

Return to Centre.

LENIN AND THE

REVOLUTIONARY PAPER

BY **Dave Stocking.**

THIS PIECE IS NOT WRITTEN WITH THE INTENTION OF INDULGING IN A HISTORICAL DEBATE WITH COMRADE CLIFF. THE LESSONS FOR US AT PRESENT ARE CLEARLY SPELT OUT IN THE FINAL SECTION.

It is first of all necessary to explain why this short pamphlet is being produced at all. The National Committee has recently decided to effect changes in the orientation and content of Socialist Worker. A document has been accepted on "Making Socialist Worker a Workers Paper".

For the membership at large this debate has, at best, entailed one article in the journal on 'Lenin's Pravda' and an article in the April 1974 internal bulletin which had limited circulation before the National Committee decision was taken. At worst it has meant little more than a letter from the National Secretary explaining the dismissals of Comrades Protz and Higgins.

Not only is such a discussion amongst the membership inadequate. It was based on misleading and incomplete information. Cliff's article on Pravda distorted the reality and relevance of Lenin's Pravda.

It is hoped that this short work will set the record straight on Lenin's view of the newspaper. It is to be hoped that the lessons for us all today can therefore become clearer. These lessons are equally relevant both to the advocates of a new style Socialist Worker and to those others who seem to have argued so far in the debate that the old style Socialist Worker was adequate to the tasks of building a revolutionary party, give or take a few changes.

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LENIN AND THE REVOLUTIONARY PAPER. ISKRA (The Spark)

The first all-Russian illegal Marxist paper was established by Lenin in 1900. It was published abroad and smuggled into Russia. It played an important role in uniting the fragmented local socialist groups in Russia into a united workers party. (The Russian Social Democratic Labour Party;) Lenin had clear ideas as to what his paper, Iskra, was trying to do.

The essence of Lenin's views on the paper at that time can be summed up simply. He argued that the party centre must have its own organ. This organ must carry the ideas of Socialism into the heart of the working class movement. This must be done not through an abstract and lecturing form but through a living dynamic description of the political situation within which the workers struggle takes place.

Iskra aimed to do this , "in the form of exposures of what our government and governing classes are doing at this very moment in all spheres of life" (What is to be done.)

To Lenin such a paper must expound the programme of the party, its long term strategy. It must analyse the course, changes and development of the capitalist economic system. It must analyse the strategy and tactics of the ruling class.

(In this context we can see that what is wrong with socialist Worker is not the

either idle parasitic consumers or as viscious profiteering exploiters....

its doings 'as a class' , its theoreticians and its plans are in fact not exposed enough.)The revolutionary paper, as envisaged by Lenin at this time, must also explain the political differences within the working class movement and must expose the strategy and tactics of all non- revolutionary elements in the class. It is this first and foremost....an organ of political direction to the members, the sympathisers and the class at large.

By the above means it becomes an organiser of the party's support. Lenin describes the role of Iskra in an early number of the paper.

"The role of a newspaper however, is not limited solely to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a collective propogandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser. In this last respect it may be likened to the scaffolding round a building under construction, which marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, enabling them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organised labour. With the aid of the newspaper..apermanent organisation will naturally take shape that will engage, not only in local activities, but in regular general work, and will train its members to follow political events carefully, appraise their significance and their effect on the various strata of the population, and develop effective means for the revolutionary party to influence these events. " (Where to Begin; Iskra no 4 , May 1901.)

Lenin at this time argued for the maximum degree of involvement of workers from all over Russia in this work. At this time the party and the press were totally illegal, as a result the numbers involved were much smaller than in the 1912-1914 period. Lenin early enunciated this as a principle of a revolutionary socialist paper that sets it apart from the bourgeois press.

"Let everyone who regards this organ as his own and who is conscious of the duties of a Social-Democratic Party member abandon once and for all the bourgeois habit of thinking and arguing as is customary towards legally published papers-- the habit of feeling; it is their business to write and ours to read. All Social Democrats must work for the Social democratic paper. We ask everyone to contribute and especially the workers. Give the workers the widest opportunity to write for our paper, to write about positively everything, to write as much as they possibly can about their daily lives, interests and work. " (Letter to a group of comrades ; Nov 29th 1904).

Such a paper, which explained and developed the party's programme and tactics which centralised the experience of struggle of the class, which drew its readership into participation in its creation would produce an educated party membership. This membership would be clear on the fundamentals of its politics. informed on the development of the struggle and flexible in its use of tactics a

LENIN AND PRAVDA.

We have seen that Lenin's position on the revolutionary paper was well formed long before he commences his work for Pravda. His practical work involved being either editor or chief contributor to various (illegal) party central organs (i.e. Proletary, vperyod, Sotsial Demokrat), a whole series of illegal workers papers and during 1905/6 the legal Novaya Zhizn (New Life).

Throughout this period, right up to 1917 revolution Lenin's Bolsheviks were in constant battle with other non revolutionary tendencies in the Russian labour movement and within the Social Democratic Party. After the revolution in Russia in 1905 the Bolsheviks represented the most militant workers in the major industrial towns. However the need to combat other tendencies always remained a central requirement of the Bolshevik press.

Lenin therefore, in 1912, had a consistent political position on the nature and purpose of the party press and a long experience of working for it. Cliff's article in I.S. no 67 contains much unexceptionable material on the role of Pravda. It does however contain fundamental errors both in what it says and fails to say. As the article is in fact intended as theoretical justification for a number of practical changes in I.S.'s present orientation we cannot take these errors lightly.

The main differences with Cliff are as follows.

- 1) an oversimplification of the role Pravda played in building the Bolsheviks.
- 2) an overestimation of the role of Lenin in the creation of Pravda and in its production
- 3) Alongside an overestimation of the organising role of Pravda Cliff underestimates the political role of Pravda in winning the leadership of the Russian Working class for revolutionaries against all contending reformist ideas. With the onset of the First World War most of the party organisation was smashed and Pravda closed down. But the education of cadres was to bear fruit when the party was rebuilt in 1917.

Firstly we must be clear that the weakness of the party in the 1910/11 period was very different to the weakness which now faces I.S. If it is true, as Cliff says, that the Bolsheviks 'hardly existed as an organisation' we must be clear that the emphasis should fall on these last three words "as an organisation". Police persecution had indeed broken the links of communication, arrested and deported hundreds of party activists and broken up many committees. But the Bolsheviks were a leading tendency in the Russian Working class movement. Thousands of workers knew their programme, had worked with them or had been party members between 1905 and 1907 (the figure of 45,000 members in 1907 is the correct one). In Moscow the party had actually led an armed insurrection.

Contd) overwhelming majority of workers in the phoney Parliament (The state Duma).

It is ludicrous then to paint Pravda as the means by which the Bolsheviks won their domination in the Russian working class. This dominance was won for the party by the worker cadres trained by the party.

One small example will suffice to demonstrate this. In 1910 the Russian Working class began to stir again. The party too began to take new life. Lenin argued for the Bolsheviks to establish a particular paper to take account of these changes. The paper (Rabochaya Gazeta.....'The Workers Newspaper) was announced by Lenin in 1910. In the quoted extract below he describes the relation of the party to the worker militants of the time and argues for the shape Rabochaya Gazeta should take..... "...the working class must also reorganise its own party...It is bringing leaders from its own ranks to replace the intellectual leaders. A new type of worker member is coming forward, one who independently conducts all the Party's affairs and is able to weld together unite and organise ten and hundred times more proletarian masses than his predecessor did.

It is to this new worker that we address our Rabochaya Gazeta first and foremost. This worker has outgrown the age when he could enjoy being talked to in baby language, and being fed with milk porridge. He now needs to know everything about the party's political aims, Party building and the inner party struggle."(Oct. 1910. No punches were to be pulled in terms of outlining the strategic and theoretical differences between the Bolsheviks and other groups in the labour movement. Lenin argued that this was crucial to the "process of welding together a basic party core of class conscious social democratic workers."

We may say then that more than a simply written paper built the class conscious core upon which the Bolshevik party was to flower again.

Cliff is also absolutely wrong to suggest that Pravda was the creation of Lenin. In 1910 Lenin had been unenthusiastic about suggestions for a daily workers paper. However the party workers in Petersburg insisted that they wanted a daily paper. In April 1911 another organ of the Bolsheviks, a weekly paper called Zvezda, established a commission to explore the matter and opened its pages to the worker readers to discuss the matter. The balance of opinion was heavily in favour of a legal daily paper. It was hoped that this would win the workers away from the cheap "bourgeois press that had started on a daily basis. Worker correspondents suggested that the paper should be written more by workers themselves, arguing that many previous publications had talked down to the workers and avoided issues that the intellectual

(contd) .They wanted the paper run by the workers themselves ,written in reasonably simple language.Petrograd worker Bolsheviks urged this new course on Lenin in summer 1911 at a party school held near Paris. They argued their case again at a party conference held in Prague in January 1912. Lenin agreed.But before going any further it must be remembered, and Cliff again does not find it necessary to make this point,that the Bolsheviks also kept at their disposal the following regular publications with a worker readership during the period of the publication of Pravda..... ' ' a weekly paper with longer articles, 'Prosveshcheniye' (Enlightenment) a monthly theoretical journal, and Sotsial Demokrat ,the regular uncensored illegal organ of the Central Committee of the Party.

A bolshevik deputy in the дума (Parliament) in fact directed the founding of the daily paper. This process involved the raising of 14,000 rubles, of which 4000 rubles were raised by workers collections. On January 21 1912 Zvezda went twice weekly, and from March 8th it began to appear threetimes a week. Over this short period of time its circulation was boosted from 7,000 to 30,000. A court decision resulted in the need to change the papers name when it went daily, and so on April 22 nd Pravda was born.

It was a four page paper. On the first and second pages were five short articles (300-500 words). They mostly concerned economic matters, but the pages also contained poems. On the remaining pages were the first issues of what were to be very popular feature sections---- "Chronicle", 'In the Workers Movement', 'Strikes in Progress', 'Duma Affairs' etc. It was initially a great success. In April and May between 40,000 and 60,000 copies per issue were sold.

Cliff seeks to give the impression of Lenin as the satisfied leader and formulator of Pravda's politics.This is untrue and serves to avoid the criticisms and reservations Lenin had of Pravda.Cliff's picture of Lenin writing simple ABC articles for the paper is a deliberate distortion. By this Cliff avoids any discussion of the political role Lenin expected Pravda to play in the Russian working class movement.

The Bolsheviks had just finally split from other tendencies in the Russian Social Democratic Party.Principally the split was with a group called the'liquidators'. They wanted to LIQUIDATE the illegal organisations of the Party into a broad legal labour party. This was not just a question of whether or not the apparatus should be legal or illegal. It was basically a question of a broad legal party having to be non revolutionary in its programme in order to remain legal. Lenin and the Bolsheviks argued that the illegal party, and only the illegal party would be free to stick to the'illegal ' revolutionary programme to which so many workers had been won in 1905. Lenin and the Bolsheviks had also split with a group dubbed 'the conciliators'. These, including Trotsky, wanted to maintain unity

to back up his point that what Lenin looked to in Pravda was the simplicity of its language we will take up here the relationship between Pravda and the Liquidators. Lenin's first article did not appear until issue no 13 (May 8th) and no further articles appeared until July 12th. In Lenin's own words he had 'Neither information, nor guidance, nor supervision of the paper.' In fact Lenin was in bitter dispute with the editors of Pravda throughout the spring and summer of 1912. He considered that they were deliberately watering down the polemics against the liquidators so as not to alienate the readership of the paper . Lenin considered such a course to be disastrous to the future of the revolutionary movement in Russia. IN her 'memoiries of Lenin' Krupskaya (Lenin's wife)has this to say.

"A determined struggle had to be waged against the liquidators. That is why Vladimir Ilyich (Lenin) was so upset when Pravda deliberately struck out from his articles all his arguments in opposition to the liquidators. He wrote angry letters to Pravda protesting against this. Only gradually did Pravda join the struggle. "

An example of what Lenin was objecting to can be seen in this early lead article entitled 'our Aims ' written in fact by none other than J.Stalin..... "Pravda will call first and foremost for unity in the class struggle, for unity at all costs....Peace and cooperation within the movement- that is what Pravda will be guided by in its daily work. "

By July Lenin was complaining. 'WHY does Pravda persistently and systematically strike out any mention of the liquidators both from my articles and from those of other colleagues ? " The editors in fact refused to print Lenin's articles in some cases. One of the editors, MS Olminsky, had this to say in a letter to Lenin...."The form of your article should not be polemical". (Out of 284 pieces contributed by Lenin to Pravda in its 2 years of existence 47 were 'Killed' by the editors).

Lenin made his argument in the following way. "...our times are times of desperate confusion and we can't do without polemics....You can't hide differences from the workers as Pravda is doing; its harmful, fatal ,ridiculous. ...Pravda will perish if it is only a 'popular', 'positive' organ, that is certain a paper must be a step ahead of everyone."(Collected wks vol35 p44).

AT the time Lenin was writing new elections to the Duma were imminent. Whoever was elected to the Duma as workers representatives would be legally immune (Parliamentary privilege). A Liquidators' victory would mean their conquest of the only public platform open legally to representatives of the working class. At such a time Lenin argued consistently against Pravda's tendency to duck controversial issues..."Meanwhile Pravda now is carrying on, at election time, like a sleepy old maid. Pravda does not know how to fight." (Letter dated Oct 3rd 1912).

by Cliff of Lenin's contribution to Pravda. The founding and development of the paper and its style was not the work of Lenin. It was the work principally of the advanced workers of Russia, and Petrograd in particular. Lenin's initial contribution was his insistence on a clear political line and his persistence in arguing and persuading until it was accepted. His further contribution was a flood of first class political journalism on all issues facing the Russian workers; the struggle with the liquidators, exposures of abuses, articles on economics, the woman worker, the national question, the agrarian question and the peasantry, the Taylor system, education, the socialist movement abroad, strikes in Ireland, revolution in China, etc. etc. From these and similar articles a whole new generation of Russian workers learned in practice the relevance and meaning of the programme of the Bolsheviks.

"Pravda" went through a bad period in 1913, the period of most of its eight names. Police agent-provocateurs, including leading members of the editorial board, succeeded in getting it fined and regularly confiscated. Its high point (after the initial 4/5 months) came in 1914 under Kamenev's direction. Kamenev got its circulation up again to 1912 levels. He organised the production of special supplements for miners, and for particular regions and on the agrarian situation. It was distributed not only in Petrograd, but in 944 cities of the Empire. Its circulation climbed back to 40,000 daily with 130,000 of its special second anniversary issue sold. By March 1914 Lenin could write "How much better looking Pravda has become under Brother (Kamenev) - it's getting to be a real beauty! It is pleasant just to look at it! For the first time, one can see the leadership of a cultured and knowledgeable local editor." (Letter to Inessa Armand)

It was in this period that Lenin wrote his article "Our Tasks" outlining his views on the further development of Pravda. In it Lenin outlined the historic achievements of Pravda's work.

"- during the papers two years, class conscious Pravdist workers united ideologically, and to a certain extent also, organisationally, by their efforts creating and supporting, strengthening and developing a consistently Marxist workers press" He emphasised the continuity of this work with that of the 1903-1907 period, its loyalty to the "old decisions, programme and tactics" and its use of new methods of mobilising fresh generations of workers. He called for Pravda and the Pravdist workers to "push ahead with the purely newspaper side hand in hand with all sides of the worker's cause"

Lenin called for an expansion of Pravda (Put Pravdy). As well as a trade union supplement it must have supplements devoted to the nationalities in Russia. The foreign reportage should be increased as well as the chronicle of the worker's life. As well as the expansion of Pravda, a more popular evening

never forget about them (The masses), for he knows that craft isolation, the emergence of a labour aristocracy and its separation from the masses means degradation and brutalisation of the proletarian and his transformation into a miserable philistine, a pitiful flunkey; it means loss of all hope of his emancipation". (Our Tasks Vol 36 c.w. p 283).

Lenin's concern was with the leadership, real not self appointed or self imagined. Pravda had as its first task to win leadership for the consistent revolutionary line amongst the 'advanced' 'class conscious' workers. To this end Lenin urged unrelenting combat against all attempts to water down the revolutionary programme, Secondly Lenin stressed the need for the advanced workers to lead the whole class, the 'backward' unorganised masses, to lead other classes, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeois, to lead the oppressed nationalities, social groups like students, to take up every case of wrong and oppression to unite these causes inseparably with the struggle for the emancipation of the working class.

Hopefully enough has been said to show the flaws in Cliff's characterisation of Lenin and Pravda. It has more in common with accounts written in the Russia of the 1930s of the near perfect Pravda created and guided by the all-knowing Lenin than with a serious examination that can be of use to revolutionaries today. It is however not a question of Tony Cliff having got his history wrong, though wrong indeed it is. This account is meant to serve to reorientate I.S. at present. The history has been coloured to suit the purposes of Cliff and Co. at this moment in time. Our attention must therefore fasten on what this catalogue of error and misconception is supposed to recommend as the way forward for revolutionaries today.

LESSONS FOR TODAY

Cliff poses the questions of the lessons of Pravda in a number of ways. Nobody would object if all he was saying was that groups of workers should contribute to the writing as well as the selling of Socialist Worker.

But there is more to the argument than this. Comrade Cliff has signalled out changes in the nature of Socialist Worker as the major means by which I.S. can intervene and grow in the next period. That is why his account of Pravda only deals with its worker support, worker contributors and its simplicity of style.

Some small points must be remembered first:

1) Pravda was a daily paper. It was the product of a demand for a daily paper from the workers of Petrograd.

2) Pravda was not the sole publication with which the Bolsheviks spoke to

3)The Petrograd workers in fact insisted that a workers paper should be daily.The party took this question to the mass of the party members and supporters.Unless there is a real demand and readiness to pay for and distribute it amongst wide circles of workers then a daily mass paper would be a fraud like the 'Workers Press'.

To this date the debate in I.S.about the development of a workers paper has more in common with the election of a pope than with the methods used by the Bolsheviks to test the opinions of party workers and supporters on the subject.

Also if you intend to create such a popular paper not only must its basic line be consistent and revolutionary but the party must also have a central organ which is speaking regularly to the advanced workers (this does not mean a theoretical journal).If a party cannot have both then its existing organ must cover both functions.

DEEPER DISAGREEMENTS

There are however even more far reaching questions involved in Cliff's article. This is in particular highlighted by Cliff's posing of the paper in the context of 'the bridge theory.'

"How to build the bridge between the small organisation and the rising numbers of militants and socialists in the working class. "

"How can we relate to tens of thousands of workers who are moving spontaneously towards our politics ?"

"..the disproportion between the size of I.S. and the layer of militant workers groping towards revolutionary socialism."

(CLIFF)

Cliff is arguing that changes in the paper hold the answers to all these questions. We must start however by asking ourselves what it is we are trying to relate to tens of thousands of workers ?

Is it a way forward , a revolutionary strategy ? But at the last conference held in I.S. Cliff said that the very word 'Strategy' made him laugh, that the struggle was still fragmented and that no overall strategy was possible.Is it our programme that we are trying to communicate to the tens of thousands of militants ? Hardly, even the totally inadequate draft presented to the last conference has been sunk without trace..... despite having been adopted by conference ! Is it our organisation ? But there are others bigger than ours, why should workers chose ours ?

Cliff sees Socialist Workers use as an organiser as crucial to 'bridging the gap'. Having ruled out either our programme or our particular way forward Cliff looks for an answer in building I.S. as the supporters of a popular paper. All we really need, Cliff argues, is something to organise

This argument ignores one very important factor. It forgets that there are other influences at work in the Labour Movement. It ignores the fact that many of the best workers accept other ideas and strategies.... that of the left trade union bureaucracy, the Labour Lefts, and the Communist Party. The struggle to 'bridge the gap' should be seen in reality the struggle to win these workers to our strategy and reject the reformist one. To this end all organisational forms should be subordinated, i.e. factory branches, the rank and file movement and the revolutionary paper.

Cliff's argument is very different. He dodges this point in two ways. Firstly he argues, for example his document signed by Paul Foot at the April National Committee that the majority of those who buy Socialist Worker have no traditions in the Labour Movement. In fact some of his supporters go on to argue that the traditional organisations of the working class have become virtually non-existent in their hold over large numbers of militant workers. Therefore our paper has to be particularly geared to workers without tradition or experience. (This argument leads in its logic to I.S. having little or nothing to offer the long term experienced militant, to I.S. turning its back on key sections of leading workers.. a recipe for irrelevance and blinkered sectarianism. It also ignores the fact that whereas traditional organisations may well have been in disarray traditional ideas of trade unionism and reformism have not been seriously challenged or discredited.)

Cliff's second dodge is to argue that "Workers consciousness lags behind the objective crisis". This is true but why? Has it not something to do with the leadership offered by the Scanlons, the Joneses, and the Jimmy Reeds, the Bernie Steers, the Pete Carters. "However the situation can change quickly", says Cliff, true again. A spontaneous upsurge (like the 'Pentonville Five' struggle or the French May events of 1968) can overcome this lag temporarily. But these movements need more from revolutionaries than their encouragement to fight harder. Cliff's remark that the lag in consciousness can be overcome 'very quickly even if there is only a weak lead! is true enough as a description of fact. As a prescription for revolutionary socialists, as a guide to action, it would be a disaster. What such a movement needs is the right lead, the right strategy, the right tactics. Otherwise it will either fail to realise its full potential (and thus strengthen the reformists) or lead to a catastrophic defeat which will strengthen the bourgeoisie itself.

In a period of deepening capitalist crisis, and deepening crisis of leadership in the working class movement it is inadequate for the leadership of a revolutionary organisation to clutch at one organisational measure after another to close the gap between us and the leading militants. Each such

Certainly Socialist Worker should be aimed at the widest audience possible. As the political voice of I.S. it should indeed attempt to draw its readers into becoming writers and sellers. It should be a forum where the great issues of strategy and tactics for the working class movement should be debated and hammered out. This debate should go beyond articles commissioned from I.S. militants. Debate should be invited on contentious issues - the conduct of the miners' strike, the A.U.E.W. claim, the Labour government. We will build I.S. as the nucleus of the party only by coming to grips with all the false strategies offered by the various misleaders of the working class. By analysing and exposing these in open controversy in and through Socialist Worker we can draw thousands of militants towards us.

What then can we learn from a closer look at Lenin's Pravda than what Comrade Cliff has given us?

- a) The origins of a real mass workers paper lie not in the schemes of a party leader be he Lenin or Tony Cliff. Lenin himself made this clear years later when writing to Tom Bell in 1921 about the setting up of such a paper amongst the miners of South Wales. He wrote; "If the Communist Party of this district cannot collect a few pounds in order to publish small leaflets daily as a beginning of the really proletarian Communist newspaper, if it is so, if every miner will not pay a penny for it, then there is not serious affiliation to the Third International (the South Wales Miners' Federation had applied for affiliation) if nine tenths of the workers do not buy this paper, if two thirds do not pay special contributions for their paper - it will be no workers' newspaper."

The origins lie in a demand from masses of workers for such a paper. Yet Cliff talks about merely doubling the papers circulation in two years. To this it could be replied that it has doubled or almost doubled its sales in the last two years - and under Roger Protz's editorship.

A mass, almost certainly daily, workers' paper will be the party's response to the clearly felt need of masses of workers. In this country such a situation is unlikely in the absence of a rank and file movement with deep roots and wide appeal.

- b) The role of a socialist paper as the political voice of a revolutionary group can in no way be 'adapted' or 'toned down' to make it more popular. The party's political organ has to put the full and clear position of the party on all vital questions confronting

would have to have an illegal organ. Lenin's struggle with the liquidators shows this.

- c) No socialist paper whether a mass paper or a more restricted party organ can exclude polemic with other tendencies in the Labour movement. It cannot confine itself to being 'positive'. This was one of Lenin's criticisms of Pravda and one we could make of Socialist Worker. Polemic with invitation to reply is a vital weapon for involving large numbers in dialogue and co-operation with the paper. S.W. has been in the past too much of a journal, too much of a political review. Lenin's contributions to Pravda were indeed short, clearly and simply written. They were written on a variety of subjects covering all aspects of working class life. But they were not just educational, teaching people from contemporary examples about the basics of socialism. They were also articles which prepared the workers for combat. The list of Lenin's articles are peppered with ones which follow and explain what the Russian bourgeoisie is doing. Lenin watched and warned the Russian workers of every significant move they made. Not only the Russian ruling class but also the British, the German, the American were submitted to scrutiny; how do they fight the workers, what are their methods, what are their successes and failures. On the other hand the workers' movement and its tendencies were clearly portrayed.

How then can these 'lessons of Pravda' help us improve Socialist Worker? Firstly we must reject the substituting of the improvement of the paper for a real industrial strategy. To do this the membership must be involved in a debate not primarily about the journalistic technique of Socialist Worker or its personnel. Above all the members, especially the Trade Unionists, should of course be consulted on what they think is the way forward for the paper - by opening the bulletin to them, by holding aggregates to discuss it. The membership must be drawn into the formulation of our political perspectives for the coming year. The conference discussion period should be opened as soon as possible - monthly internal bulletins should be re-instituted and the Journal opened for controversy. Socialist Worker should take the broad issues to our readership and allow them to comment.

It is vitally important that we indentify the key tasks of the present period; that we decide our actions from the needs of the working class in the coming period. This can no longer

Such slogans in a period of heightening crisis will tell us less and less about what is actually to be done. The paralysing leadership of the Trade Union bureaucrats will become ever more acute in major confrontations. The key role of the C.P. in providing an outlet for the bureaucrats will be heightened. How we face these problems, how we build the party are the real issues lurking behind the debate on Pravda and Socialist Worker.

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Dave Stocking is willing to speak to any I.S. branch on the contents of this Pamphlet.

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