. Yet beyond vague promises of support for any plans to resist the closures, all these 'leaders' have offered by way of strategy is a call for blacking any work transferred from threatened plants.

What else can they offer? Down the line they all hailed the 39-hour week (to be implemented

the resources to back losers', sneered Sir Michael.

### Betrayal after betrayal

Neither does the working class! Not one more job must be sacrificed to keep the interest payments (which devoured more than half of the £48 million pre-tax profits for the first six months of this year) rolling into the hands of the banks and former shareholders of this nationalised capitalist loser. The only worthwhile 'vote' in Edwardes' phoney referendum is to burn the ballot.

But BL workers are saddled with a do-nothing leadership and demoralised by a string of defeats, including last year's closures of the Speke and Southall plants. At Park Royal, workers have already opted for a redundancy offer of several thousand pounds (predicated on uninterrupted production until the plant shuts down next June). MG-Abingdon may survive the cuts, but only because of

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# Leyland ...

(Continued from page 1)

in 1981!) cajoled out of the engineering employers through the recent weak-kneed one and two-day strikes as a 'historic victory'. And shaving 12 minutes off the work-day is not much of a basis for fighting mass redundancies through work-sharing on full pay.

Not that a fighting programme was forthcoming from the fake Trotskyists of the International Marxist Group (IMG) and Workers Socialist League (WSL), who also lauded the engineering strike outcome as a 'historic hours breakthrough' (*Socialist Press*, 10 October). In virtually identical interviews on facing pages of the IMG's *Socialist Challenge* (18 October), *Socialist Challenge* supporter and Jaguar steward Paul Shevlin and WSL leader and Cowley scab deputy convenor Alan Thornett came out with virtually identical calls for 'resistance' -- by the plants already targeted for the axe -- and occupations only in those plants.

Certainly the threatened plants must fight the sackings. But a fight centred just on those plants would be doomed to defeat. It is precisely this sort of narrow parochialism with which Thornett justified his support of Cowley's scabbing on the national engineering strike. (See 'Alan Thornett: Scab!', *Spartacist Britain* no 15, October.) Thornett must be breathing easy that his plant is not among those bestowed with the privilege of single-handed 'resistance'!

The parochial, craftist outlook which leads workers to view their interests as separate from those of other trades and other factories is a reactionary and divisive hangover from the era of the guilds. BL's redundancy plan is an attack on all Leyland workers, and its repercussions will be immediately felt on working conditions throughout the entire motor industry. A successful struggle against the BL sackings can and must be taken beyond Leyland itself. Leyland workers' brothers at Ford, for example, are right now pursuing their own claim. They must combine their fights to win much higher wages and better working conditions throughout the industry.

## Seize the plants!

If the social democrats and their camp followers are incapable of advancing a programme to fight Leyland's attacks, it is because their only solution is to plead with the bourgeois state to 'save Leyland', with one 'alternative' recovery scheme after another. With Leyland already under state ownership, they can no longer trot out their favourite old plea for nationalisation -- so they demand instead more cash bail-outs, more production (to be sold where?), more protectionist import controls or ... more nationalisations.

The BL sackings can only be defeated if

workers tear off the social-democratic strait-jacket which holds them responsible for repairing the bosses' economy. No bargaining over government bail-outs, no negotiating over who gets the axe, no agonising over alternative recovery schemes -- *Seize the plants!* For immediate occupation of all BL plants, the occupations to be run by rank-and-file elected factory committees! Hit the bosses where it hurts -- not just Leyland, but an immediate industry-wide strike!

Not one penny lost, not one job lost! Any necessary retraining and relocation must be at the bosses' full expense. For work-sharing on full pay -- not a 39-hour week but thirty hours for forty hours' pay! For unemployment benefits equal to full pay and guaranteed by the state! Let the bosses try to get Leyland out of its bind.

## For bankruptcy under workers control?

BL's crisis condition is the product of decades of gross mismanagement, miserly capital underinvestment and a well-earned notoriety for shoddy quality and service, accelerated by the situation in the motor industry internationally and further aggravated by the overvaluation of British export goods. Dividends were lavish and capitalist commonsense scarce -- as much as fifteen years after the merger of Austin and Morris the two divisions maintained separate books and separate boards of directors. Even should Edwardes' latest speed-up scheme succeed, BL's targeted production capacity would still be less than half that of its major capitalist competitors internationally.

Little wonder that even the right-wing Tory *Spectator* (22 October) has offered the following 'modest proposal':

'British Leyland is clearly not a great national asset.... Since the company is worth nothing or less than nothing ... give the entire operation to the workers and let them manage it themselves.'

And predictably enough, this Tory parody of 'socialist self-management' is exactly what the Labourite *Militant* (21 September) wants:

'A board of one-third workers in the industry, elected through the trade unions, one-third elected by the TUC, and one-third appointed by the government [!] would ensure that the interests of the working class, not those of big business, were in a majority....  
'Such industries would by their success show their clear superiority over private enterprise. The nightmare of industrial decline and unemployment ... could become a thing of the past.'

All this social-democratic cretinism is echoed in only a slightly more leftish form by the other fake Trotskyists. Arguing against the Stalinists' 'nationalist call for import controls' the centrist WSL advances the demand for opening BL's books, to 'confirm the necessity

for the nationalisation, without compensation of the entire automotive industry and the banks if jobs are to be protected' (*Socialist Press*, 17 October, emphasis in original).

But for all the WSL's sputtering against the Stalinists, nationalising the car industry can only 'protect jobs' if it is part and parcel of a chauvinist campaign to 'buy British' in order to prop up the ailing national economy. It is patently obvious from the Leyland experience that by itself nationalisation is not going to protect jobs. In the decade following 1963, Britain's share of car production in Western Europe and Japan fell from 27 to 11 per cent -- and with lost sales have come tens of thousands of lost jobs, whether in nationalised companies or not.

The plight of Leyland workers will not be solved by a Leyland writ large -- a nationalised British car industry propped up by subsidies lifted from the taxpayers' pockets and bolstered against international competition by protectionist import controls. This is nothing but the reformist, inherently chauvinist, formula for dividing up a shrinking pie -- 'saving' car workers' jobs in Britain at the expense of the jobs of car workers internationally. Indeed the whole reformist hue and cry over saving Leyland is infused with social-chauvinist sentiment over 'our' nationalised motor industry -- a foul foretaste of the furore these 'socialists' will whip up to save 'our fatherland' in the event of another inter-imperialist war foreshadowed by stiffening protectionist barriers.

Leyland workers must demand to see the books, but not in order to counsel the ruling class on how better to run a bankrupt industry, or worse yet, to run it themselves as a 'socialist' island in a capitalist sea. Far from demonstrating the historically progressive character of nationalised property relations, 'socialism in one industry' proves only that 'worker-managers' can go bankrupt under capitalism as easily as privately owned enterprises -- as the erstwhile enthusiasts (like the IMG) of the Lip watch strike, the Clyde shipyard work-in and the Lucas 'Alternative Plan' should ably testify. All over the world, Britain's 'socialism' a la Leyland is just what right wingers eagerly point to as their proof that socialism doesn't work.

No, workers must demand to see how much Leyland really has been driven into the ground by the irrationalities of capitalist mismanagement -- and incidentally to see how many other perks and baubles it is hiding besides the now notorious £60,000 recently proffered to Princess Anne's playboy husband to buy show-jumping horses, or the million pound 'luxury' trip round the gale-ridden Irish Sea for Leyland's unfortunate dealers. If BL can be set on its feet, let the bosses try it -- at their own expense. If not, the plants and assets which the workers have seized should be disposed of by the workers -- not the capitalist state, not the bondholders -- and all the money

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## SWP scabs at LSE

# Spartacist students support NALGO strikers

On Monday, 1 October, NALGO members at universities throughout Britain staged a one-day strike. This action naturally demanded the full support of all university workers and pro-working-class students -- so student members and supporters of the Spartacist League in both London and Birmingham joined the NALGO workers' picket lines.

At the London School of Economics, strikers welcomed Spartacist Society members bearing placards saying 'Victory to the NALGO workers' and 'Picket lines mean don't cross'. In a leaflet the LSE Spartacist Society pointed to the need for 'united labour-student mobilisations against all education and social service cuts' within the framework of full support for this and all workers struggles:

'The picket line is the class line -- students must rally to the workers' side. Today, our place is not inside getting our NUS cards and talking about fees and grants but outside with the workers who are fighting against the same government and administration attacks that affect us. The whole university should be shut down until the workers' demands are won.'

Several students were in fact dissuaded from crossing the picket lines upon reading our comrades' leaflet.

Not so the 'socialist' parliamentary cretins of the National Organisation of Labour Students, or the pro-Albanian Stalinist student bureaucrats of the London Student Movement -- or the 'honest militant' workerists of the Socialist Workers Student Organisation (student group of Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party [SWP]). Every one of these fake-left groups at LSE crossed picket lines to peddle their reformist tripe at the Freshers' Fair. At least one SWP member also waltzed past the NALGO pickets at Birmingham University. The Cliffites actually violated the call in their own leaflet for students to 'honour the pickets'.

So, when seasoned reformist Tony Cliff himself arrived at LSE four days later to speak on the need to fight the Tory offensive against the right to picket, one of our comrades naturally rose during the discussion to point out that Cliff had better set his own house in order first. Feigning incredulity and outrage, Cliff retorted that if any SWP member did cross a picket line, he would personally see to it that they were immediately expelled.

The SWP leader's chance came only seconds later, as an embarrassed SWP student got up to 'justify' crossing the picket lines, offering the old scab refrain that the lines were only

'informational', that the workers had not demanded that they be respected, that the workers could not be told what to do etc etc. So, Comrade Cliff, we're still waiting for the expulsions. But then again, if the SWP started expelling members for betraying elementary proletarian principles, they'd have to start right at the top.

As a letter from the Spartacist Society to the LSE student newspaper concluded:

'Those interested in strike support, not strikebreaking, and a revolutionary programme, not hollow rhetoric, will know in future to look to the Spartacist Society and the Spartacist League.' (*Beaver*, October 1979)

## LSE Spartacist Society public forum

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The Mullahs' Left-Wing Apostles Paved the Way for Khomeini's Islamic Reaction!

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London School of Economics  
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# Pope, Paisleyites and Provos

'In whatever country he is invited, Pope John Paul II can descend from the sky and be greeted by millions with genuine love. Such magnetism is power. The Pope knows it, enjoys it and intends to use it....'

With these rapturous words, the *Economist* hailed the recent Irish and American visits of the Apostle of Anti-Communism. From Westminster to Washington, imperialist politicians joined in the singing of hosannas, for in the globe-trotting 'human rights' pope they have not just the head of an institution which wields the sceptre of mediaeval reaction over hundreds of millions of the world's oppressed, but a tireless messenger of the 'virtues' of capitalist oppression.

In Mexico the pope beseeched the starving masses of Latin America to surrender unto the military dictators of the continent all that was asked of them. In Poland he urged his flock to assert the 'temporal authority' of the Church against the godless reign of Communism. In America he implored jobless blacks to eschew material values. And his sermon to the two-and-a-half million Irish (the vast majority of the Catholic population of the entire island) who turned out to hear him during his three-day visit was no different: hew to the traditional paths of piety and devotion, shun material advancement and abandon the struggle against oppression in the North.

But Ireland is the land where, as prodigal son James Joyce put it, 'Christ and Caesar go hand in glove'. Wherever he went John Paul II was surrounded by Green nationalist politicians as eager to kiss his ringed fingers as they are to kiss the arse of British imperialism. The whole travelling road show for clerical reaction provided as dramatic confirmation as could be wished that there is no solution to the oppression of the Irish masses within the framework of *gombeen* nationalism. Waltzing about in his velvet cape, bearing his jewel-encrusted crucifix, admonishing women made haggard by child-bearing against the mortal sins of contraception and abortion -- and visibly receiving mass support and adulation -- the Ayatollah of Rome did more than any Loyalist tract could ever do to reinforce the backward chauvinist prejudices of the Protestant workers in the North. Why break the chains of British imperialism and its royal 'defender of the realm' only to be bound by the chains of a spiritual prince whose mass influence is every bit as reactionary and more all-embracing?

## Pope against the Provos, Provos for the pope

It was at Drogheda, on the first day of the visit, that the pope delivered the political

message the capitalist politicians were waiting to hear. In this town steeped in Irish Catholic nationalist symbolism -- where Cromwell put the entire garrison and as many priests as he could find to the sword, and the Protestant William of Orange decisively routed the forces of the deposed James II -- John Paul blessed the preserved head of Oliver Plunkett, the canonised Catholic bishop who was hung, drawn and quartered by Charles II in 1681. And there on the altar was Social Democratic and Labour Party leader John Hume, reading the epistle of the day; alongside him stood Fianna Fail Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, Padraig Faulkner, leading the crowd in prayers in Gaelic.

Echoing some of the worries of US imperialist spokesmen like Tip O'Neill and Ted Kennedy that a solution must be found to the Irish crisis, the pope nevertheless predictably aimed most of his sermon against the petty-bourgeois nationalists of the Provisional IRA and their continuing military campaign against the British imperialist army: 'The longer the violence continues in Ireland, the more the danger will grow that this beloved land could become yet another theatre for international terrorism.' His sermon was clearly directed at reinforcing the subordination of the Catholic masses in the South to their bourgeois rulers and in the North to their imperialist overlords.

But if the pope did not bestow his blessings on the IRA, the Provisional Republican movement all too enthusiastically bestowed *their* blessings on him. 'The northern nationalist people in terms of being a beleaguered Catholic community badly need spiritual reassurance and acknowledgement at this time', they preached (*An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 6 October). Their one regret was that the pope didn't visit the North but they felt that the 'breath-takingly satisfying sights in Phoenix Park and elsewhere' might be sufficient pastoral compensation.

So what about John Paul's 'spiritual reassurance'? In Dublin he told a crowd of over one million to uphold the Rosary, Benediction and Holy Hour devotions; at Limerick he excoriated divorce, abortion and birth control and called on the government to 'always support marriage, through personal commitment and through positive social and legal action'. At Galway he told assembled youth, 'Do not imagine you can organise your own lives.' At Knock he stepped out of his helicopter to affirm that the Mother of God had indeed landed there a hundred years earlier (presumably not by helicopter) and should henceforth be known as 'Mary, Queen of Ireland'. With this 'spiritual reassurance' added to its reactionary arsenal, the powerful Irish Catholic hierarchy, notorious for its opposition to any liberalising reforms, will now redouble its efforts to ensure that women are

kept as firmly as ever in the home, that new-fangled notions like secular education never see the light of day, and generally that Ireland remains a fertile breeding ground for the thousands of nuns and priests needed to man the Catholic missions of the world.

The pope's tour showed exactly what the mediaeval papal philosophy is all about -- not just a more superstitious version of Christian dogma than that propounded by the now-equally reactionary Protestant religions, but a social and political programme flatly opposed to every interest of the workers and oppressed. The Holy Father appealed to Northern Ireland Protestants not to think of him as 'an enemy, a danger or a threat'. Yet he demonstrated throughout his visit that he was an enemy, a danger and a threat to every Irish worker -- Protestant *and* Catholic.

And what did the Provisionals think about all this? They did politely beg to differ with the Pontiff about the need to struggle against British imperialism, but focussed their ire on 'discriminating editorials ... which called on the Provos, and not the 400,000 Irish women on the Pill, to say "The Pope is right, there is another way"' (ibid). Presumably if the Irish papers had launched an even-handed campaign against the provision of contraceptives and the IRA, then the Provisionals would have been content. After all this is the same organisation whose group in the Clonard area of Belfast issued a leaflet in 1977 citing as an example of 'Brit oppression' the 70,000 'babies killed' in Britain as a result of the 1967 Abortion Act!

Only when the Irish workers are led by a revolutionary party -- which enjoys decisive support from both the Catholic and Protestant working masses -- to the seizure of state power will the democratic questions facing the Irish masses be resolved: the separation of church and state, the securing of equal rights for women, breaking the chains of national oppression in the North. Such a party can only be built by those with the programme and determination to raze to the ground the sectarian barriers which divide the working class -- a programme of unconditional opposition to imperialism, to the reactionary sectarian Orange state *and* to the Green nationalist goal of forcibly incorporating the Six Counties into a united capitalist, Catholic Ireland. And, such a party will be infused with the spirit (paraphrasing Voltaire) that authentic freedom will finally come when the last capitalist is found dangling from the entrails of the last priest -- or parson.

Troops out now! Not Orange against Green but class against class! For an Irish workers republic in a socialist federation of the British Isles! ■

# IMG cheers Polish anti-communists

The pseudo-Trotskyist International Marxist Group (IMG) has found a new East European 'dissident' movement to champion: the explicitly reactionary, anti-communist Confederation of Independent Poland (KPN). Uncritically introducing an interview with chief KPN spokesman Leszek Moczulski on 27 September, the IMG's *Socialist Challenge* says of the new party:

'This is a major development: for the first time an opposition group has taken up the problem of power. Previous efforts were defined in terms of "democratisation", which often ended up in pushing for initiatives from the bureaucracy. 'The KPN, on the other hand, is saying in effect: no democratisation without overthrowing the bureaucracy.'

In its enthusiasm for 'overthrowing the bureaucracy', the IMG appears not to care whether this is accomplished by the proletariat in a political revolution for soviet democracy or by counterrevolutionary forces seeking the restoration of capitalism. The Confederation of Independent Poland is clearly an example of the latter. Its founding declaration (reprinted in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, September-October 1979) rails against 'Communist Russia' and attacks the Western imperialist powers for allowing 'the subordination of Poland to Soviet hegemony' after World War II. It announces: 'Today the Polish nation again awakens and raises its head', and calls on 'all Poles within the country and in exile to join in common activities with the aim of freedom and

independence'.

In response to the question 'What are the aims of the KPN?', Moczulski again quotes the party's declaration:

'"The opportunity to create a new, third Polish republic, independent and democratic, must not be wasted. The only road to this aim is the ending of Soviet domination through the liquidation of the power of the Polish Unified Workers Party [Polish Communist Party]."' (*Socialist Challenge*, *op cit*)

And on the question of the nationalised Polish economy, Moczulski adds:

'Certain groups which are part of the KPN ... think that it's necessary to build a real socialist system....'

'Other groups, however, who see state control of the economy as leading straight to totalitarianism, envisage a large area of private initiative.'

The KPN echoes both the phrases and the message of Western imperialist leaders, who seek to smash the gains of the social overturns in the deformed workers states and restore capitalist exploitation. The rhetoric is all there: for 'democracy', 'independence' and 'human rights'; even a bit of vague 'real socialism' for more social-democratic palates.

Imperialist mouthpieces have welcomed the new party with almost as much enthusiasm as the editors of *Socialist Challenge*. The *Economist* (8-14 September) describes how the KPN was founded after a special mass in Warsaw Cathedral, in the wake of the pope's anti-commu-

nist pilgrimage to Poland in the summer. It remarks:

'The new party draws its support from outspoken anti-Marxist, Catholic and nationalist activists in the Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights as well as from some student groups and other factions that have split off from the regime-sponsored Pax movement.'

In fact the formation of this party appears to have been directly influenced by the new crusading 'human rights' papacy. During his

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## SPARTACIST BRITAIN

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# Rotten, yes – A bloc? Not for long

## OCI/Moreno manoeuvres

As events in Nicaragua send the United Secretariat carousel madly whirling, the USec has spun off an unexpected liaison. Suddenly the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) of Pierre Lambert is making common cause with Nahuel Moreno's Bolshevik Faction (BF). Only yesterday it would have seemed to casual observers that the Lambertistes and Morenoites stood on opposite ends of the pseudo-Trotskyist spectrum, and never the twain would meet. The BF these days lays claim to the USec's left flank, while the OCI represents the closest thing to a chemically pure social-democratic parody of Trotskyism. Yet today they unite to praise the Simon Bolivar Brigade (BSB) which was recently expelled from Nicaragua by the victorious Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) and to denounce a 'reconstituted' (but unstable) USec majority led by Ernest Mandel and Jack Barnes. Today, but not tomorrow; for this most putrid of rotten blocs is likely to have the lifespan of a mosquito.

At a stormy meeting of the United Secretariat over the weekend of September 30 the USec adopted a series of motions which add up to total liquidation of an independent presence and political line in Nicaragua, in favour of complete subordination to the petty-bourgeois Sandinista Front. The Moreno-led Bolivar Brigade was unequivocally condemned and the BF ordered to cease operating as a 'public faction' on pain of expulsion. A lengthy political resolution, 'Nicaragua: Revolution on the March', fulminates against a 'headlong plunge into ultraleftism' and 'adventuristically forcing the rhythm of the class struggle', while labelling calls to break with the bourgeoisie a 'sectarian temptation of applying an abstract schema' (*Intercontinental Press*, 22 October). It ends by calling for the USec supporters to act 'as loyal militants of the organisation which led the overthrow of Somoza' -- ie time to dissolve your organisation, join the FSLN, shut up and take orders.

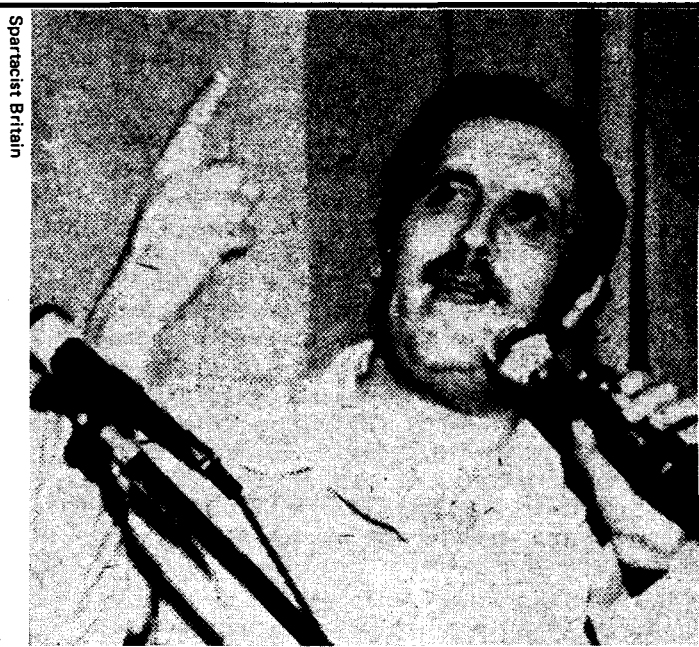
In response to this treachery Moreno submitted a countermotion condemning the USec's scandalous refusal to express even elementary solidarity with its own 'comrades' in the face of repression by the bourgeois Nicaraguan government. This Bolshevik Faction resolution 'reject[s] these measures, which break all rules of democratic centralism', and calls on militants to 'prevent the holding of an anti-democratic World Congress'. The threat to split before the USec's 'Eleventh World Congress', scheduled for early November, was clear. In addition to Moreno's BF, members of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency (LTT) voted for this motion. (The LTT is a grouping of former supporters of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction -- led by the American Socialist Workers Party -- who after the SWP's dissolution of the LTF in 1977 wanted to continue the factional struggle against the USec majority under Mandel, and have since politically aligned themselves *grosso modo* with the Lambertistes.)

Immediately after the explosion in Brussels representatives of the LTT and the BF held a private meeting with the leadership of the OCI which then provocatively published this fact in its public newsletter (*Lettre d'Informations Ouvrières*, 10 October) along with various USec internal documents ('from a dossier given us by comrade Moreno'). The newsletter publicly endorses the Simon Bolivar Brigade and the BF as attempting to 'aid the masses in developing their own organisations' while the 6 October issue of the OCI's newspaper *Informations Ouvrières* (10) announces that refusal to defend the BSB's right to stay in Nicaragua would be joining 'the liquidators of the Fourth International'. (In the previous month and a half the weekly *IO* had nothing to say on the subject.)

So the bloc is sealed, at least for the purposes of the joint wrecking operation against the SWP and Mandel, while the OCI's previous attempts to join the United Secretariat have apparently been shelved for now. Lambert was angling to blow apart the USec and now that a split is clearly in the offing he has simply



Rotten 'bloc', rotten partners -- Pierre Lambert (left), Nahuel Moreno



placed his money and picked his horse.

In the face of the SWP's outrageous support for Sandinista Front repression against the workers and its alliance with the 'anti-Somoza bourgeoisie' in a capitalist country, and in contrast to the Mandelites' more shamefaced and whimpering capitulation, it is very cheap for the Moreno/Lambert bloc to look left on Nicaragua. Thus the OCI wrote of the new FSLN-appointed regime:

'This bourgeois government installed solely due to the reconciliationist spirit of the Sandinista leaders ... has received for the accomplishment of this counterrevolutionary task the support of imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy....' (*IO*, 8-23 August).

Similarly the Costa Rican Organizacion Socialista de los Trabajadores (OST), a USec sympathising section which is linked to the LTT and directly tied to the French OCI, wrote in its newspaper *Que Hacer?* (26 June-11 July) shortly before the fall of Somoza that the opposition by the FSLN's provisional government to immediate elections 'clearly demonstrates its intentions of safeguarding the interests of the national bourgeoisie and imperialism....' (translated in *Intercontinental Press*, 1 October). In turn the Colombian Morenoites of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) write that Latin American governments '... bought "life insurance" for capitalism in Nicaragua with their intervention and support to the FSLN.... To sum up, the "democratic" bourgeoisies have sent the bill to the FSLN; and the advice of Castro is very clear: pay up!' (*El Socialista*, 7 September).

These are very left-sounding critiques of the currently popular Sandinista regime, but the real policies of the BF/BSB and the OCI/LTT are considerably to the right of their present posturing and moreover mutually sharply counterposed. In fact before the FSLN took power on July 20 there was no basis whatever for Morenoites to unite with Lambertistes in or over Nicaragua. As we have explained previously ('Sandinistas Expel Bolivar Brigade', *Spartacist Britain* no 15, October 1979), the Morenoites' present hostility to the FSLN is the pique of rejected suitors. Over the last year they have repeatedly called for a Sandinista government, later dressed up as 'a government of the Front and of the workers' and people's organisations' (*El Socialista*, 15 June) and similar formulas. But the FSLN under the pressure of imperialism and 'friendly' Latin American capitalist governments and at the behest of Castro prefers the company of industrialists and technocrats.

As for the Morenoites' policies in the Simon Bolivar Brigade, they were even more opportunist (while also aggressively pressuring the FSLN tops, soon leading to their downfall). Sending an international brigade is a sometimes necessary and valiant tactic for communists in civil war situations; the participation of several dozen European Trotskyists in the POUM's Lenin

Brigade during the Spanish Civil War for instance was principled and admirable. But since one can't expect to operate independently of an existing military leadership it is *essential* to establish and defend the uniquely proletarian character of such a unit. The Bolivar Brigade was a parody of these principles. Its very name denies a working class character and the Morenoite 'open letter' calling for its establishment says flatly 'the only programmatic point of the Simon Bolivar Brigade is to support the struggle of the Sandinista people' (*El Socialista*, 22 June). In addition to the Morenoites' usual financial shady dealing -- the Colombian PST which organised the Brigade raised money by selling bogus Sandino Bonds -- they appealed to the Colombian government to 'legally recognise the Simon Bolivar Brigade, guaranteeing its papers, transportation and financing'.

But if Moreno & Co tried to capitalise on enthusiasm for the Sandinista-led revolution against the hated tyrant Somoza and their gimmick simply blew up in their faces, at least they stood to the *left* of the petty-bourgeois nationalist FSLN. In contrast the Costa Rican OST and by extension its co-thinkers in the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency *denounced the Sandinista Front as criminally adventurist and ultraleftist!* Their chief spokesman on Nicaragua is one Fausto Amador, a brother of assassinated FSLN founder Carlos Fonseca Amador, who split from the Front several years ago as a demoralised element. In a pamphlet entitled 'Dondé va Nicaragua?' ('Where is Nicaragua Going?'), published in February by the OST, Fausto Amador and Sara Santiago presented an analysis that was not only one hundred per cent wrong -- it amounted to defeatist propaganda, in effect calling on the Nicaraguan masses to lay down their arms when the showdown with the dictator was almost under way:

'In Nicaragua, the second offensive was rapidly being converted into a myth which no one believed any more.... There will not be a second offensive. That is obvious for everyone, at least in the immediate future.... The lack of a second offensive revealed the September [1978] action as an ill-fated adventure.'

The OST/LTT's 'alternative' -- peaceful demonstrations for democratic rights -- was cretinous legalism in a country suffering under a bonapartist dictatorship and, moreover, in the throes of a popularly-supported insurgency. As we noted when the American SWP printed a similar piece by Amador and Santiago last June:

'To present this social-democratic cowardice and demoralization as having anything to do with Marxism is just about the worst thing the SWP/USec could do to besmirch the name of Trotskyism before the Central American masses.' (*Workers Vanguard* no 234, 22 June).

As for the OCI, its opposition to the new FSLN regime is based purely and simply on Stalinophobia -- denouncing 'the sudden resurrection of the moribund Nicaraguan Socialist Party

(national branch office of the Kremlin)' and 'the excessive weight of its members vis-à-vis the Sandinistas in the government' (IO, 8-23 August).

### Portugal, Angola, Cuba ...

We have dealt elsewhere with the stark contradiction between the abstract 'leftism' of Moreno's Bolshevik Faction on Eurocommunism, the dictatorship of the proletariat or popular frontism in far-off Europe and its ultra-opportunist practice in Latin America (political support to Peron, Torrijos etc). But what of its new bloc partners of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency (and its mentors in the OCI)? In opposing the dissolution of the LTF in 1977 the future LTTers put forward a face of left-wing militancy: where the SWP called the Mandeliste majority ultraleft they said centrist; where Jack Barnes said the faction was formed to fight guerrillaism alone they said it was also to fight popular frontism at home. But by the time it came to formulating a 'Call for the Formation of an International Tendency' ([SWP] International Internal Discussion Bulletin, December 1978), the future LTT stood on the whole of the 'programmatic and political acquisitions' of the LTF and in particular the texts of the LTF on the Portuguese revolution and on Angola.

This statement definitely branded the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency as a *reformist* formation and ignominious capitulators besides. For what did the LTF stand in Portugal and Angola? At the height of the 1975 polarisation in Portugal when Lisbon workers were taking over factories, the LTF called for a purely 'democratic' programme of defence of the Constituent Assembly (at the time the battle cry of the right). As the Socialist Party of Mario Soares was leading the mass anti-communist mobilisations which were burning down CP offices, the SWP proclaimed that the 'real vanguard of the Portuguese working class ... participated in the SP demonstrations' (*Militant* [US], 8 August 1975). And the OCI called for a 'Soares government' (IO, 23 July-6 August 1975). Moreno broke from the SWP and the LTF precisely over this issue, while the future LTTers were at first even harder in condemning the SWP's tailing after Soares (only to capitulate a few weeks later and vote for the LTF's 'Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution' resolution).

For principled Marxists differences of the magnitude that divided the Morenoites and Lambertists over Portugal would make unity *impossible*: like the SWP and Mandel they would have been facing each other on opposite sides of the barricades in Lisbon. The same on Angola;

where at the height of the fighting between the South African-led, CIA-financed imperialist drive on Luanda the SWP/LTF *refused to take sides* for the military victory of the Soviet-backed MPLA. (Later they tried to disguise this vile betrayal by some heavy-handed 'editing' of the January 1976 SWP National Committee statement.) Moreno denounced this in the most violent terms, publishing a whole book on the subject (*Angola: Revolucion Negra en Marcha* [1977]) where he said that 'the best way to aid Vorster and Yankee imperialism was to say what the SWP said....' So how does Moreno feel about uniting today with people who consider the SWP/LTF stand 'historic'?

And Cuba? On Cuba the LTT supports 'the general line of D Keil's contributions', while three leaders of the Costa Rican OST (Andres, Rodrigo and Sara) signed a document together with Keil labelling the Castro regime a 'bureaucratized workers state' ('For a Change in the Fourth International's Position on Cuba', [SWP] IIDB, December 1978). Again, at first glance this might seem a move to the left from the USec's political support to the 'unconscious Trotskyist' Fidel (now taken to new lengths by the SWP's latest panegyrics to Castro, the champion of peace and friend of the world's children). But as we pointed out in our article 'For Workers Political Revolution in Cuba!' (*Workers Vanguard* no 224, 2 February 1979), Keil et al

were attacking the SWP 'from the right, arguing in effect for a consistently *social-democratic* position of opposing all Stalinist regimes'. We summed up:

'Add up the SWP/LTF positions on China, Vietnam, Portugal and Angola and throw in a deformed workers state position on Cuba and what do you get? A fleshed out program of Stalinophobia.'

The LTT/OST's openly *counterrevolutionary* positions on Nicaragua, calling the Sandinistas' victorious 'second offensive' an 'adventure' are vivid confirmation of our earlier conclusion.

### ... and the strange case of Fausto Amador

These questions -- the most basic issues of revolutionary perspective in key recent events -- are but the small change in the course of trading combinations and recombinations in USec factional struggle. There is a basis of sorts for the Morenoite/Lambertist bloc: both are deeply reformist while appearing left today in Nicaragua. Besides there is the attractive bait that the OCI recently broke with Moreno's long-standing opponents in the Argentine Politica Obrera group (an enemy of my enemy makes you my friend etc). But there are a few sticking points even for these consummate opportunists -- and

*continued on page 7*



Four years before 'unity' -- Moreno defended Portuguese CP, whose offices (right) were burned by anti-communist mobs mobilised by Lambert-backed Portuguese SP

## USec/Bolivar Brigade...

(Continued from page 8)

Are they true? Just how did the FSLN pick out the Morenoite leaders of the very much larger Bolivar Brigade? Did USec representatives *supply them with names*? In a Marxist organisation any member (much less a leader) guilty of such treason would be expelled. And faced with such charges, silence by the accused can only be interpreted as admission of guilt.

Did Peter Camejo, the SWP and the USec finger the Simon Bolivar Brigade? We demand an answer!

Managua, 20 August 1979

United Secretariat of the Fourth International  
Dear Comrades:

At dawn on Friday August 17, 1979, the leadership of the Sandinista Front expelled from Nicaragua part of the membership of the Simon Bolivar Brigade, members of the Bolshevik Faction of the Fourth International. The context in which this expulsion took place was marked by a serious factional incident between a member of the United Secretariat and the leadership of the Brigade, and we consider it our duty to transmit in written form to the leadership of the International an account of the events which we witnessed. This testimony does not imply any support to the Simon Bolivar Brigade's [political] orientation, of which we have an extremely negative opinion. Our only objective is to help the appropriate bodies of the International to throw light on the inci-

dent in question and draw all the lessons so that events of the same nature and such gravity don't occur again.

The events described below happened in a situation in which the whole Simon Bolivar Brigade was summoned (through the press and radio) by the leadership of the Sandinista Front for the afternoon of August 14; the situation of conflict between the leadership of the Front and the Brigade was therefore known to all the protagonists.

Sunday at midnight comrade Manuel, a member of the United Secretariat, made a phone call to the United States. After this phone call, he stated that comrade Pedro [sic] Camejo had just informed him that the position of the comrades of the United Secretariat in Oberlin was to be even harder on the Simon Bolivar Brigade, to take no responsibility [for the Brigade] with the Sandinista Front and to collaborate with the leadership of the Sandinista Front in order to help it get rid of the Simon Bolivar Brigade. Manuel stated that comrade Camejo had asked him to remain in Nicaragua so as to be present at the meeting of the Simon Bolivar Brigade with the leadership of the Sandinista Front on Tuesday and make clear the position of the Fourth as regards the Simon Bolivar Brigade.

On the afternoon of Monday the 13th comrade Manuel had a discussion with Julio Lopez, a representative of the Sandinista party organisation, during which, according to what the comrade himself reported to us, the Simon Bolivar Brigade was discussed.

Immediately afterwards (Monday, August 13 at about 8.00pm) comrade Manuel went to the Brigade's headquarters. In front of the headquarters a discussion took place in our presence in which comrade Manuel informed the leadership of the Brigade that he was going to

meet the leadership of the Front to ask that the Simon Bolivar Brigade be kicked out of Nicaragua.

Comrades Olivier and Romero, who arrived in Managua on Tuesday the 14th, gave a different version of the position of the United Secretariat, stating that it did not include collaboration with the leadership of the Front against the Simon Bolivar Brigade.

The events described above are strictly those which we witnessed, in a situation in which we warned comrade Manuel that he could not count on our collaboration in this manoeuvre which we disapproved of from the start. The position presented as that of the United Secretariat, which, according to comrade Manuel had been communicated by telephone by comrade Camejo, and was enforced by him seems to us to constitute a break with our political principles. Whatever the magnitude of our differences, collaborating with the petty-bourgeois leadership against members of the Fourth International, within which they are organised as a faction, cannot be tolerated. Such unprincipled and factional manoeuvres can nevertheless only damage greatly the clarity of the clash of the political orientations present in the Nicaraguan revolution, as well as the defence of the International and of its unity.

Trotskyist greetings,  
Sara (Executive Committee, OST Costa Rica)  
Felix (Executive Committee, OST Costa Rica)  
Galene (Central Committee, French LCR)

cc: Bolshevik Faction, Socialist Workers Party (USA), Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Mexico), OST (Costa Rica), Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (Spain), Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (France), Manuel Aguilar, Pedro Camejo, Olivier. ■

# Chinese Trotskyist freed after 27 years

Reports have reached the West recently of the release from a Shanghai prison of the prominent Chinese Trotskyist Chen Chao-lin. According to a report in the 1 October *Intercontinental Press*, the 78-year-old revolutionary who spent a total of 34 years in jail, first under the Kuomintang (KMT) and then as a prisoner of Mao, was freed last June 5. Chen's case had been taken up earlier this year by Amnesty International as representative of a number of leading Trotskyists who 'disappeared' during the Maoists' nationwide round-up of the Chinese Left Opposition in 1952 and were not heard from since. Many were 'liquidated', in the Stalinist parlance of the day. As we said in our article, 'Mao's Jails for Revolutionaries' (*Workers Vanguard* no 63, 28 February 1975):

'Taken away to be shot, these militants demanded that they be permitted to wear signs imprinted with the single word "Trotskyist". They were refused that last subversive gesture, and were instead falsely branded "Kuomintang agents" by the Stalinists. Their executioners shoved cotton in their mouths so that they could not shout out to those watching and wondering why veteran revolutionists were being reviled and butchered.'

For years there was a curtain of silence over these persecuted militants. Arne Swabeck, the ex-Trotskyist turned Maoist (and now social democrat), claimed in print that they had been released (*Revolutionary Age*, 1975); this was corroborated, he said, by a letter from Pierre Frank, a member of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec) of the Fourth International. Chen Chao-lin's re-emergence after 27 years in jail proves that all such apologies from the friends of Mao are out-and-out lies. We demand the immediate release of all the imprisoned Chinese Trotskyists, or, if they have died under nearly three decades of Stalinist incarceration in Peking, that their fate be known!

In our 1975 article, we publicised the plight of Chen, a leader of the 1927 revolution in the Wuhan area, and a founding member of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and of the Chinese Trotskyist movement. A close collaborator of Chou En-lai and Deng Xiaoping in Paris after World War I, Chen was invited to Moscow in 1923 to attend the University for the Toilers of the East. Returning to China in 1924 he served as a leading party propagandist and, in 1927, as a member of the Hupei Provincial Committee of the CCP leading the revolutionary struggle in Wuhan. Witnessing the massacre of thousands of their comrades at the hands of their Stalin-imposed 'revolutionary ally', Chiang Kai-shek, a significant section of the leading CCP cadre were won early and hard to Trotskyism. Chen Chao-lin was among the 81 original signers of the manifesto of the Chinese Left Opposition along with such party leaders as CCP general secretary Chen Tu-hsiu and CCom Peng Shu-tse.

Arrested by the KMT in 1931, Chen spent the next seven years in jail, participating upon his release in the underground anti-Japanese resistance. According to *Intercontinental Press*, fol-



Freed Trotskyists Chen Chao-Lin, left, and Wu Ching-ju

lowing the Maoists' ascent to power in 1949, CCP leader Li Wei-han, who had known Chen in Paris, contacted him and asked him to compromise with the new regime. But Chen refused to abandon his struggle against Stalinism. He was arrested on 22 December 1952 as the Stalinist bureaucracy began a nationwide wholesale round-up of hundreds of Chinese Trotskyist militants. For his refusal to capitulate, Chen spent the next 27 years in jail, first in the notorious Ward Road Jail in Shanghai, later being transferred to a labour camp. His wife, Wu Ching-ju, a dedicated revolutionary who had earlier been released from prison, voluntarily shared Chen's last seven years of imprisonment; because of failing health, she required constant medical care, which as a political outcast in 'People's China' she could obtain only by going to prison.

At a September 9 Stockholm election rally for the KAF, Swedish section of the USec, Ernest Mandel announced the news of Chen Chao-lin's release. Never in his whole life, said Mandel, had he seen such a moving picture as that of Chen and his wife standing outside the prison with their fists clenched. No thanks to you, Ernest. It was this same Mandel, then known as Germain, together with Michel Pablo, then secretary of the Fourth International (FI), who refused to defend the Chinese Trotskyists and suppressed their appeals for aid. In one of the most shameful acts in the course of their political degeneration, the Pabloist liquidators labelled the persecuted Chinese militants 'refugees from a revolution'. While militarily supporting the Communist Party against the KMT, the valiant Trotskyists refused to bow to the victorious Mao-Stalinist bureaucracy.

As hundreds of their number were being rounded up, imprisoned and many shot, the Chinese Trotskyists smuggled out an appeal which was brought by Peng Shu-tse before the leadership of

the Fourth International. The International Secretariat of the FI headed by Pablo suppressed their desperate appeal for aid. And when Peng then submitted to the IS an 'Open Letter' to arouse world-wide working-class protest over the persecution of the Chinese Trotskyists, it was Mandel who arrived on his doorstep to announce that the IS would not support it. As Peng wrote in a letter to James P Cannon dated 30 December 1953:

'... Germain came to talk with me about it. He started by criticizing the form of the letter as completely wrong, and asked that it be written over again. According to their ideas, I should have opened the letter by first expressing a total support for the movement under the leadership of Mao's party, praising its revolutionary achievements, and then at last come to the point of enumerating the facts of their persecutions and made the protest. Secondly, Germain remarked that the views expressed in this letter diverged considerably from the line of the Resolution of the International, and for this reason he denounced me as a "hopeless sectarian". At last he said that the IS could not undertake the responsibility of sending this document to the different sections for publication. If I insisted on having it published, I myself was to be responsible for any step taken concerning it.'

Summarising his experiences with Mandel, Peng noted his 'wavering and conciliatorist spirit', adding: 'In many respects, especially in his temperament, he resembles Bukharin. He often wavers between revolutionary conscience and the momentary consideration of power.' No doubt Peng was reflecting on the steadfastness and courage of a Chen Chao-lin who was to survive 27 years in Maoist jails, compared to the cowardly capitulator Mandel, who at the slightest threat from Pablo simply threw away the Trotskyist heritage.

The struggle against Pabloist liquidation of the Fourth International was also the struggle for the lives of the valiant Chinese Trotskyist fighters. The American Socialist Workers Party had initially defended the Chinese militants as soon as they knew of their plight. But in unifying with Mandel to form the United Secretariat in 1963, they drew a curtain of silence over the shameful Pabloist betrayals in China, declaring them a matter of simply 'historical interest' and banning discussion on China for five years. In contrast to these pseudo-Trotskyists, the international Spartacist tendency has been unique in opposing all wings of the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy, calling for proletarian political revolution from the very moment of Mao's victory in 1949, and fighting for the rebirth of the Fourth International through political destruction of Pabloism.

A renascent Chinese Trotskyist movement that reappropriates its proud history will neither forgive nor forget the Pabloists' vile betrayal of Chen Chao-lin, Ying Kwan, Chiang Tseng-tung, Ling Hwer-hua, Ho Chi-sen and the rest of the heroic imprisoned Trotskyists. ■

## Poland...

(Continued from page 3)

recent visit, the Pope warned Communist Party secretary Edward Gierek that the Catholic Church was about to claim its 'total place' in Polish society, not just 'freedom of religion'. The KPN declaration expands on the same theme, stating:

'The Polish national consciousness has formed itself in its more than 1000 year process of social and state development which has been accompanied in good and bad days by the existence of the Catholic Church. Irreplaceable in this consciousness is ... the understanding of the need for national sacrifice in the name of higher goals common to all and ties to the world of values created by Catholicism and to the moral fundamentals of Christianity.'

In 'Catholic Poland' such a reactionary clerical ('anti-Marxist, Catholic and nationalist') movement could well develop a mass base of support among the large peasantry, dissident intelligentsia and even backward religious sections of the working class. Thus the KPN is an invidious and potentially dangerous organisation (far more

than, for example, an isolated religious crank like Solzhenitsyn). The IMG's wholehearted support for it is thus all the more criminal.

In common with the rest of the United Secretariat (USec), the IMG has never been too choosy about which Eastern bloc 'dissidents' to acclaim. But to applaud such overtly right-wing clerical anti-communists as the KPN is to take anti-Trotskyism to new heights -- a flat, reactionary denial of the whole programme of the Fourth International.

Which is of course the whole point. In order to chase after the Eurocommunists, over the past few years the entire European USec has shown itself more and more prepared to junk the Trotskyist position of unconditional defence of the deformed workers states. Moreover here in Britain the IMG is currently courting the state-capitalist Socialist Workers Party, and a principled stand on the Russian question would be a barrier to pursuing the affair. Thus the Pabloites are now prepared to champion even capitalist restorationist forces in order to underline their rejection of the need to defend the USSR and the deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. ■

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## IMG in crisis...

(Continued from page 8)

SWP's politics represent a syndicalist break from revolutionary Marxism, ie Trotskyism' and added that the SWP is 'prone to being drawn behind alien class forces' (SWP *Bulletin*, December 1978). Replying for the SWP, Chris Harman lectured his 'critics':

'What disappointed and angered us in all this was not merely the tone and sectarian phrasology, which seems to have been borrowed from some publication of the Spartacists or the WRP, but what it indicates about the majority of your leadership. They clearly do not take seriously the aim of unification of the forces of the revolutionary left.' (SWP *Bulletin*, December 1978)

The IMG response has been to discard more and more criticism. At the final session of the recent Marxist Symposium -- amid an atmosphere reminiscent of a chummy Oxford Union 'debate' -- Tariq Ali proposed to the SWP cadre present that as a 'serious revolutionary organisation' the SWP should 'join the Fourth International' -- which Ali explicitly stated did *not* involve international democratic-centralist discipline. And what few criticisms remain are often from the right. Thus IMG leader Val Coultas has lately been taking up the cudgels for consistent separatist feminism against the SWP's decision to turn Women's Voice into a front group. (Coultas had the gall to attack the pop workerist-feminist Women's Voice as a 'communist women's movement'!)

And how about the Russian question, which *should* be the key difference between the ostensibly Soviet-defencist IMG and the 'third camp' SWP? The IMG used to correctly consider this a key programmatic difference, sharply insisting that 'those who have deserted the revolutionary marxist position by refusing to adopt the class line of unconditional defence of the workers states against imperialism have long since lost any claim to be considered as marxists' (IMG Introduction to 'The Inconsistencies of State Capitalism' by Ernest Mandel, 1969).

Now however the same IMG makes crystal clear that it considers defence of the USSR to be of no fundamental importance. The IMG leaders feel obliged to wilfully distort the history of the Trotskyist movement for this, claiming in a recent reply to the SWP (authored by Ali, Ross and national secretary Brian Grogan) on international perspectives:

'We do not believe that the state-capitalist analysis of the SWP necessarily excludes it from the Fourth International. This was a position taken by Trotsky at the time of the foundation of the Fourth International and we see no reason to change it.' (*International Socialism*, Autumn 1979)

But Trotsky did object *on principle* to forming a common organisation with anyone who drew from a 'state-capitalist analysis' the programmatic conclusion of refusal to defend the Soviet Union:

'The whole course of the world workers' movement, beginning with July 1914, demonstrates that defeatists and defensists cannot remain in the same party, if the concept of a party has in general any sort of sense. The basic task of the present discussion consists in demonstrating the full political incompatibility of defeatism in relation to the USSR with membership in a revolutionary proletarian party.' ('Defeatism vs Defensism', *Writings 1937-38*)

That was the position taken by Trotsky at the time of the foundation of the Fourth International and it remains true today. The SWP and its predecessors are and have been social-democratic renegades from Trotskyism since their definitive capitulation to imperialism in 1950, when they abandoned the military defence of the North Korean deformed workers state. In chasing this organisation so assiduously the IMG is only underlining how vastly removed from Trotskyism they themselves are.

There is a potentially fatal organisational corollary to the IMG's politically liquidationist course. For if the far larger Cliffite organisation is 'revolutionary' and the outstanding differences are unimportant, the appropriate conclusion for frustrated IMGers is ... to vote with their feet for the SWP. Indeed there are reports that this is already happening around the country, as the IMG loses members to the larger and superficially more stable SWP.

The attractiveness of the SWP to the IMG leadership is itself a measure of the IMG's sorry state. For the Cliffites themselves have had their troubles. An investigatory team sent out by the SWP Central Committee late last year came back to reinforce a grim picture of massive inactivity and confusion, rapid membership turn-

over and failure of even minimal paper sales. In the same SWP *Bulletin* (December 1978) five Glasgow cadre trenchantly described the CC's 'fact-finding mission' as 'nothing so much as a Red Cross visit to a disaster area', stating: 'It will not be news to anyone that the SWP is a bit lost at the moment. *Socialist Worker* reflects that general lack of direction, and feeds the demoralisation within the party.... Today the SWP is *not* an organisation of conscious revolutionary cadres....'

### International crisis

In years past, IMGers downcast by domestic reversals and worn by incessant inner-party strife could at least warm themselves in the reflected glow of 'the FI', ie the pseudo-Trotskyist USec. If a thoughtful IMGer was only too aware that the 'United' Secretariat was never united and daily demonstrated somewhere in the world that it could only *betray* the programme on which the Fourth International was founded, still it was much the *biggest* group claiming the mantle of Trotskyism.

Not for much longer will USec leader Ernest Mandel be able to boast that 'For 15 years now, the FI [sic] has not witnessed a single international split' (SWP[GB] *International Discussion Bulletin* no 9). If the decade-long factional war between the American-led minority and European-based majority led by Mandel has of late subsided into an SWP(US)-dominated truce, things are by no means quiet in the USec. The left-posturing Bolshevik Faction (BF) led by chameleon-like reformist and charlatan Nahuel Moreno is clearly headed for an expulsion or split, taking with it most of the USec's Latin American presence. So apparently is the French-based 'Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency' (which politically supports the OCI of Pierre Lambert) (see 'OCI/Moreno manoeuvres', p4). Add to this the extreme organisational difficulties and membership decline of the European USec's star sections in France and Spain and you have a recipe for gloom. USec members desperately need to tell themselves that it is better *somewhere* else -- but it isn't!

## Leyland...

(Continued from page 2)

from the sale of assets be divided equitably on the basis of seniority among BL workers. Much better this solution, than a glorified workers co-op vainly trying to compete in the capitalist market with its best militants ground down by working four hours overtime each day for *nothing* -- all in the vain hope that the 'workers control' and 'workers alternative' claptrap of the charlatans like Tony Benn, Ken Coates and Ernest Mandel will come true under capitalism. Whatever BL is worth, it was extracted from the sweat and toil of its workers. *Leyland workers: Don't beg, take it, it's yours!*

A series of militant plant seizures could be the clarion call for a massive class upsurge by the whole British proletariat, ground down by years of recession and social-democratic betrayal, consigned to an ever deeper slide into the living standards of the 'Third World'. Impending steel closures threaten to turn Corby and Shotton into ghost towns; Liverpool is pretty much one already. The question which must be forced onto the agenda is not 'Who wants Leyland?', but 'Who rules Britain?' And the outcome to that question hinges on the construction of a mass *revolutionary* party, which at every step seeks to challenge and not salvage the tottering capitalist class.

Leyland is simply frontrunner for a British capitalism in an advanced state of decay, and the air surrounding the dying beast is suffused with the stench of social democracy and its sticking-plaster nationalisations. We fight not for the bourgeoisie's spent castoffs, but for its expropriation as a class by a workers government. As Trotsky said in the *Transitional Programme*:

'To those capitalists, mainly of the lower and middle strata, who of their own accord sometimes offer to throw open their books to the workers -- usually to demonstrate the necessity of lowering wages -- the workers answer that they are not interested in the bookkeeping of individual bankrupts or semi-bankrupts but in the account ledgers of all exploiters as a whole.'

Only under proletarian rule can British industry be rebuilt with a socialist planned economy. The working class will show that it can organise society rationally and usefully in a Soviet Britain, part of the Socialist United States of Europe.■

While the BF has as yet gained few adherents in Britain, there is now a sizeable contingent of the LTT, headed by a political quick-change artist named John Strawson, whose main talent lies in borrowing a political line from elsewhere and building an opposition around it. Having led an 'anti-Pabloite' split from the IMG to join the WSL in 1976, Strawson turned around less than a year later to lead a Mandelite split from the WSL back to the IMG. A staunch opponent of the SWP(US) line while in the WSL, Strawson wasted no time in making a bloc with SWP(US) supporters once back in the IMG, at the 1978 national conference, only to go on to his current stint with the LTT -- with yet another vastly different programme! If Strawson's British followers -- many of whom are doubtless attracted by the LTT's hard, 'orthodox' pose in contrast to the craven liquidationism of the Ali/Ross/Grogan ilk -- were to exit from the USec along with the rest of the LTT, they would find themselves in the uncomfortable position of having to unite with the wretched British OCI section, the Socialist Labour Group. This gang of reformists has toiled for the past few years to build a geriatric base for *Tribune*.

The incessant unclear factionalism, cynical horsetrading manoeuvres and wild programmatic gyrations which are the stock-in-trade of Pabloite politics have over the years ground down -- or even destroyed -- scores of subjectively revolutionary IMGers, who gravitated to its earlier impressionistic leftism in the absence of a genuine Trotskyist alternative. A Trotskyist party will not and cannot be built on the basis of tailing a 'mass movement' for Islamic reaction in Iran; of uncritically hailing treacherous Stalinists like Castro and Ho Chi Minh; of lauding any and every petty-bourgeois radical movement which comes along as a short-cut substitute for the uniquely vanguard role of the conscious proletariat. There is no substitute for the Trotskyist programme -- that is what is decisive in the struggle for a revolutionary party; not numbers, not clever manoeuvres, not impressionistic organisational 'turns'. Break with the centrist swamp! For the reforging of the Fourth International!■

## OCI/Moreno...

(Continued from page 5)

one of these is the case of Fausto Amador, already introduced to our readers.

For F Amador did not simply break from the FSLN. He was interviewed on Somoza's television and spoke to Somoza's press where he urged other members of the guerrilla organisation to lay down their arms in return for promises of amnesty from the blood-soaked dynastic dictatorship. For this the FSLN leaders rightly consider him a traitor. Lately as the Nicaraguan cultural attaché in Brussels, ie an employee of Somoza, he was reportedly won to the USec's perversion of Trotskyism. Naturally this caused a certain commotion in Central America where the case was well known. Moreno picked this up and was the first to make it an issue in the USec. At a December 1977 meeting of the Central Committee of the Colombian PST Bolshevik Faction leader Eugenio Greco complained:

'Do you know the name they give in Europe to what Fausto Amador did? It is called collaboration.... If a very probable combination of circumstances occurs: that Somoza falls; that the Frente Sandinista emerges as a movement of great prestige because of its anti-dictatorial struggle .... The Frente Sandinista might say: I would like the Fourth International to explain why Fausto Amador is in its ranks. At that moment Trotskyism will be finished in Central America.' ([SWP] IIDB, April 1978).

And so it came to pass. Today the notorious Fausto Amador, leader of the Costa Rican OST, is defended by the LTT and its new allies of Moreno & Co. The BF counter-motion at the September 30 USec meeting explicitly defends Amador against his accusers, 'a petty-bourgeois leadership foreign to the Trotskyist movement'. Attacks on the personal integrity of political leaders are the bane of the Latin American left where most splits focus on accusations of stolen money or cowardice and betrayal. In the case of Fausto Amador the charges are essentially proven by his own admission; and yet he remains a recognised leader of the USec. What is destroyed by this fact is not Trotskyism, however, but the revolutionary pretensions of these renegades from Marxism for whom Fausto Amador's hands are only a little dirtier than all the rest.

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# SPARTACIST BRITAIN

## IMG in crisis

The International Marxist Group (IMG) is visibly in trouble. Its less and less frequent public events attract ever smaller and more dispirited attendances. Its grand initiatives to attract the 'children of 68' -- through such menshevik 'regroupment' manoeuvres as Socialist Unity and an ostensibly broad, 'non-party' incarnation of *Socialist Challenge* -- have been clear failures. Plaintive pleas in the lifeless *Socialist Challenge* throughout the summer indicated serious financial problems and suggested a dramatic decline in sales. And the backdrop to it all is the increasing factional polarisation and looming split in the IMG's crisis-ridden 'international', the so-called 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International' (USec) -- a polarisation from which the IMG itself has predictably not been immune.

The organisation exudes an air of decay. The student vanguardism and vicarious guerrillaism of the early IMG (circa 1968-72) have not aged well. And the heady perspectives of a rapid emergence of dual power in Britain, which guided the organisation through its next few years of rapid growth, have long since gone flat. Membership since has remained stagnant; lately it has begun to fall. This September's Marxist Symposium, the annual fashion show for the IMG's latest intellectual fads, featured one cadre after another musing on the organisation's numerical weakness, and John Ross openly admitted a mood of pessimism inside the IMG.

It is not primarily an organisational, but a political crisis, which has brought the IMG to this impasse of despair and disaffection. Utterly lacking the anchor of a revolutionary programme, the centrist IMG has in recent years drifted more and more rightward on the road to disaster. As one illusory 'new mass vanguard' after another faded into oblivion, the IMG's tailist appetites led inexorably in the direction of the social democracy, either in its Labour Party or more leftist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) manifestations. Any IMG'er discomfited when the paper defended abandoning Brick Lane for the balloons of Carnival 2 last year would find it hard to ignore the ever-more-rightist line on Ireland (eg banner headlines saying 'End the War Now!'), and the increasing

devotion to dubious 'lefts'. Today hundreds of IMGers, having stored away their Che Guevara posters and the motorcycle helmets which used to be *de rigueur* on demonstrations, are esconced in a mellow routine of parochial reformist campaigns -- cuts committees, 'solidarity' groups, the tired feminist milieu, the ANL etc. For many, continued membership in the IMG is an act of nostalgia.

It was not the opportunities which were lacking, but a revolutionary programme with which to intersect them. Reformism has at least a consistency of purpose in its pursuit of influence within the bourgeois order. Centristism is by nature transitory and inconsistent. Incapable of engaging in systematic political combat with the much larger reformist, state-capitalist SWP -- or even with the execrable political flotsam and jetsam which left the SWP to the right three years ago -- the only conceivable alternative for the IMG was to grovel before them. This failed with the SWP's offspring (what is left of these people now comprise the International Socialist Alliance, a tiny rump of cynical workerist-reformists). So the IMG has turned from the all-but-dead ISA in search of the big time, having already dubbed the SWP 'revolutionary' (albeit with a few problems).

For Bolsheviks, Trotskyists, there is of necessity another road -- genuine, *revolutionary* regroupment through principled splits and fusions on the basis of sharp programmatic struggle and exemplary revolutionary practice. Thus while the IMG/USec has bounced from one opportunist flirtation to another, the Spartacist tendency has broken out of enforced national isolation in the US, forged an international cadre and become a pole of attraction for many leftward moving tendencies from within the USec and other revisionist organisations. The Spartacist League itself was founded through



Opportunists fallen on hard times: (from left) Brian Grogan, Ernest Mandel, Tariq Ali

a fusion of the London Spartacist Group with a left oppositional faction inside the centrist Workers Socialist League, the Trotskyist Faction -- not by uncritically courting the WSL as 'revolutionary' but through an intransigent fight for programmatic clarity.

### The 'turn' and the SWP

But the IMG is *not* Trotskyist, and it has no programmatic clarity. So it can only go from one futile get-rich-quick scheme to another. With the organisation in chaos, it is currently weighing two more. First is the 'proletarian turn' -- to the trade-union bureaucracy -- pioneered by the American SWP and now being exported throughout the USec, which is premised on a wholesale immersion into heavy industry in order to construct a reformist 'class-struggle left wing' in the unions. Second is the courtship of the British SWP of Tony Cliff which at least a section of the IMG leadership is bent on pursuing.

The IMG formally approached Cliff & Co last year with some centrist idea of discussion and conflict in mind, in a ludicrous combination of appeal and attack. An IMG letter last November urging formal discussions enclosed a Central Committee resolution which hoped that the IMG and SWP could be 'moving toward unity in the medium term', but began with the sentence 'The

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## Nicaragua:

# Did USec leaders finger Bolivar Brigade?

The international Spartacist tendency has learned that the sixty leaders of the Simon Bolivar Brigade deported from Nicaragua last August by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) may have been expelled from the country at the request of their own ostensibly Trotskyist 'comrades'. The putative fingerman? Peter Camejo, a leader of the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP). And behind him? The leadership of the 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International' (USec), which allegedly ordered the denunciation.

As reported in last month's *Spartacist Britain*, USec leaders -- far from protesting the FSLN's expulsion of the 'foreign Trotskyist' leaders of the Bolivar Brigade (who were beaten by Panamanian police during their transit through the land of 'anti-imperialist' strongman Torrijos) -- went so far as to actu-

ally endorse the regime's anti-communist crackdown. On September 3 Sandinista leaders were handed a statement by a USec delegation stating that 'the FSLN was right to demand that the non-Nicaraguan members of this group leave the country'.

Now at a meeting of the United Secretariat over the September 30 weekend an 'official' statement was voted to explicitly 'condemn and repudiate the Simon Bolivar Brigade and its activities'. However an amendment by USec leader Ernest Mandel mildly criticising the expulsion as unnecessary was enough to cause the rabidly pro-Sandinista SWP to vote against the resolution. Now it appears that this is only the political aftermath of the affair.

The report we have received and reprinted on page 5 -- published in a bulletin of the Italian LSR, followers of Brigade mentor

Nahuel Moreno -- is from three members of the pro-OCI 'Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency' of the USec. The authors politically oppose the Brigade policies and mainly relate the story of this betrayal as it unfolded before their eyes.

The events the letter relates are straightforward. A delegate of the USec in Managua allegedly spoke by phone with Peter Camejo at the US SWP convention in Oberlin, Ohio, in mid-August and was instructed to 'collaborate with the leadership of the Sandinista Front in order to help it get rid of the Simon Bolivar Brigade'. The next day he carried out this mission and then so informed the leadership of the Brigade.

Can the American Socialist Workers Party, the United Secretariat and/or Peter Camejo refute the serious charges made in this letter?

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