

CHARTIST

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WILSON'S OUT: NOW DUMP HIS POLICIES

WITH THE RESIGNATION of Harold Wilson as Labour leader and Prime Minister, following hard on the heels of the Government's defeat on the White Paper on Public Expenditure, many Labour Party supporters will be looking for new policies, as well as a new leader. Policies to replace the tattered rags of Wilson's policies which led the Labour Party to defeat in 1970, and which the present Labour Government have now brought out of the mothballs. Gone are the shiny new clothes of the 1974 Manifestoes and back are wage control, unemployment and public spending cuts.

MORE OF THE SAME

Callaghan's victory promises only more of the same. But from the ranks of the Labour Party and the trade unions and echoed, ever so faintly, by those MPs who abstained against the cuts, the demand for socialist policies has gone hand in hand with the demand for an extension of democracy inside the Labour movement.

Joan Maynard's call for a special Conference to elect the new leader found an echo in many Constituency Parties. In many Parties MPs had been given firm instructions on how they should vote. The success of Benn in the first ballot, shows the palest reflection of the fight which is beginning to gather momentum against the Tory policies of the Labour Government.

DAYS OF ACTION

The 3,000 delegates who attended the Assembly of Labour on March 27th, and those who packed the Albert Hall the previous week for the "Right-to-Work" rally, as well as the magnificent Days of Action in Glasgow and Dundee, are an indication of those who are prepared to organize against the policies of the Labour Government. It is the pressure from these workers and their families that lies behind the decision of the 37 Tribune MPs to oppose the cuts in Parliament.

The abstention of these MPs on the Cuts must now be translated into action. They must reject the wretched appeal from Basnett, Jones, and Scanlon, which so delighted Michael Foot, and which aims at lining up the trade unions behind the wage-cutting, job slashing policies of the Labour leadership. YES, we are for unity in the Labour movement but it is precisely the policies of the £6 pay limit and the lengthening dole queues which split the movement.

How do the 37 Tribune MPs intend to carry forward the fight?

Geoff Bender

are careful we shall be treading down the Tory path... We are carrying out Conservative policies" but went on to say that he agreed with 80% of the Government's policy! Rightly, he said that the vote on the cuts was a vote on the whole future of the Labour Government and especially, the forthcoming Budget. Rightly, he attacked the rising unemployment figures, though failing to mention that it is, above all, fellow-Tribunite, Michael Foot, who bears responsibility for them. It is when it comes to answers that he is found wanting.

NO IMPORT CONTROLS

The main demand he makes is for import controls, and even goes so far as to blame unemployment on "cheap imports" flooding the country. Calling, predictably for import controls he conveniently forgets that those "cheap imports" are the only way many working class families can afford essential goods; that the so-called "unfair competition" is, in fact, a result of the failure of British manufacturers to invest in new plant and equipment. The call for import controls, by persuading workers that their enemy is foreign workers and not their own employers, sabotages any struggle before it begins.

The call for import controls also featured largely in the election man-



DUNDEE 5 March: 30,000 marched against cuts and unemployment

ifesto of Tony Benn, who, alone of the candidates, attempted to inject politics into the leadership contest. Certainly, his campaign organized by left Tribunites, like Dennis Skinner, gave the left of the Parliamentary Labour Party a boost and undoubtedly, the votes he did receive reflect the desire of the Constituencies for a change of course. Though his policies were not significantly different from those endorsed in "Labour's Independent Weekly", Tribune, they failed to come out in support of him in the first ballot.

Now the issue is settled, at least for the time being, the task for the left MPs is to take the struggle out into the unions, the CLPs and the trades councils. The will to fight is there. By linking the fight against cuts on Labour councils with the trade union struggle against redundancies, by the joint action of CLPs and trades

councils, a movement can be built in which workers can test in practice which demands can take the struggle forward.

The CHARTIST has made it clear that we believe such demands to include:-

- Public works schemes which link the fight for jobs and the defence of services and raise the question of planning production.
- Work-sharing without loss of pay and the nationalization of all industries declaring redundancy.
- Opposition to the £6 pay limit and all incomes policies under capitalism.

On such a basis, a movement can be built which will take the question of policies and leadership, out of the narrow confines of the Parliamentary Labour Party and into every corner of the working class movement. Before the leadership of the Labour Party again falls vacant, we must make sure such a movement exists.

TROOPS OUT ONLY SOLUTION

THE COLLAPSE of the Constitutional Convention in the British colony in Ireland has opened up what will almost certainly be a lengthy period of direct rule from Westminster. The British Government has, for the time being, exhausted its stock of "solutions" to the crisis in the Six Counties of Ulster and has now instigated a regime based openly and unashamedly on the military power of the British army on the streets of the North of Ireland.

Both the forces of Irish nationalism and the reactionary sects on the Loyalist ultra-right are deeply committed to oppose an indefinite

will be placing pressure on the British government to withdraw the army from Ireland at some point in the future.

The Loyalists on the other hand, will be pressurising Westminster to step up its harassment of the Catholic community through the use of the army and "the re-establishment of the authority of the Royal Ulster Constabulary" as a precondition for Protestant support for continued rule from Westminster.

Between the demands of the Catholics who want British troops out, and the call for tougher army action

the next period. That is why the CHARTIST calls for the stepping-up of the fight for the immediate withdrawal of the British army from Ireland and the recognition of the right of the Irish people to self-determination.

The left wing in the British Labour movement will be severely tested on this point over the next few months. A failure to give a clear call for Troops Out Now! will brand the working class movement on this side of the Irish Sea as supporters of the Loyalist reaction. Only by building up strong support for the campaign initiated by the Troops

THE CHARTIST

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WILSON'S CAREER: A POLITICAL ASSESSMENT

HAROLD WILSON's decision to resign as Labour Party leader and Prime Minister will certainly be regretted very deeply by certain people in Britain today. Those people who will most lament the passing of Wilson, who has for 13 years steered the Labour Party away from any serious consideration of socialist policies, will undoubtedly be Britain's boss class of millionaire high financiers, industrialists and stock market whizz kids.

The verdict of the more capable members of the ruling class must surely be that no one else in the Labour Party could have held the balance between the rank and file of the labour movement and the bureaucrats and careerists in the TUC and Parliament for so long and so well.

bonaparte

Wilson's role in the Labour Party was that of a bonaparte, or a little Caesar. He stood between the right and the left wing of the movement and whenever the tension between the two sides sharpened, whenever an issue of socialist principle was put before the labour movement, Wilson found a way to evade the issue. Under the guise of "unity" he managed to rip the guts out of any fight for socialist principle.

In 1951 Wilson operated as the chairman of the "Keep Left" group of MPs who were the political fore-runners of the present day Tribune Group. At the same time however, in a speech in March 1952, he pledged personal support to Clement Attlee, the right-wing head of the post-war Labour government who at the time was leader of the Opposition, against the left's own candidate, Nye Bevan. In 1954, a deep rift opened up with-

in the Labour Party when Bevan resigned from the Shadow Cabinet in protest against the defence policies of Attlee. This action was a rallying call for the labour movement, both in the LP and the trade unions, to stand up and fight against the pro-Western imperialist policies of the Labour leadership during the Cold War.

But Wilson, cast in the role of a sort of fireman, hose-pipe in hand, rushed on to the scene and doused the spark that threatened the flare up. With the credibility he had gained as a left winger—through his role in the "Keep Left" group and his resignation from an earlier Labour cabinet over prescription charges—Wilson was able to step into the Shadow Cabinet position so recently vacated by Bevan. Thus, confusion and despair was sown amongst the rank and file of the Party, and the initiative was given back to Attlee.

More recently, this bonaparte of the Parliamentary Labour Party, managed to pull the chestnuts out of the fire and avert a clash over socialist principles on the issue of the Common Market. Having, with the Labour vote against the EEC in 1972, proclaimed himself an opponent of membership of this capitalist club, in the 1974 Referendum he proceeded to campaign

with the Tories, Liberals and the right-wing of the Labour Party for staying in the Common Market.

In each case, the tactics used by Wilson were the same, and the traditional Labour left in Parliament and the TUC let him get away with it. He firstly posed as a champion of the left, as a Bevanite or anti-Market-er, and then turned round to reveal himself as a supporter of right-wing, pro-capitalist policies.

The old labour movement slogan says that unity is strength. But under Wilson, the principle of 'unity' meant shackling the active, campaigning, left wing of the movement to the policies and personalities of the right wing. If Wilson can in any way be described as an 'outstanding' politician it was in this direction that his 'outstanding' talents were directed.

Only under Wilson could the LP make the transition from the days of the leftish document "Labour's Programme for Britain" and the Manifesto of the October 1974 Election to the hard, anti-working class policies of public spending cuts, wage restraint and 1½ million unemployed.

Throughout his political life, Harold Wilson closely adhered to the traditional maxim that politics is the art of the possible. But for Wilson, what was possible was only what the capitalist class was likely to let him

get away with. The bounds of possibility were strictly drawn for this man by the first indication that his policies might be resisted by the City and the CBI bosses.

This passage from Wilson's own book on the Labour Government of 1964-70 serves as the best obituary at the close of his career as Labour Party leader. After complaining about persistent demands for cuts in public spending from the City, Wilson relates how he protested feebly to the Governor of the Bank of England:

"I said we had now reached the situation where a newly-elected Government with a mandate from the people was being told... that the policies on which we had fought the election could not be implemented; that the Government was being forced into the adoption of Tory policies to which it was fundamentally opposed. The Governor confirmed that that was, in fact, the case.

economic power

"I asked him if this meant that it was impossible for any Government, whatever its party label, whatever its manifesto or the policies on which it fought an election, to continue, unless it immediately reverted to full-scale Tory policies. He had to admit that that was what the argument meant, because of the sheer compulsion of the economic dictation of those who exercised decisive economic power."

The capitalist class will certainly regret the passing of this wretchedly pliant individual from the leadership of the Labour Party. The ranks of the movement must resolve that the next leader of the Party does not have the opportunity to serve the interests of the bosses but rather organises the labour movement to break their power.

Assembly blows cold on import controls

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT Assembly on unemployment held in London on March 27th, mustered over 3,000 delegates in what the organisers (the London Confed and Co-op Political Committee) claimed to be the largest delegate conference against unemployment since the 1920s.

Delegates from shop stewards committees, trade union branches, trades councils, and over 100 CLPs demonstrated an enormous show of strength and determination to fight unemployment and the cuts.

But there was no real leadership from the platform on how to fight redundancies, the £6 pay limit and the social contract, the social spending cuts and the other bankrupt policies of the Labour Government. All that really came from the Conference was a call for strikes, demonstrations, meetings etc on May 26th.

The Assembly was run bureaucratically with no amendments allowed, speakers hand-picked and no real debate over what programme could take the fight forward.

Tribune MPs such as Stan Thorne and Brian Sedgemore and ASLEF chief Ray Buckton were full of left rhetoric and calls on the Government to implement the Manifesto but provided no effective way forward. Labour lefts and CP members all advocated selective import controls — as a solution for the "British" working class. Just how dangerous and confusing this policy is, was illustrated by a speaker from the London branch of the National Union of Seamen who called for the dropping of clause 9 of the new Race Relations Bill on the grounds that it would lead to the "importation of Third World labour" and "undermine



Police attack 'Right to Work' March

seamen's jobs".

But so much opposition to the nationalist policy of import controls (which will in no way guarantee jobs) came from the floor that future speakers barely mentioned the idea.

Members from the IS-dominated 'Right to Work' Campaign wanted to change the date of the 'Day of Action' to May 21st to coincide with the court appearances of the 30 marchers arrested and charged after the police attacked their march. A 'Right to Work' Campaign speaker described how the police went on the rampage against the marchers and Bill McLoughlan, chairman of the Assembly called for solidarity from every section of the movement with those charged.

The lesson of the Assembly is clear. The determination to fight unemployment exists. What is needed is a proper opportunity to thrash out policies and a fierce political struggle to commit the TUC and Labour lefts to organising actions and supporting struggles against unemployment, cuts and the policies of the Labour Government.

Power cuts mean pensioners

'Go cold or go hungry'

PENSIONERS and the unemployed are facing new attacks on their already meagre living standards. Following the scandal of pensioners dying of hypothermia, after fuel cut-offs for non-payment of bills, the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) have come to an arrangement with the gas and electricity boards.

Previously the Supplementary Benefits Commission allowed the DHSS to meet high fuel bills received by claimants, but now "to avoid disconnection, a weekly sum will be deducted from his (the claimant's) benefit and paid direct to the fuel authority and will be sufficient to cover current consumption plus a small sum off the arrears... The claimant will have to be told what this sum is and it should be explained to him that if his consumption increases, the amount of the weekly sum withheld will have to go up." (Circular A243)

Already estimates of current consumption exceeding £6 a week for a single pensioner have been received yet the rates of supplementary pension allow only £4.15 at maximum (usually rather less) for fuel bills. Those on supplementary benefit are being told to go cold or go hungry.

It is up to the members of the Civil Service unions, the CPSA and SCS to use issues such as this to provoke discussion in their branches as to the responsibilities of civil servants. Are they enslaved to a

Government bent on obeying the logic of a system facing another profitability crisis, or are they, as trade unionists, obliged to defend the most defenceless members of a working class facing widespread attack?

SQUATTERS

Squatters are also facing fuel problems. Despite parliamentary assurances that squatters would not be discriminated against by gas and electricity boards it is evident that these authorities are collaborating with the police and the property owners by cutting off supplies or refusing to supply squatters (despite the fact that bills have been paid or deposits agreed to). Further information is available from the Squatters Fuel Campaign, c/o 2 St. Paul's Road, London N. 1.

Trade unionists in the supply industries could play a vital role in refusing to cut off supplies to pensioners and squatters. Resolutions condemning the collaboration of the service industries' management and calling on councillors and MPs to publicly defend the rights of all members of society to fuel supplies should be passed where possible.

Copies of such resolutions should be sent to Lord Lovell Davis, the Dept. of Energy, Thames House South, Millbank, London SW1, who is conducting a review into laws relating to fuel supplies.

UNION ACTION THWARTS ATTACK ON JOBLESS

(By a CPSA member)

THERE IS A widespread view among industrial trade unionists that white-collar workers, in particular Civil Service workers, have little in common with the working class. However paradoxically, it has been unions such as the Society of Civil Servants and the Civil and Public Servants Association who have been in the forefront of the challenge to the collaboration between the TUC and the Government over the £6 limit and cuts in the public sector.

Unfortunately, since their initial opposition at the TUC last year to the Labour leadership's economic policy, both the SCS and CPSA "Broad Left" leaderships have shown their fear of conducting a debate amongst the union membership about alternative pay policies and show every sign of preparing Civil Service workers for a sell-out on the question of redundancies (35,000 jobs are threatened in the next two years). Indeed, union members have just been urged to accept a "take-it-or-leave-it" £6 pay deal by their respective Executives.

In contrast to this hypocrisy on the part of the union leaders, members of the CPSA employed in the Government Employment Service Agency's local offices in East London have taken action to protect the rights of unemployed workers. The ESA management had proposed to introduce,

into an experimental scheme for the computerization of unemployed registrants' records, a symbol denoting the worker's acceptability to an employer. The system would place workers into one of four 'categories' (A, B, C or D) according to their 'amount of employment', 'job stability' and 'realism'.

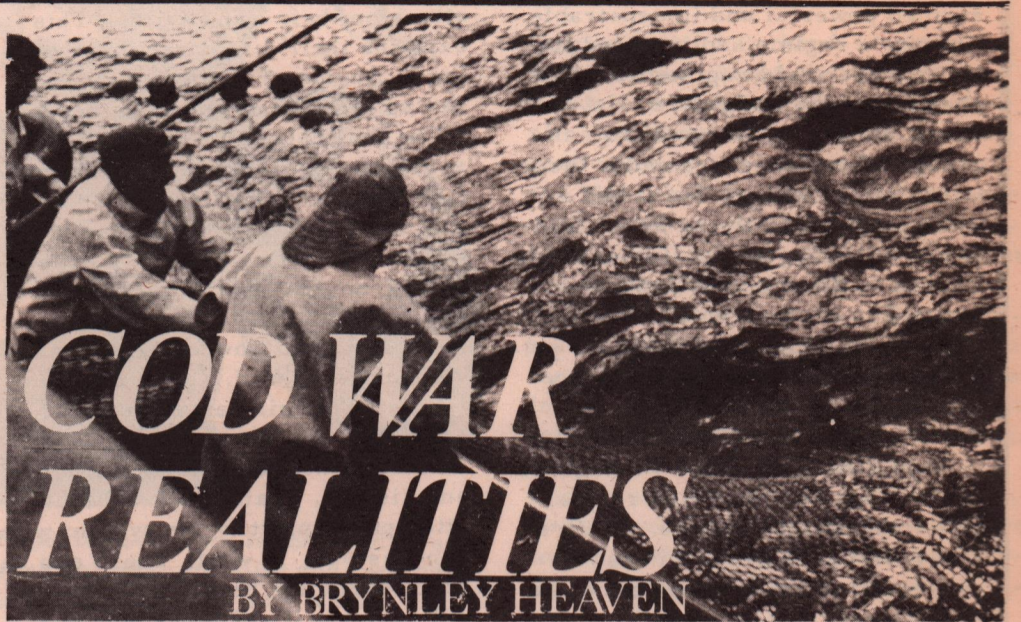
Conscious of being characterized as 'unfeeling bureaucrats', the union members realised that the proposals would undermine both their difficult job of finding jobs for the unemployed and the rights of all workers to a fair deal from the state employment service. They refused to co-operate until the 'categorisation' was withdrawn, and demanded that the union executive publicise their action and protest to the TUC and the union representatives on the Manpower Services Commission (which controls the policy of the ESA). At the same time, appeals for support for their actions went out to Trades Councils in the East London area. The action has been particularly embarrassing for the ESA management (who have already sunk £5 million of the taxpayers' money into the computer scheme) as they had to admit that they had not consulted anyone, least of all the CPSA members involved, before going ahead with the scheme.

The Manpower Services Commis-

sion have now announced their acceptance of the categorisation scheme. It also seems that the TUC might accept the proposals. If this is the case, then a major campaign must be mounted to throw out this scheme to grade the jobless.

Part of this campaign should in-

volve the lobbying of MPs and resolutions through Trades Councils, Labour Parties and union branches to defeat this dangerous proposal. Messages of support to the CPSA General Secretary should be sent to: CPSA, 215 Balham High Rd., London, SW17.



COD WAR REALITIES

BY BRYNLEY HEAVEN

ON OCTOBER 15th last year Iceland extended her fishing limits to 200 miles. Soon after the quota talks in Reyjavik broke down on November 17th, British frigates were sent into the disputed zone in response to warp cuttings by Icelandic coastguards: the fourth 'Cod War' since 1952 had begun.

Although the Royal Navy still has sufficient strength to settle the issue in an afternoon, the Icelandic government is confident that Britain must eventually back down. Western military strategists, already worried by the breaking of diplomatic relations between two NATO allies, have warned the Labour Government not to endanger Geir Hallgrímsson's centre-right coalition and strengthen the left wing which has already led a general strike and threatens to evict the US-run NATO air-base at Keflavik.

The Labour Government knows that it is only a matter of time before other countries, especially the US and Canada, extend their own offshore zones and that this trend will ultimately be rubber-stamped by the interminable United Nations' 'Law of the Sea' Conferences.

Ironically, Britain, whose coasts harbour up to 60 per cent of the entire fish stocks of the Common Market, is squaring up for its own quarrel with the EEC common fisheries policy, and insisting on an exclusive British zone around our shores.

| ICELANDIC COD LANDINGS | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| 1970 | 308,000 tons |
| 1974 | 239,000 tons |

Rather than acknowledge these realities, the Labour Government continues to mount what is an expensive holding operation, which is given an added hypocritical dimension by the government's own claim to a 200-mile zone around Rockall, an uninhabited outcrop in the Atlantic.

Iceland depends upon fish and fish products for three-quarters of her visible export earnings. Faced with a crippling economic recession, a massive trade gap widened by Common Market import controls and an astronomic inflation rate, Iceland has again been forced to curb the plunder and depletion of her one and only major industry by more powerful capitalist economies.

THE CHARTIST recognises the right of the Icelandic government to police the exploitation of her natural res-

ources and demands that the Labour Government immediately withdraws naval protection to trawlers in Icelandic waters. But such a policy will get no support from trawlermen in Grimsby, Hull and Fleetwood, Britain's three major deep sea fish docks, unless an alternative is posed, since Icelandic catches account for nearly half all distant water landings.

In the words of 'Fishing News', British deep sea trawling is in its 'death rattles' through years of neglect by owners and governments, and low quayside prices through competitive over-fishing. Despite subsidies deep sea trawlers barely covered their costs in 1975 and, after capital depreciation, lost £6m overall.

Since the beginning of last year well over twenty distant water trawlers have been sold off, scrapped or laid up in Hull alone. Imports, which normally account for three-fifths of domestic consumption, are running at £12m a month compared with £6m this time last year. No wonder Jeremy Tunstall wrote that this industry "might have been invented by Karl Marx to prove that capitalism was inherently self-destructive."

SAFETY

The TGWU must be forced to use its strength to fight for its own policy of decasualisation of the industry and a guaranteed basic wage, which should rise according to cost of living increases. There must be a campaign for 100 per cent union membership with rights to ship-board representatives and freedom of communication to shore at all times. This would lay the basis for improved conditions (a 126 hour week is not unknown at the fishing grounds) and safety in the most dangerous of all industries.

Labour must nationalise the industry as a whole, to stamp out the profiteering and make good the chronic shortage of capital investment. This could turn the industry outwards to pioneer new fishing grounds and new techniques. When male unemployment in Hull stands at 11 per cent and the shipyards of Tyne and Clyde are crying out for orders, it is an insane system which drives a pliant Labour Government to dice with men's lives in a cat and mouse game with the Icelandic coastguard.

Right wing routed over cuts

DESPITE opposition from the platform, this year's London Labour Party Conference decided to reinstate compulsory selection procedures for GLC candidates.

The Party's regional executive last year changed the rules to ensure that Constituency Parties did not have to go through the normal democratic selection procedures, but could instead simply adopt the sitting councillor, Len Hammond of Norwood Labour Party told the Conference.

The leadership's manoeuvre was overwhelmingly defeated, and throughout the whole meeting the Party rank and file showed a consistent determination to oppose the government's public expenditure cuts—which also boost unemployment—and the implementation of those cuts by Labour councillors in London.

It was the issues of cuts and unemployment that occupied the bulk of the Conference discussions. Resolutions were passed condemning the Labour government, calling for a guaranteed job for all, work or full pay, nationalisation and a socialist plan of production. But it was the cuts debates that really brought the Conference to life.

Motions were passed:

- Against any more fare increases on London Transport.
- For restoration of the housing cuts, municipalisation and a massive extension of the housing programme.
- Against the Health Service cuts, for an end to private practice and an increase in real funds.
- Against the cuts in teaching staff of 440 by the Inner London Education Authority; against the cuts in overseas students' grants and against education cuts generally.

Despite the passing of these resolutions—many against the recommendations of the Executive chaired by Bob Mellish—they have, of course, been suitably ignored by the

BY PAUL MOORE

GLC and ILÉA leadership. But they have strengthened the hand of those councillors who are prepared to oppose fare increases and housing cut-backs, and strengthened also those Constituency Labour Parties and trade union organisations who are already campaigning against the cuts.

Policies alone are not enough. Firstly, rank and file campaigning and organisation are necessary to follow up the gains made. Secondly, those right-wing GLC councillors whose policies have been discredited must now be removed or made to follow GLC councillors Eden and Haseler, of the right-wing Social Democratic Alliance, who declared the London LP Conference showed the LP had been taken over by 'communists' and they would therefore not stand for re-selection.

Labour Against Cuts Conference

TO AVOID local struggles against the cuts being isolated a national campaign has been started from London. Labour Against the Housing Cuts (LAHC), which attracted dozens of delegates from London CLPs to its founding conference last year have resolved to widen their scope to a campaign against all cuts in social spending and to change their name to 'Labour Against the Cuts'.

It is vital that all Labour Party members who oppose the cuts get their local party and YS branch to affiliate to this Campaign. The Campaign will not get very far without trade union support either.

There will be a delegate Conference, on May 8th (10 to 5), at Friends Meeting House, London WC1. Write to Ted Knight, 7 Wiseman Court, Woodland Rd, London SE19, for details.

BLACK WORKERS HOLD KEY IN SOUTH AFRICA

JUST A FEW years ago the racist white "laager" of Southern Africa seemed powerful and impenetrable. Vorster's regime had imposed its vicious apartheid regime with its powerful army and police. Not only was it setting up "Bantustans" as cheap labour reserves under theoretical black control, but it had a whole series of "Uncle Tom" leaders in adjoining states (for example Kaunda in Zambia and Banda in Malawi) to act as a buffer zone.

Now, however, South Africa's policy of "detente" with black Africa has collapsed. The victories of Frelimo in Mozambique and MPLA in Angola have smashed Portuguese colonialism and installed radical anti-imperialist regimes. Smith's cosy fools' paradise in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) is being jolted out of its security as the Zimbabwe liberation forces step up the pressure. The compromise talks with the wretched Nkomo have collapsed.

What really worries the South Africans and their backers in the

West, of course, is that these struggles will snowball into all-out attack on their own regime. This explains their disastrous intervention in Angola. Even Kaunda is now having to make threatening noises.

The real danger to the white supremacists will not be guerilla warfare, but the newly-organised and militant black workers. They have now started to fight back, independently from the traditional nationalist exile organisations. South Africa could be a real powder keg in the year or two ahead. Given that British firms dominate much of the economy, the tasks of real class solidarity with our black brothers and sisters, against any 'liberal' attempts to prettify the system with concessions, is vital. There can be no compromise between the present racist hell and black workers' socialist revolution.

In the following article a guest South African militant looks at the background to the developing crisis in South Africa.

Class solidarity vs. liberalism

WHENEVER THERE is discussion in this country concerning change in South Africa, it has become obligatory to start by mapping out how much investment British firms own there. From the map the following conclusions are said to be self-evident. Firstly, since British firms own such a large part of the South African economy, they must be in a position to influence the South African government to change its ways.

Secondly, because the SA government of Balthazar Vorster is hard of hearing, then the British firms must go it alone by increasing the wages of the black workers they employ.

Unfortunately, as everyone knows from bitter experience, British firms never part with a single penny without putting up a fight. The conclusion? Pressure must be brought to bear on British firms not only to increase African wages but also to defy South Africa's repugnant laws.

MORAL CRUSADE

To the question, who exactly must pressurise these firms, the answer always is, the British people. Herein lies the roots of the great British moral crusade against Apartheid. The British government is in it, so are the major political parties. The TUC is in it, and so is the press, the institutions of learning, and the Church. Only the City and its soul brother, the CBI, remain unimpressed.

After fifteen years of the crusade we must ask who are the benefactors and who are the losers. To the first question, the answer clearly is, the British ruling class.

The opposition of British workers to the Apartheid system (essentially only a more naked form of capitalist rule) has been skilfully diverted into a moral issue. This, and the apparent support of the British ruling class, through Parliament and its Press, for the struggle of black workers in SA for higher wages genuine working class solidarity is submerged in a general act of philanthropy from the 'British people' to

the 'black people' of South Africa. The imperialist character of the British ruling class therefore remains hidden from British workers, and what is more important, the British working class remains firmly under the political leadership of the ruling class in matters concerning British foreign policy in general.

To the question, therefore, who are the losers in this great British crusade against Apartheid, the answer must obviously be the British and South African working class. The very object of this type of national crusade is to emasculate the interests of both by hiding them behind charity and sentimentality.

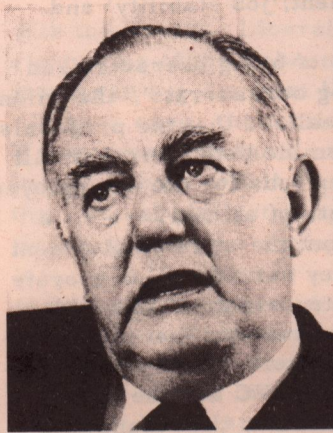
Only when British workers defend the interests of black workers as a class with common interests distinct from the interests of all other classes in South Africa, can true class solidarity be said to exist. This is impossible so long as the British working class looks at South Africa through the deliberately darkened and twisted telescope provided by British capitalists.

BOERS

But what position does South Africa actually occupy within the imperialist orbit and what are South Africa's specific relations with Britain?

When between 1899 and 1902, the British ruling class, at a cost of £200 million, fielded 448,000 men against the Boers, the purpose was not only to obtain a firm grip on the vast mineral resources of South Africa, but also to monopolise the South African market for consumer goods, on the one hand and for British finance capital, on the other. By 1907 when Britain handed over power to a local white ruling class, SA was politically and economically, well and truly within the orbit of British imperialism.

The mining industry was in British hands. The railways, though state-owned, were built with loans raised in the City of London and were eq-



South Africa's Vorster / South African Police club striking worker in Durban



uipped, exclusively, with British-made rolling stock. Only agriculture remained in the hands of the local whites, but it too was dependent on exporting to Britain and receiving subsidies from the mining industry via the Treasury.

South Africa has, of course, developed tremendously since 1907. However, like all capitalist countries that started developing during the epoch of imperialism, SA has specific features which countries such as Australia and Canada also have.

The economy of SA has three main features. Firstly, large sections of industry, finance and commerce are owned by the imperialists—the so-called multi-national corporations. Secondly, the state is a very important economic force because it owns the transport system, large-scale public works, for example, power generation, and certain industries that initially did not interest the imperialists, for example iron and steel in SA.

Thirdly, the local capitalist class is strongest in agriculture, although of course there is a substantial industrial and financial segment, as well as local shareholding in subsidiaries of imperialist concerns.

These features tell us two things. Firstly, that Britain, by virtue of having been the first imperialist

country and at one time direct master over SA, remains, to this day, the major foreign investor. Secondly, because historically a large section of the economy is imperialist-owned then, and this is the key, the South African ruling class is composed of two segments. The local white propertied classes and the pro-British imperialist element. The latter have traditionally been most strongly organised in the Chamber of Mines, through the United Party, and more recently the Progressive Party, into the City of London and Whitehall.

It was precisely the Chamber of Mines that gave the migrant labour system its final shape, that modified the pass laws, (every black S. African must carry a pass to enter white areas), and that perfected the mine compounds.

The local white propertied classes, on becoming the class directly in charge of the state, have translated the practices of the Chamber of Mines into the racist ideology of the South African ruling class as a whole. Armed with what is now its general world-view, Vorster and co have harnessed all other strata of whites and enlisted them as foremen, supervisors, policemen, soldiers, lawyers, professors etc, to forever press the black working class into the unrelenting mill of capitalist exploitation.

Portuguese fascists backed UNITA in Angola

EXTRACTS from correspondence between UNITA chief Jonas Savimbi and leaders of the Portuguese fascist regime before the April 1974 coup. Published by the Portuguese MFA, the letters clearly show the stooge nature of the UNITA movement. ■

Letter from Jonas Savimbi to General Luz Cunha, 26.9.1972. (C-in-C of the Portuguese forces in Angola)

Savimbi to Luz Cunha

Your Excellency, Before entering into practical considerations... I should like to ask your Excellency to convey my homages on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the arrival in power of His Excellency Professor Marcello Caetano... and congratulations to His Excellency General Luz Cunha on his appointment to Chief of Armed Forces in Angola...

... However far we have to go before the final solution, we are certain that the authorities are already in a position of victory, thanks to

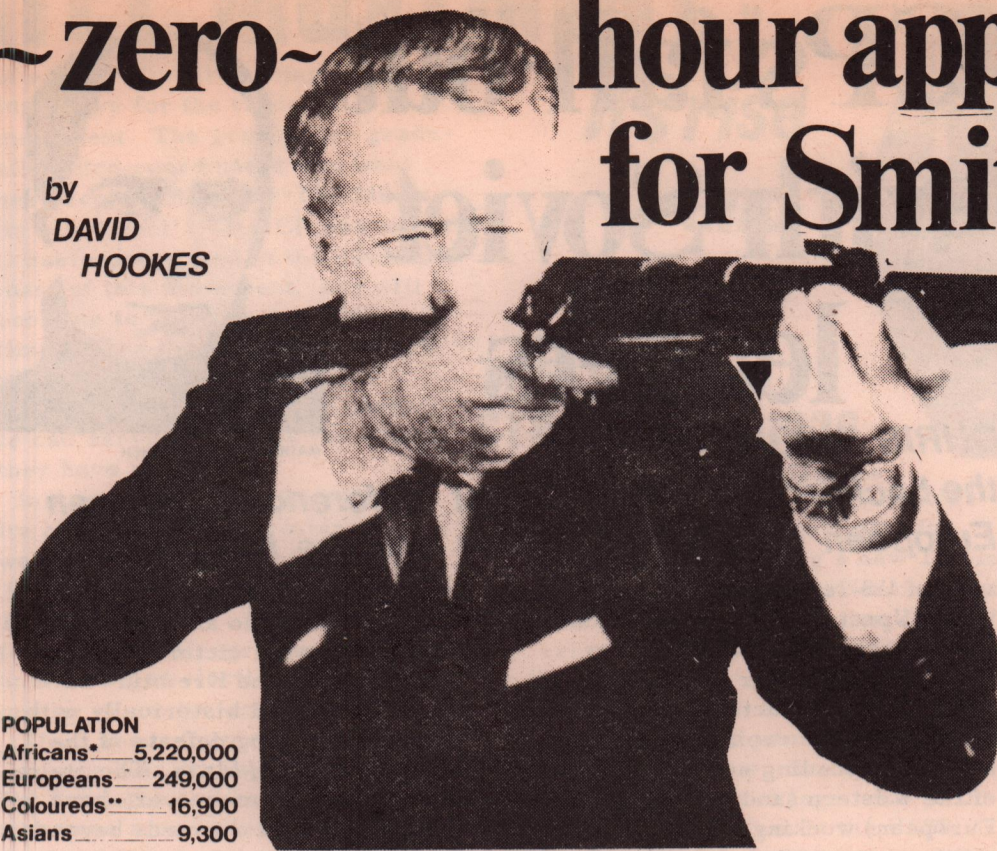


JONAS SAVIMBI

the enormous means they are devoting to the policy of 'renovation'... as far as we are concerned, we desire a decisive eradication of the common enemy (MPLA) in the eastern sector. We have been doing everything in our power to weaken the forces of the common enemy.

Zimbabwe - zero - hour approaches for Smith racists

by
**DAVID
HOOKES**



POPULATION

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| Africans* | 5,220,000 |
| Europeans | 249,000 |
| Coloureds** | 16,900 |
| Asians | 9,300 |

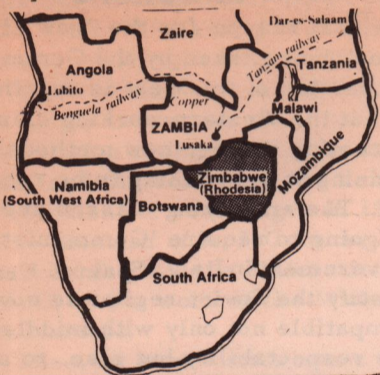
THE CRISIS OVER the future of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) is rapidly coming to a head, and with it the imperialist chickens are coming home to roost. British Imperialism can no longer rule through the white settler minority and would like to replace them by a black bourgeois regime, which is now waiting in the wings and groomed to protect the vital interests of imperialism.

The situation, however, is explosive; the settlers will not accept majority rule for fear of losing their property and privileges; the planters, their plentiful supply of labour at starvation wages, and the urban middle class has one of the highest living standards in the world, with servants two a penny etc.

NO MAJORITY RULE

Their leader, Ian Smith, is claiming that he will never accept majority rule; "not in a thousand years", he claimed recently. Though this is probably bluff in an attempt to extract better guarantees and or better compensation, he is probably prepared to fight a limited war against the 20,000-strong guerrilla army amassed by the black nationalists on the Rhodesian borders. This he hopes will persuade the British Government to intervene militarily to prevent things getting out of control. It is the presence of the guerrilla army, armed and trained by the Russians and Chinese, that represents the real threat to the interests of Western capitalism, in Southern Africa.

Kissinger, arch-spokesman for the interests of US capital, has already warned Cuba of the dire consequences if it comes to the



aid of the liberation fighters.

It is by no means clear that Sitole, Muzorewa and co. - those nationalist leaders who have refused to negotiate with Smith - have much political control over the guerrilla forces. In the event of a large-scale war of national liberation starting, the consequences for imperialism in the whole of southern Africa could be incalculable. Even the settler lobby in the Tory Party is silent and official Tory spokesmen are backing the Government to the hilt in its attempts to produce a rapid transition to majority rule.

What are the basic interests of imperialism in Zimbabwe? They are two-fold. Firstly, the direct economic one; coal from the Wankie coalfield supplies both the Zambian copper belt and South Africa. The huge Kariba dam supplies hydro-electric power also to the copper belt (whose mines are largely owned by Anglo-American Corporation) and the British multinational Lonrho has a large stake in the high-grade chrome ore deposits. Barclays Bank is the single most important bank in Rhodesia as well as the rest of Southern Africa.

However the second aspect is probably the more important from the standpoint of American and world

imperialism. This is the need to ensure political stability and continuity in Southern Africa as a whole. The possibility of a war, starting as a guerrilla war of national liberation, being transformed into a revolutionary class war in which the property and interests of the settlers and the imperialists are expropriated by the workers, arms in hand, is a real one. Such a war would certainly spill over into the surrounding neo-colonialist states, Zambia, Zaire and Tanzania. It would also enormously strengthen the black working class in South Africa, itself. This is probably the most serious threat of all for the whole structure of world imperialism. It is on the anvil of this class struggle that the socialist future of Southern Africa and the entire African continent will be forged.

It is this scenario of extended class war which sends spasms of fear up the spines of gentlemen both in the boardrooms of the City of London and on the back seats of Mercedes-Benz in Lusaka, Dar-es-Salaam, and Kinshasa. British Imperialism and their pawns in those surrounding African states are united, therefore in wanting a smooth rapid transition to majority rule in Rhodesia. In fact,

they are obviously hand-in-glove. Mozambique closed its borders to Rhodesian freight traffic, and Britain simultaneously promised to make good its loss in revenue. So much for the "Marxist" regime in Mozambique.

Of course, none of these real interests are discussed openly in the Western media. Rather we hear talk of "the need to avoid at all costs the human tragedy of a racial conflagration throughout Southern Africa". No-one in the labour movement must be taken in by this hypocritical breast-beating.

Rhodesia was established by Cecil Rhodes and his gang of colonial freebooters with the most bloody savagery, including the machine-gunning of hundreds of unarmed Africans. Imperialism never hesitates to drown in blood all those who resist its rule or to provoke the most bloody racial conflicts on the principle of divide and rule.

NO TROOPS

Any attempt by the present British Labour Government to send in troops to police a settlement must be uncompromisingly opposed throughout the working class movement. A campaign of unconditional support must be launched for the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe to free their country from the fetters of colonialism, and their right to do this in whatever way they choose.

No confidence, however, can be given to the political programme put forward by the nationalist leaders for a future independent Zimbabwe. This will leave the interests of imperialism intact. Only by taking the mines, plantations and factories into social ownership, without compensation to the old owners, can the future interests of the overwhelming majority of the Zimbabwean people be assured.

... Our analysis permits us to designate the MPLA as the principal obstacle to peace... in the entire territory of Angola.

... Our position is irreversible.. We are not interested in the OAU, nor Zambia, and even less in an alliance with the MPLA. If certain aspects of UNITA policy are not sufficiently clear for the government authorities... there is in any event one irrefutable fact: we have actively participated in the weakening of the MPLA in certain regions of the East. And we cannot nourish any illusions about... an alliance with those we are fighting, fighting in fact without rest. What are the intentions of the government? We have no illusions about taking up arms against the authorities... we are employing them essentially so that the MPLA should one day be obliged to abandon the East.....

The pacification of the East, in our opinion, will have to take account of the following considerations:

(a) Reduction, to the point of liquidation, of the MPLA forces in the interior of Angola. This task can be carried out through the combined efforts of the military and militarised forces (i.e. Portuguese) and those of UNITA.

b) Liquidation of MPLA camps between Angola and Zambia. This can be done easily by UNITA since we have no political status which could lead to legal proceedings before an international court. Our plans for this are already under way.

(c) Discrediting the MPLA. We see the OAU itself as a means for this, at least as far as the liberation movements are concerned. Once the MPLA has been weakened or liquidated in the east, the way will be open to newer horizons for us. ... I ask your Excellency once more to provide us with at least 1,500 7.62 calibre shells, for our actions against the MPLA are always with arms of this type. I ask you to pay particular attention to this request, since we shall no longer be using these munitions against the authorities.

Savimbi to Oliveira

B. Letter from Jonas Savimbi to Lt. Col. Ramires de Oliveira. 25.10.72

(After informing R. de Oliveira of the disposition of MPLA forces, as well as UNITA/MPLA engagement). ... We request His Excellency the GOC's permission to operate in zones 1 and 2, starting on 5.11.1972

for a maximum period of one month, or until the action has been carried out. Our forces will withdraw immediately after.

... I have in my possession a document from the OAU which I consider to be of extreme importance... The document deals precisely with the provision of weapons to the MPLA as well as to other movements operating on Portuguese territory: quality, quantity of arms, finances, means of transport etc. I think it is useful to the extent that it reflects the spirit of the last meeting on African Heads of State in Rabat in June last. As soon as I have studied it, I shall send it to you along the usual channel - it would be a pity if a document of this importance should be lost.

... As to the possibility of a meeting with myself, I have always been disposed to meet persons of greater authority to discuss face to face what I think, and the position of the local and national authorities concerning what we propose to do.

I should like to take this opportunity to send my respectful greetings to His Excellency Santo e Castro upon his appointment to the high office of Governor General of Angola. Respectfully, J. S.

Oliveira to Savimbi

C. Letter from Lt. Col. Ramires de Oliveira to Jonas Savimbi, 4.11.72. The analysis you have made of the situation, both internal and external, concerning the subversive movements inside Angola and the relations between themselves and the African countries which support them have been duly studied and are highly appreciated. As I have already had occasion to tell you, it coincides for the most part with our own. In our opinion, the destruction of MPLA bases abroad is extremely important. But we believe also that this must be done with some guarantee of success and with all the precautions necessary to avoid compromising the national authorities. ... We can decide on objectives and sort out the details for its execution at our next meeting.

D. Letter from Jonas Savimbi to Lt. Col. Ramires de Oliveira, 7.11.72.

We should be able to find a definitive solution to all points of difference in the same spirit that His Excellency Professor Caetano has shown.

European CPs fall-out with Soviet leaders

THE MOSCOW-LINE Communist Parties are in disarray:

- Issues of the French CPs newspaper, L'Humanite, have been banned from sale in Russia for supporting Soviet 'dissident' Marxists such as Leonid Plyusch.

- Speeches by foreign delegates at the 25th Soviet Party Congress early last month suffered deliberate mistranslation by the Soviet authorities before being released in Russian (as, for example, when Italian CP leader Enrico Berlinguer insisted on the need for Western-style "pluralism"—replaced in the translations by the meaningless expression "multiformity").

- The leaders of two of the strongest European CP's—the French and Spanish parties—deliberately boycotted the Soviet Congress.

- The leader of the largest Western CP—Enrico Berlinguer—went out of his way to spell out, even within the walls of the Kremlin Palace of Congresses itself, his party's resolve to keep Italy within NATO (describing the Western alliance as a safeguard for "the sovereignty of the Italian people, and against foreign interference in our internal affairs").

primitive

- In a speech in Rome, the Spanish CP leader, Santiago Carillo, described Soviet socialism as "primitive" and bearing the "stigmata" of Tsarist feudalism. Spain's 'Communists' aimed at a wholly different kind of socialism.

Some British Communist Party members, and (for different reasons)

BERLINGUER ADDRESSING PARTY CONGRESS WITH BREZHNEV (FAR LEFT) LISTENING



right-wing Tory politicians like to tell us that all this is part of a "subtle plot" to deceive the West. The soft "pro-Western" phrases, they say, are only a mask: behind it, the Communists are the same as they have always been since the Russian revolution in 1917.

If you think this, you are wrong. The Kremlin-bashing is real, and so are the assurances of loyalty to the military alliances and parliamentary institutions of the West.

The drift from Moscow is a reflection of the increasing disarray of the states, alliances and economies of the Western capitalist world. The globe with its super-powers, its military alliances and its "balance of power" forms an intricate interlocking system. The Warsaw Pact is as much a product and part of this system as the NATO alliance; and Stalinist dictatorship in the East is as much a part of it as the domin-

CHRIS KNIGHT looks at the background to the current 'differences' between European Communist Parties and the Kremlin

ance of US-led imperialism in the West. Upset any part of the system, and the reverberations will run through every other part.

The upsetting factor is the economic crisis of the capitalist West and the corresponding new combativity of the Western (and particularly European) working class. Western military strategists fear that Communist advances in Italy, Spain and perhaps also France could undermine the entire "southern flank" of the NATO alliance. In certain quarters, a total collapse of NATO is actually feared.

This fear affects the Kremlin bureaucracy in a paradoxical way. The Warsaw Pact countries have amassed about 935,000 men and 15,500 tanks along the borders of Central Europe. The Kremlin leaders claim to their own people that these forces are required to meet the threat from the West. While that is part of the reason, in actual fact the NATO forces are considerably smaller (about 788,000 men and 6,880 tanks along the same border), and it is absurd to imagine that defence from the

West is all the Soviet leaders have in mind.

What they are doing is exploiting and exaggerating the "foreign threat" to provide themselves with the political means of maintaining a level of military expenditure which would otherwise be impossible. And without such enormous armed forces, the Kremlin and East European bureaucrats would be unable to defend themselves... against their own working class.

In this roundabout way, the Stalinist rulers actually require the existence of their Western counterparts. Without the NATO "counter-balance", the Warsaw Pact forces—with their internal "policing" function—could not be maintained. As the professional "Kremlin-watcher" Victor Zorza put it writing of an earlier period (Guardian February 20th), "as US policies tended to become harder, this helped the hardliners in the



MATHEMATICIAN PLYUSHCH

Kremlin."

It is therefore no accident that the greatest internal victories of the "hardliners in the Kremlin" have always coincided historically with the most crushing defeats of the Western working class. The Stalinists' victories, moreover, have always extended outwards beyond the borders of the Soviet Union itself, for the more impotent and defeated the Western Communist Parties felt, the more dependent they felt upon the power of the Kremlin and the more slavishly they followed the Soviet bureaucracy's every political twist and turn. It was hardly surprising, then, that the Kremlin bureaucrats saw the advantages of following policies expressly designed to ensure the continued dominance of capitalism over the Western world.

Kremlin rulers

The new "independence" being asserted by Western Communist Parties is a product of the new militancy of the European working class. To a subordinate extent, the relationship is a direct one, the attacks on Soviet bureaucratism reflecting the bitterness and outrage which communists everywhere feel when they finally realise what has been done in their name by the Kremlin rulers over the past half-century. The prison-camps, the executions of strike leaders, the arbitrary arrests and purges, the unbelievable privileges of the ruling bureaucrats and the economic blunderings and inefficiencies resulting from bureaucratic rule—all these are things which no communist who made the Russian revolution could have dreamed would happen in a workers' state.

Giorgio Napolitano, a member of the directorate of the Italian CP, has recently called for research to be carried out to explain "why a great revolution... could have produced a system based on Stalinist degeneration." He is apparently unaware that Communists have been carrying out such research for many decades, beginning with the work of the founder of the Red Army, Leon Trotsky.

But a bold struggle against Stalinist bureaucratic tyranny on behalf

Unpublished letter to 'Socialist Worker'

AS A REGULAR reader of Socialist Worker I feel obliged to reply to Duncan Hallas's 'theorizing' as to the class nature of the Soviet Union. The position of the IS is - or should be - well known: viz, the USSR as well as Eastern Europe, China, Indo-China etc, are not socialist, or workers' states but state-capitalist. However Hallas in the first of his recent series of articles (14th Feb. to be precise) goes much further than a mere state-capitalist position. By endorsing some of the more noxious Chinese anti-Sovietism, Hallas like Chou and Mao has concluded that the Soviet Union is now a FASCIST dictatorship. (see

of the working class of Russia and Europe is hardly what any of the timid West-European CP leaders have in mind. Such a struggle would involve bringing the workers of Europe to power in order to ally them as a mighty force in support of their oppressed Soviet and East European comrades. It would involve, not NATO re-armament or Kremlin-bashing from the standpoint of Western 'democracy', but the very opposite.

It would involve removing the very SOURCE or the Stalinists' bureaucratic power. And that source of their power is ultimately only this: the military boundaries, dividing East from West. If a workers' revolution in Spain, Italy or any other major Western country really were to destroy the NATO alliance and upset the global balance of power, then that in itself would make it impossible for the Kremlin bureaucrats to survive.

fraudulent

It is in the light of this that we can see how fraudulent the "anti-Stalinism" of the Western CP leaders really is. Support for NATO means support for the present global "status quo", peaceful-co-existence, and hence support for the Kremlin rulers as part of this arrangement.

The same goes for the French Communist Party's renunciation of the proletarian: the Russians want to keep it because they use it to justify their own dictatorship against the Soviet working class itself; the French want to abandon it only to regain some "respectability" in the eyes of the French bourgeoisie. Both courses are identical inasmuch as they are equally directed against the conquest of state power by the international working class.

'new directions'

The real reason for the "new directions" being taken by the Communist parties of the West is only this: now that the Western working class is becoming strong, new methods of containing it are coming to be required. The employing classes are soon going to require 'Communists' in Government in Italy, Spain & France. To justify the Soviet regime is now incompatible not only with middle-class respectability but also, to an increasing extent, with working class votes. Consequently, criticisms have to be made.

But the criticisms cannot be allied with military support for the Warsaw Pact countries, for that, paradoxically, would threaten the entire global balance of power, and consequently the rule and privileges of the Kremlin leaders themselves. So the Western 'Communist' leaders must support NATO, as part of an unstated "arrangement" with the Kremlin itself. Enrico Berlinguer's pro-NATO speech in Moscow was firmly in the Stalinist tradition.

SW 'talking about socialism 14 Feb) In trying to justify this outrageous assertion, Hallas has the temerity to quote Trotsky, though significantly he neglects to inform us of the source of the quote.

Let us set the record straight: Trotsky pace Hallas, always insisted that the Soviet Union was a workers state with certain bureaucratic deformations, and had remained a workers state in spite of the Stalinist Thermidor. Although the working class had been politically expropriated, there had been no counter-revolution restoring bourgeois property relations. Apropos of the Burnhamite/IS notion of a new

cont. on p. 7.

THE MINORITY MOVEMENT :

Part 2 By Graeme Atkinson

DURING THE PERIOD leading up to the 1926 General Strike, a prominent role was played by the National Minority Movement, a mass rank and file movement of trades unionists organised under the leadership of Communist Party (CP) members.

Following the defeats of whole sections of workers in 1921 and 1922, the CP was forced to look anew at its industrial work. The initial reaction of the CP leaders was to adapt to the pessimism of some sections of workers, discounting the need to build a mass base in preparation for future battles.

By early 1924 the adaptation had deepened to such an extent that the Red International of Labour Unions (RILU) intervened and severely criticized the CP for its refusal to fight consistently within the mass organisations. The RILU's report stated... "The work of the British Bureau does not keep pace with the requirements and possibilities of the present Labour movement of Great Britain." The conclusion drawn was that the CP's industrial work was to be re-organised, with emphasis on the task of building up revolutionary groups in all sections of industry under a national, centralised leadership.

TREACHERY

The intention was to provide workers with a focal point for struggle against the treachery of the official leaders and to fight to replace the latter with a revolutionary leadership.

Despite some opposition in the CP, by January 1924 the first steps were taken when a national conference set up the Miners' Minority Movement and resolved to form district committees in all the major coalfields. By February the Miners' Minority Movement was publishing a regular paper, 'The Mineworker', which called for a single industrial union for miners, affiliation to the RILU, the six-hour day and for real wages to be the equivalent of real wages in 1914. The election of A. J. Cook as Secretary of the Miners Federation owed much to the work of the Minority Movement.

The next step - after some delay - was the launching of the Metal Workers Minority Movement, but here progress was rather slow. The Sixth Congress of the CP assessed the situation as follows: "The bankruptcy of the bureaucracy has brought into existence fighting groups

of workers... all battling for a fighting policy for the trade union movement. The groups are gradually being coordinated into what has become known as 'The Minority Movement'... the CP has on all occasions assisted in the development of this movement, and will continue to do so, but at the same time warns those active workers who participate... that only a revolutionary Communist struggle can serve to achieve the object they have in view."

In August 1924, the first Minority Movement (MM) conference was held in London, attended by 270 delegates who represented 200,000 workers. Conference formulated a Programme of Action and arranged election of officers and an executive committee.

The Labour Government of Ramsay MacDonald had held office for 8 months and sections of workers were moving into conflict with it. Also, the lessons of 'Black Friday' and the collapse of the Triple Alliance of miners, transport workers and railmen had bitten deep into the militants minds and left them desirous of a weapon to fight the right-wing. These factors made the gathering a timely one.

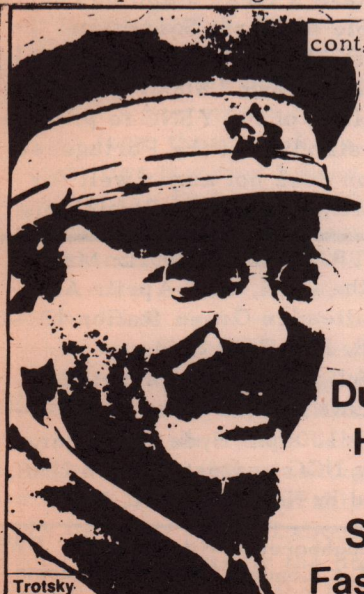
The Programme of Action reflected the feelings of the militants by calling for workshop and factory committees, for representation of these bodies on Trades Councils, for industrial unionism and for immediate affiliation of the National Unemployed Workers Movement to the TUC it also urged a strengthening of the TUC General Council, "to mobilise and concentrate all the forces of the working class movement for the purpose of opposing a united class front to the united class enemy" and called for rank and file control over the General Council.

STRIKE ACTIVITY

The deliberations of the Conference coincided with a renewal of strike activity. Railmen, engineers, dockers and shipyard workers all filed wage demands... fertile ground for the intervention of the MM.

In these conditions, the movement expanded rapidly and by 1926, 957,000 were organized under its banner. Prominent was the miners section which secured the affiliation of 40 miners' lodges in the Durham coalfield alone. In engineering, too advances were made with 153 engineering union delegates present

state-capitalist ruling class which had emerged from the supposed defeat of the October revolution, Trotsky, to his dying day fought tooth and nail, against this particular petit-bourgeois chimera.



Duncan Hallas and Soviet Fascism

cont. from p. 6.

"The attempt to represent the Soviet bureaucracy as a class of 'state capitalists' will obviously not stand criticism. The bureaucracy has neither stocks nor bonds. It is recruited supplemented and renewed in a manner of an administrative hierarchy, independently of any special property relations of its own. The individual bureaucrat cannot transmit to his heirs his rights in the exploitation of the state apparatus. The bureaucracy enjoys its privileges under the form of an abuse of power. It conceals its income; it pretends that as a special social group it does not even exist. Its appropriation of a vast share of the national income has the character of social parasitism. All this makes the position of the commanding Soviet stratum in the highest degree contradictory, equivocal and undignified, notwithstanding the completeness of its power and the smokescreen of flattery that conceals

Its rise and demise

THE GENERAL STRIKE: MAY 1926

at the next MM conference.

Under MM pressure the miners' leaders began to investigate the possibility of forming a new Triple Alliance. The TUC Conference in 1925 accepted a resolution empowering the General Council to organise support for stoppages.

Unfortunately, at the very time that the CP was winning real support among workers, the MM's tactics began to change, due to the growth of Stalinism in the USSR. The developing Stalinist bureaucracy put the world revolution in second place to alliances with 'progressive forces' who would neutralise imperialist hostility to the young workers state in the USSR. Its British expression was the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee, a gathering of trade union 'left' bureaucrats who were to be instrumental in betraying the General Strike. The fake lefts covered their class collaboration in Britain with verbal 'pro-Soviet' noises.

MANOEUVRES

Increasingly, the MM became tied to these elements. Political independence was subordinated to their manoeuvres. Just how much this was so is shown by two statements by CP leaders:

*1924: "It would be suicidal policy... for the CP and MM to place too much reliance on what we have called the official left-wing." (J. R. Campbell in 'Communist Review')

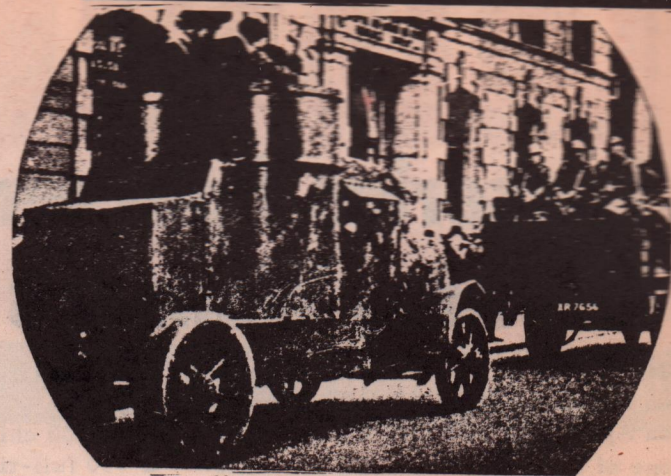
*1925: "The left trade unions leaders occupy at present the position not only of the workers in the immediate crisis, but also of the spokesman of the working class elements in the CP... an alternative political leadership" (Palme Dutt in 'Imprecor')

Under the pressure of this new alliance with the 'lefts' in the TU leadership, serious preparation for the coming clash between the miners and the state was abandoned. The 'lefts' were dished up as a leadership which could smash the capitalist

it." (Revolution Betrayed - L. Trotsky, pp249/250).

While Hallas, our theorist of state-capitalist-fascism, makes hay with that one, I will pose three more pertinent questions: 1) Both the English and French revolutions ended with the restoration of their respective monarchies; therefore are present French and British societies capitalist, or, - by the use of Hallas' logic - state feudalist? 2) Is Hallas - as the ideological spokesman of the IS - inventing a third camp a la Burnham, between the bourgeoisie and proletariat - namely, a new state capitalist class? If he is, then further questions arise.

For historical materialism insists that new classes only arise on the basis of the needs of the productive forces and their development. If, as Hallas asserts, the bureaucracy is a new class, he will have to explain in what way



offensive. The result was that during the General Strike of 1926 both the CP and MM were paralysed before the left bureaucrats of the Purcell, Hicks and Swales variety; men who were no less treacherous than their right-wing counterparts. Above all, the CP and MM were powerless to expose and fight the enormous betrayal which was the culminating point of the General Strike. This was the beginning of the end for both organisations as revolutionary forces. Only a year later in 1927, the very union leaders that the MM had relied on launched a vicious witch-hunt against the movement and the Anglo-Russian Committee collapsed. Still, no lessons were drawn... except by Trotsky, by now a political outcast. In fact, the CP instructed its members to vote for a TUC instruction for Trades Councils to disaffiliate from the Minority Movement... all to preserve an alliance that no longer existed. The CP and MM, having given the TU bureaucracy a left cover was now dispensable.

NON-SECTARIAN

The burial of the Minority Movement could be left to Stalinism, though not before the ultra-left binge of 1929-34 in which not only the trade union bureaucracy was declared bankrupt but also the unions themselves! After trying to build up exclusive 'revolutionary' unions, the MM was laid to rest in 1932.

In its formative stages, the MM was a model revolutionary opposition in the unions. Politically non-sectarian, it won hundreds of thousands of workers to active combat against the ruling class and its reformist friends in the unions. However, thanks to Stalinism it was shipwrecked on the rocks of unprincipled alliances with the reformists, especially during the nine day General Strike in May 1926. NEXT MONTH: FRANK LEE will examine the 1926 strike in more detail

its emergence was made necessary by the development of the productive forces and in what way it was progressive, as Marxists insist all new classes must be in history. 3) Does Hallas advocate a social revolution in USSR, Eastern Europe, China etc, to overthrow nationalized property relations - a curious position for a socialist -- that one.

On the supposed liquidation of the gains of the October revolution, I will leave the final word with the 'Old Man' "The October revolution has been betrayed by the ruling stratum, but not yet overthrown. It has a great power of resistance, coinciding with the established property relations, with the living forces of the proletariat, the consciousness of its best elements, the impasse of world capitalism, and the inevitability of world revolution." (LT - Revolution Betrayed pp252) - No comment... fraternally, F. V. Lee February 1976.

Nurseries fight central for Working Women's Charter

THE FORTHCOMING Working Women's Charter Conference in Coventry on April 10th and 11th will have as one of its major tasks the prioritisation of the demand for free nursery facilities for all who need them.

The Conference could do worse than take a leaf from the campaign, in London to organise an all-London fight for adequate under 5s facilities. Nationally, in England and Wales, there are 700,000 children born each year. This makes a total of 3½ million under 5s. There is nursery provision for less than 50,000, of which only half are from local authorities—the rest being expensive private nurseries. There are also 190,000 part-time nursery classes and 95,500 full-time.

Thus, if women are to reap the dubious benefits of the recent legislation, a pre-requisite is readily available nursery provision for children under five.

A recent meeting in London brought together representatives from nursery campaigns in Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Islington, Lambeth, Surbiton, Enfield, Brent, Haringey, Camden and Deptford. The meeting decided to produce a policy statement and work towards the formation of an all-London committee. A lobby of this year's Labour Party Conference is planned and attempts will be made to get resolutions on nurseries to the Conference. This is the pattern that can be repeated throughout the country.

In the following article, **Marie Montaut** looks at the situation and the nursery campaign in just one area of London.

IN NORWOOD the Labour Party intends to fight the Government's cuts and, as part of our campaign, we have set up an Under 5s group to organize a Lambeth-wide campaign for better and more nursery facilities in Lambeth.

The situation in Lambeth at present is:

- 24,000 children under 5
- 700 full-time nursery places
- 600 children on the priority waiting list, that is, children in neglect.

The answer given to these appalling figures by the LABOUR-controlled Council is:

- All planned nursery building programmes have been postponed indefinitely (the economic crisis, you know?).

● Baby units attached to day nurseries are being phased-out although it is not council policy, because the council says there isn't enough demand for them.

● Lambeth Council like many Inner London councils have adopted a policy of sponsoring children who urgently need places to go to private nurseries. This is also being phased-out and in one nursery the number of places used by Lambeth Council went from 17 to 4.

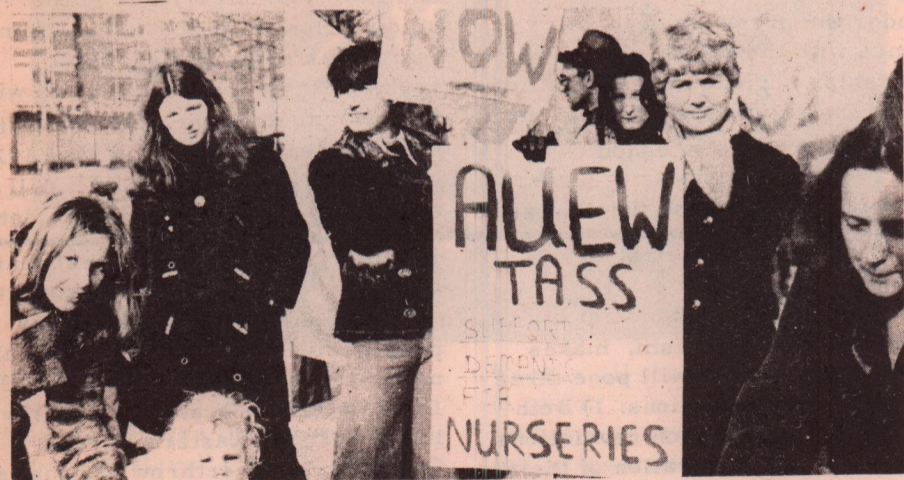
Borough-wide

We as socialists do not intend to sit back and allow local councils and a so-called socialist government to get away with these cuts.

The position described in Lambeth is repeated time and time again in London boroughs and throughout the country. That is why it is necessary for all Labour Parties and trade unionists to fight for more nursery facilities and against all attacks on working class living standards.

In Lambeth we are organising a borough-wide campaign, involving members of Labour Parties, trade unions, the Working Women's Charter group and people in the area who want more and better nursery facilities.

For more details contact: Marie Montaut, Norwood Labour Party Under 5s Campaign, 14a Hurst St. London SE24.



More and more trade unions are taking up the demand for nurseries. A recent picket line outside the Social Services Department.

ABORTION RIGHTS—STEP UP THE FIGHT!

By VON McCLAREY

THE APRIL 3rd National Abortion Campaign demonstration has not won free abortion on demand. The rump anti-abortion Select Committee, with White, Abse and co. is still sitting, and the fight to commit Labour MPs to boycott it must go on.

Now the fight must be intensified in the localities. Trade union and Labour Party branches and trades councils should be committed to campaign actively for a woman's right to choose.

Local NAC groups should attempt to work in conjunction with labour movement organisations to take the campaign for abortion rights deep into the working class. Public meetings, leafleting and especially picketing of hospitals which are not implementing the 1967 Act are vital to propagandise the campaign. In those areas where the anti-abortionists—SPUC and LIFE are strong, their actions must be opposed.

Tasks facing LPYS

THE 15TH ANNUAL Conference of the Labour Party Young Socialists convenes this Easter, as the Labour movement reels under the blows of public spending cuts and the highest unemployment since the 30s. That this can happen a mere two years after the election of a Labour Government, on the most radical programme for many years, expressing the tremendous upsurge of working class struggle against the Tories, should be a cause for serious reflection among young militants in the Labour Party and trade unions.

How can the Labour Party Young Socialists intervene in this situation to help turn the tide of the Labour Government's betrayals, dispelling some of the confusion and demoralisation and rekindling the spirit of the movement that helped bring down the Tories in 1974.

NO ACTION PROGRAMME

The stand of the 37 Tribune MPs against public expenditure cuts has created an opening in the Labour movement into which new fighting policies can be advanced and find a ready response. The response to the IS "Right-to-Work" rally and the Assembly of Labour have shown the eagerness of sections of the Labour movement to fight the attacks of the Labour Government. How do the present leaders of the YS plan to take this struggle forward?

The answer, presented in the National Committee document 'Unemployment and the Crisis of Capitalism', while containing many correct points and demands, nevertheless fails to advance a serious analysis of the crisis, or a programme of ACTION for fighting unemployment and the cuts. Instead we have the wistful, "If the leaders of the Labour movement were prepared to mobilise that power (of the Labour movement) the grip of Big Business... could be broken. That is why we, in the Young Socialists, have re-emphasised the call put forward by Clement Attlee in 'Labour in Perspective' in 1937 for the Labour Government to introduce emergency legislation... providing blanket powers for the nationalisation of industry and the inauguration of a socialist plan of production". Until this is done, apparently we can do nothing!

NATIONALISATION

Following the NC's lead many resolutions call for the nationalisation of industry as the only cure for the economic ills of the capitalist system, but though many resolutions are rich in demands, few tell us what we should DO. Many also link calls for nationalisation to the confused scheme of fake 'workers' control', calling in familiar style, for industries to be run by boards of "one third from the unions in the industry, one third from the TUC,

(By GEOFF BENDER, Lambeth Cntl) and one third from the Government". This arid schema extracts from workers' control, its very essence, the class struggle. Conference should reject these schema for the fighting policies outlined, for instance in resolutions from Vauxhall, Wood Green and Wokingham which give the YS real weapons for a fight against the cuts. The resolution from Leeds South East referring back the NC document should also be supported.

WOMEN

However, two issues, in particular, confront the YS Conference this year, the problems of women and the struggle in Ireland. The response of the YSNC to the resolutions passed last year endorsing the Working Women's Charter and opposing the James White Bill, has been to promote the issue of women from the "Others" section of the Agenda to a section of its own. Beyond this, however, the contribution of the LPYS leadership to the fight against the James White Bill, and to the developing struggle over nurseries has been minimal. The resolutions at this year's conference from Norwood and Chipping Barnet correctly condemn the negligence of the NC in this area and together with those from Ashton-Under Lyne and Lancaster provide both the demands and the means to put flesh on those demands.

IRELAND

Ireland, always one of the most intense debates of the YS Conference, promises, once again, to place before the YS leadership those tasks it has evaded for so long. Resolutions from Hackney North and Stoke Newington and Carlton provide a refreshingly clear contrast to the voluminous evasions of the Liverpool, Garston resolution. By focussing on the role of the British Army in proping up the Orange statelet, the main source of sectarianism in the North of Ireland, these resolutions place before the YS the tasks of socialists in Britain. The NC must explain why they have failed to launch any real fight for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

One other international issue, worthy of note, is that of the revolution in Portugal. Having seen their entire perspective confounded by events the YS leadership have retreated to an embarrassed silence. Not one resolution appears on the agenda putting the positions of the NC on the events of the past year. Delegates received (if at all) the promised NC statement on 'Spain & Portugal'—with only two days to amend it. The resolutions from Surbiton and Northampton South, at least, take a clear stand on the reactionary role of Mario Soares and the leadership of the Portuguese Socialist Party and our own Labour leaders.

The failure of the YSNC to produce an understanding of the Portuguese revolution does not augur well for their ability to lead the British one.

BRENT TRADES COUNCIL: March Against the Cuts, 24th April. Assemble Willesden Green Station 10.00. (Buses: 8, 176, 260, 266).

NATIONAL DEMO, Sun. April 25, Against cuts in NHS—Ban all Private Practice. 1.00pm Hyde Park Cnr. Called by NCC against Cuts in NHS. Supported by NALGO, SMA, NUS.