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BEHIND THATCHER "COUNTER REVOLUTION"

TORIES PREPARE

The sharp turn to the right in the Tory Party represented by Margaret Thatcher's election as Tory Party leader is an important stage in the preparations the Tory Party are making to take on and defeat the working class when they return to power.

These changes are in response to the new situation created by rising unemployment, short time working, plant closures, speed up and redundancies which arise out of the world crisis of the capitalist system and which are being carried out under a Labour government.

Tory MP Angus Maude, writing in the Sunday Express, put it this way: "I see these events not as a revolution but as a counter-revolution - the beginning of a sustained campaign to halt and reverse the march of socialism. For this campaign I have no doubt the Tories have picked the right leader."

This is a development from the moves last autumn when a group of Tory MPs including Angus Maude and Airey Neave (Thatcher's campaign manager) began a campaign for a force of volunteers to aid the police.

But the preparations of the Tories are first and foremost an ideological preparation, a struggle to resolve the crisis of leadership within the ruling class itself, and win around and whip up forces from the middle class against the working class.

'LAW AND ORDER'

Issues around which they are active are 'law and order', the anti-abortion campaign, defence of private schools, private medicine, opposition to comprehensive education, the 'Festival of Light' campaign, and similar middle class movements.

What forces the Tories to turn to whipping up these layers is the political crisis produced by the forward movement of the working class internationally reaching its sharpest point in Britain with the removal of the Heath government by the miners in February 1974.

This decisive turn to the right ends all talk of coalitions.

In a speech on January 26th, Sir Keith Joseph called for a 'Bill of Rights', "to protect individuals against politicians and bureaucrats".

He went on: "Once the state can take away your property, your home and your income, make you dependent on the kind of health service you receive, how your children will be educated... your home and your income, make you dependent on them for the kind of health service you receive, how your children will be educated..... your access to other freedoms will be in danger too."

This is the world crisis, and the same problems are posed for capitalism internationally. In the United States the right wing emerges in a similar way, with Reagan, ex-

Governor of California, at the head. Speaking last Saturday Reagan called for a new right wing party if the "liberal" wing of the Republican Party cannot be quickly "purged". He said Americans are "hungry once more for a sense of mission and greatness".

MISSION

Joseph speaking recently in similar vein to Reagan said "there is a huge evangelical job to be done". There is no doubt that Joseph stands firmly behind the Thatcher-front. Joseph is the chairman of the recently formed right wing grouping Centre for Policy Studies - the vice chairman is Thatcher. In a TV speech on January 28th Joseph said Thatcher would underwrite his speech completely.

Joseph has been working for some time to provide the ideological and theoretical base for a right wing movement. In a speech to the economic research council recently he said "I began my campaign for capitalism in June". He went on to say that the Tory party should "leave the defensive".

In order to rally round sections of the middle class, who feel their existence threatened both by big business and by the organised working class, Thatcher last Monday addressed a mass rally of small businessmen in Central Hall Westminster, bidding for the leadership of their revolt over rates and taxes.

In speaking against a call at the rally for a march on Parliament, Mr. Lesley Seeney, Director General of the 350,000 strong National Chamber of Trade, shouted above the uproar: "If we break the law now we are no better than the people we are attacking. Don't parade yourselves like a lot of trade unionists."

'MARXISTS'

This development, alongside the attacks on Labour leaders as 'Marxists' - now levelled by a number of Tory spokesmen - are reminiscent of the early stages of the capitalist preparations in Chile prior to the counter revolution, which brought down the 'socialist' government of Allende.

He is pressing Thatcher for the key shadow chancellor position and for the decisive voice in Tory policy making. His determination to take on the working class using mass unemployment as the main weapon is clear.

On January 10th he condemned the Labour government's 'Santa



Keith Joseph

Claus' policy of bailing out ailing giants of industry "whilst subsidising the unviable, the overmanned and the undermanaged." He said his policy would "slim" the companies that were over manned; there was no substitute for restoring profitability. The temptation to reflate must be resisted.

Joseph went on to put the following points of policy:

1. Company tax must be cut, last year's tax repaid and companies allowed to draw their accounts according to the real value of money, to cure "inflation-blind taxation".
2. Removal of price controls.
3. Cuts in government spending and increases in indirect taxation.

He called for an economy based on free enterprise with prices varying to meet market conditions, with firms disciplined by competition and bankruptcy and rewarded by profits. This has for a long time been the position of Powell.

Powell has shown that he understands this change. When asked recently if he was moving closer to the Tory Party he replied that the Tory Party was moving closer to him. Thatcher, on 'World In Action' on February 3rd said only that she does not see a place for Enoch Powell in the Shadow Cabinet "for the present".

There is no doubt that the election of Thatcher is the prelude to big class struggles. Every employer is strengthened by this move to the right. In the factories the big employers feeling the new strength of leadership are hardening their attitudes and moving on to the offensive with redundancies, speed

BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD

up and victimisations held back over the recent period.

At the same time that the ruling class prepare for class battle the trade union leaders stoop to ever greater depths of class compromise. Dennis Healey, who has said that workers must accept a substantially lower standard of living or face mass unemployment is able to back up his position by saying that Jack Jones - "The leader of one of our great trade unions was warning his members last autumn that it was no good pressing for enormous wage increases at the cost of bankrupting the firm which gave them work."

This is an exact parallel with the statement of Alan Fisher "left" leader of NUPE who said:

"if all this money is paid out in large wage settlements, I very much feel that what we are going to see in the next budget is a heavy increase in taxes."

"This is going to damp down the home market and the economy, and consequently we are going to see a large increase in unemployment."

RETREAT

The same retreat is shown by the NUM leaders who have agreed to recommend a deal which will mean a cut in real wages in the pits. The deal is paraded as a 'victory' and a 'breach of the social contract', and many miners are confused by this talk, but the fact remains that the additional take-home pay produced by the deal is substantially less than an inflation rate which could well exceed 25% this year.

But the biggest betrayal is that the deal is recommended with no sliding scale of wages clause - or even the previous threshold agreement. It is now clear that any settlement, even if the lump sum exceeds the rate of inflation, can be eaten away in a few short months by the current soaring prices if it is not protected by a sliding scale of wages clause to compensate in full for the rising cost of living, on figures worked out by trade union committees.

Gormley's betrayal is backed up by McGahey of the Communist Party who cynically talks of this as an 'interim deal' and of a 'threshold deal' at some time in the future, in order to obtain acceptance.

The Workers Socialist League will campaign in the pits for the rejection of the deal on the basis that

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NUT LEADERS BETRAY

Disciplinary action by their school governors is to be taken against five London teachers who took time off work to support the TUC lobby of Parliament on Jan 14th calling for the release of the Shrewsbury Two.

One of the teachers is secretary of Hackney Trades Council, and all were taking part in an official action called by the TUC, yet the NUT Executive has already stated it will not defend them against discipline.

This acceptance of the employer's offensive links in with the NUT's refusal to fight the cut-backs in education spending, despite the enormous support that can be won on such an issue.

In Aylesbury on Friday 14th February 1,000 teachers, parents and trade unionists demonstrated in the Market Square against spending-cuts of £3,500,000 in Buckinghamshire.

Yet all a succession of trade union speakers could say was that the local rates should be increased in order to make up for the government cuts.

Thus the NUT leadership along with the other teaching unions, is presiding over a massive onslaught on education, with staffing cuts and an all-round drop in standards now inevitable as inflation combines with government cuts.

SALARIES

At the same time they have refused to fight to defend their members' living standards, and accepted at the Special Salaries Conference on January 25th the Houghton report on teachers' pay.

This gives heads increases of £40 per week - more than the new weekly rate of pay for young teachers who get only a £4.37 per week increase.

The WSL put out a leaflet in lobbying the Salaries Conference, calling not only for a £15 across the board increase, but also for a clause in the agreement linking salaries to the rising cost of living.

The leaflet also called for ed-

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UNITED STATES

Like a python in a monkey-house, the world economic crisis uncoils in the US Congress.

Democrats and Republicans united in February to dismantle President Ford's carefully-prepared deflationary economic plans for 1975.

In its place they hurriedly pieced together a hotch-potch of increased tax rebates, straight tax cuts totalling over \$12 billion, and continued food subsidies as a sop to workers on the breadline.

The dissarray among the capitalist politicians reflects the severity of the recession now threatening the US. With unemployment rising since last August to hit a record 8.2% in January (and certain to go higher), they fear above all the reaction of the American working class.

Tens of thousands of angry workers demonstrated in Washington - many of them from the car plants of Detroit - on February 5th.

Anxious at all costs to head off any independent movement of the working class, Democratic Senators joined the demonstration, and former Presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey demagogically declared that Ford's tax and welfare proposals make "Scrooge look like a social worker".

The overall fall-off of production is only part of the situation. Key industries are being hit with exceptional severity. Lay-offs of 40% are reported in the synthetic fibres industry, while many automobile plants are working at only one-third capacity.

While inflation continues unchecked, the dollar has fallen 24% against the Swiss franc since September.

Economic pundits are split on whether to cut interest rates and expand the money supply. As its chief, Arthur Burns, put it, the Federal Reserve Bank 'no longer has good options open to it'.

Ford's administration is itself divided. For all his frenzied travelling, Secretary of State Kissinger cannot secure any 'peaceful' settlement for US imperialism's interests in the Middle East.

And his plan for an agreement with the Arab states for a 'floor-price' of around \$8 a barrel for oil (compared with the present \$11) is publicly opposed by Treasury Secretary William Simon and his aides.

US foreign policy as a whole faces an insoluble crisis. Not only must any plan such as Kissinger's be imposed on the politicians of the oil-producing states, themselves confronting the anger of the Arab masses, but America's wavering 'allies' among the Western European governments are frightened at the inflation and economic disruption which is being driven forward by the fuel crisis.

For all his war threats, Kissinger knows he cannot rely even on the political support of a single one of the Common Market states for a military intervention in the Persian Gulf.

The US ruling class are over a barrel in another area. No fewer than five official committees are now 'investigating' the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Kissinger himself is threatened by the revelations of former CIA chief Richard Helms - now on more-or-less permanent leave from his post as US Ambassador in Iran to answer questions in Washington.

Helms' most important evidence concerns Kissinger's part - under the Nixon administration - in CIA backing for the fascist coup in Chile.

As for the FBI, Congressional questioning has so far only scratched the surface of its spying and sabotage against the labour movement and left-wing in the US itself.

These include activities against the Socialist Workers Party (sympathising organisation of the revisionist United Secretariat of the Fourth International) which involved FBI agents procuring the sacking of SWP sympathiser Ernest Able from his job in a Florida shipyard on the grounds that he was 'a Communist'.

Similar stories continue to cascade through press leakages of 'secret' Congressional committees they include accounts of 'bugging' the private apartment of murdered Black civil rights leader Martin Luther King.

Fabricating 'derogatory information', attempts at blackmailing, manipulation of news media and even tapping of former Vice-President Spiro Agnew's phone during the 1968 election campaign are among the other things reported!

None of the capitalist politicians want the deluge of political scandals. Nor have even the 'liberal' congressmen any solutions to the economic crisis. Their role can only be to contain and divert the American working class while it is made to pay through unemployment and inflation. Never have there been more favourable conditions for building a revolutionary, Trotskyist party within the American working class, breaking the grip of the trade union chiefs and the Democratic politicians. As the placards of the autoworkers who demonstrated in Washington showed, the crisis of American capitalism now hits at the elementary living standards and rights of millions of workers,

POLAND

STALINIST CORRUPTION

The former mayor and his deputy head a list of public officials of the town of Sandomierz, on the river Vistula south of Warsaw, who are accused of stealing funds allocated for the restoration of historic buildings.

Their trial has received wide publicity in the national and party press. It is alleged that over eight years they embezzled millions of pounds in money and materials, using them for the building of their own luxury villas and to finance drinking orgies.

Corruption in Sandomierz is only a drop in the ocean of 'legal' and illegal privilege which the Stalinist bureaucracy of Eastern Europe suck from the working class.

But the fact that the apparatus has been obliged to make scapegoats of these minor officials is important. Since the strikes by dock workers against price rises in Danzig toppled the old leadership in 1971, the Gierek regime has had to tread warily.

The wide coverage in the Stalinist own press of this affair, backed up by a personal visit of premier Piotr Jaroszewicz to inspect the renewed 'restoration' works, is intended as a warning to the most brazenly corrupt elements in the bureaucrat's own ranks, that if they do not moderate their activities they could incite the wrath of the working class.

Car workers demonstrate in Washington



ARGENTINA

On February 9th the Argentinian regime unleashed the army in a massive campaign against guerrilla forces in the outlying provinces of Tucuman, Salta and Chaco.

Special 'shock-troops' are being used, known for their brutality and trained in 'counter-insurgency' methods.

One of the main targets is the 'People's Revolutionary Army' (ERP - a former 'trotskyist' tendency which split from the Mandel faction of the revisionist 'Unified Secretariat').

But other guerrilla detachments, totalling between two and three thousand are also under attack.

The Army's aim is not only to destroy the guerrillas but to 'pacify' the thousands of poverty-stricken peasants in the rural areas

who sympathise with them and protect them.

The Workers Socialist League has no political agreement with the ERP, whose adventurist kidnappings have led to their political isolation in the cities. But they must be defended against the repression they now face.

Since the death of Peron last year the Argentinian regime, run from behind the scenes by minister of 'social welfare' Lopez Rega, has moved to the right and to closer collaboration with extreme right-wing army officers.

Top figures in the government back the fascist assassinations and terrorism of the unofficial 'Argentine Anticommunist Alliance'. In August last year they allowed the army to shoot without trial sixteen members of the ERP.

The right-wing of the Peronist movement, in collaboration with the army, are clearly moving towards the imposition of a full military dictatorship, as in Chile.

WAR IN ERITREA

Eritrea, which was briefly incorporated into Ethiopia in 1962 has ever since been the scene of a struggle for national independence which was previously carried on against the British, and the Italians.

This war is now erupting more openly and shows increasing chances of success, against the present 'left' military regime in Ethiopia which has continued the Deposed Haile Selassie's attempts to repress the national movement.

The United Nations forced this union with the reactionary Haile Selassie on the Eritreans, and the present 'left' military regime has continued efforts to enforce it.

The strategic importance of Eritrea especially if the Suez Canal is opened to traffic again this year, is obvious from a glance at the map. The national liberation struggle there poses the possibility of the development of an anti-imperialist regime on the shores of the Red Sea.

The present phase of the independence struggle in Eritrea is fifteen years old. Despite its non-socialist aims, the struggle of the Eritrean Liberation Front must be supported.

The sincerity of any so-called 'progressive' regime can be judged in part by the way it treats national minorities, and the present Ethiopian regime is no exception.

The Eritrean forces have always been large and well-organised, and in recent weeks have gained the support not only of the mass of the local population, including both the Moslem and Christian sections, but even from parts of the army, police and administrative apparatus. The Le Monde correspondent who passed through Eritrea in January found it impossible to get to Asmara without meeting large groups of liberation fighters.

In this situation, with growing strength of the ELF, and the offen-

sive they have been able to mount in recent weeks in Asmara itself, the reaction of the Ethiopian junta has been the traditional imperialist response.

On 30th April, 1967 the Washington Post reported a 'pacification campaign' in which people were being herded into villages 3000 strong. During 1971 the whole of the world press heard of the large scale fighting in which many Eritreans were killed and villages wiped out.

The junta has responded in just the same way. When guerrilla activity began in Asmara, they simply burnt some of the surrounding villages. News reports from the area have been sketchy since the latest large-scale outbreaks of fighting, but it does not seem possible that this long-standing independence struggle can continue for much longer without forcing major concessions by the rulers of Addis Ababa.

The growing power of the ELF is shown by the fact that the Ethiopian junta can only send military convoys to Asmara with difficulty. Their struggle indicates that, for all the betrayals of the leaders of petty bourgeois nationalism, and despite the machinations of Stalinist diplomacy, the forces of national independence and anti-imperialism remain strong throughout the Middle East.

An independent Eritrea would be a small and backward country, as indeed would be an independent Dhofar.

Without these justified national liberation struggles becoming part of a wider battle against reactionary and pro-capitalist forces, there will be no way of ensuring that the vast wealth which the area is capable of producing is controlled by those who will have to produce it.

We can play a role in strengthening these struggles against oppression through the building of the Fourth International and the fight for its programme to construct revolutionary parties in every country.

SPAIN

The decision on February 15th by Franco's Supreme Court to reduce the savage jail sentences inflicted in 1973 on the 'Carabanchel 10' - leaders of the semi-legal 'Workers Commissions' - reflects the stick-and-carrot tactics now being forced on the fascist regime by the development of the Portuguese revolution.

The simultaneous development of a 'hard' grouping among the top army leadership follows widespread strikes and demonstrations. All Madrid's theatres - for decades straightjacketed by censorship and police surveillance - were closed in February by a protest strike of actors and producers.

Clearly worried by splits and indecisiveness among the ruling class General Campano, Commander of the Madrid military region, announced immediately after the Supreme Court had freed two of the Carabanchel militants that the army would oppose 'subversion' wherever it appeared, and that they were determined 'to guarantee some virtues which are not exclusively military'.

The fact that the worker's organisations of Lisbon and Oporto, and the land occupations in the South, are now thrusting beyond the 'democratic' limits of the Stalinist and Socialist Party leaders, has two important results. On the one hand it gives the lie to the Spanish Communist Party's policy of a gradual, 'parliamentary' road away from fascism. And on the other it drives key sections of the Spanish ruling class away from 'liberal' solutions and towards plans, based on the army command, for a renewal of the most violent repression.

ITALY

The Italian Communist Party's plans for a 'historic compromise' - a national coalition agreement with the Socialist Party and the main capitalist party, the Christian Democrats, took an important setback on February 12th.

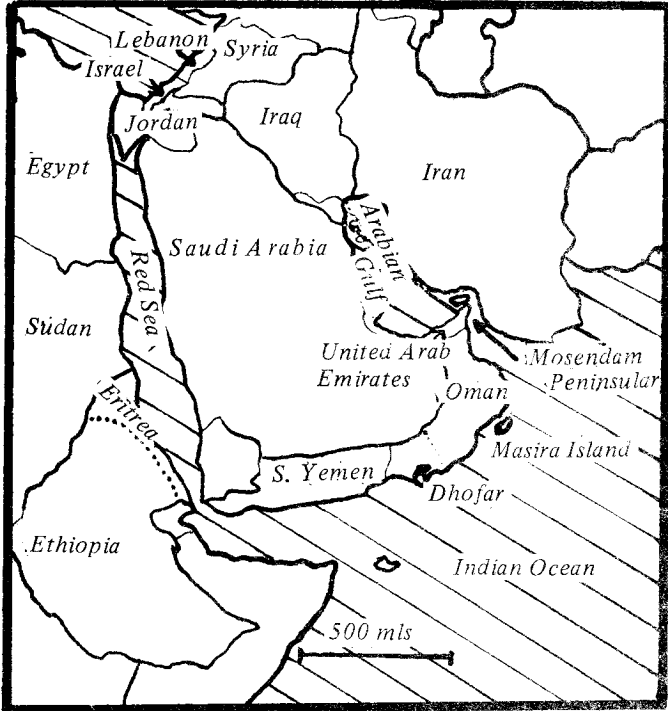
The agreement reached last December in Venice for a municipal council supported by the votes of eighteen Stalinist councillors collapsed with the resignation of five representatives from the (openly anti-communist) Social Democratic Party and twenty-one Christian Democrats.

Vaunted in the Stalinist and reformist press for the last two months as a 'laboratory' for national politics, the Venice arrangement has disintegrated following strong pressure from Christian Democrat Party Secretary Amintore Fanfani, presently engaged in a labyrinthine faction fight within his own party over negotiations for a national deal for which the Stalinists are only too eager.

But the effect of the Venice collapse has been to push Communist Party policy, if anything, even further to the right. The Party press continues to publicise the twenty-five tiny municipalities in which some form of collaboration with the Christian Democrats continues. And in a Rome interview Stalinist party secretary Enrico Berlinguer stressed that even if the Socialist and Communist parties were to get a parliamentary majority they would not form a government without the Christian Democrats.

OTHER SIDE OF THE OIL CRISIS

by Alan Clinton



One of the many important effects of the international oil crisis has been on the political and social developments in the oil producing areas of the Middle East.

Although the oil industry itself needs few workers, its expansion has an enormous effect on the national economies of the region, and has done much in recent months to sharpen the national liberation struggles going on at the fringe of the oil producing world.

The politics and economics of the area are now dominated by the efforts of the international monopolies and their imperialist backers to hold their position in the quicksands of the international payments crisis, and in the face of an aggressive Arab capitalism.

The capitalist press sets out consciously to obscure the fact that the Arab countries and their neighbours are not simply inhabited by 'sheikhs' and 'terrorists' but reflect in their own way the same class contradictions to be found in the richer capitalist countries.

In many different parts of the area, bloody and bitter struggles are going on whose fate is intimately linked with the struggles of workers in Britain and elsewhere in the Western world.

The Palestinian struggle, and the threat it has posed not only to the Zionists but also to pro-imperialist regimes throughout the Arab world, has provided inspiration for the development of many other national liberation movements throughout the area.

Like the Palestinian struggle itself, none of these national liberation movements can be confined to the borders of one country, not least because they quickly come into conflict with the strategic interests of imperialism.

While Kissinger tours Arab capitals in an effort to get them to come into line politically, he and others make it plain that the United States is again prepared to consider intervention in the area, as they did through the CIA in establishing the present regime in Iran in 1953, and in 1957 by sending the marines to the Lebanon to end threats to the oil companies.

Any war plans of the US imperialists in the area would need the participation of the British government. The United States now are not only demanding the joint use of the island of Masira, which is an RAF base, but also of the Omani-held Messendham Peninsula, which commands the entry to the Arabian Gulf, and is passed by the tankers containing a large proportion of the world's oil supply.

The state of Oman, which contains a small but significant amount of oil, was ruled until 1970 by the slave-owning Sultan bin Taimur, one of the most reactionary and backward rulers in the world.

In 1966 a guerrilla struggle against him began in the Western province of Dhofar under the

leadership of what came to be known as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Occupied Arab Gulf.

The growing success of this movement led to the overthrow of the Sultan and his replacement by his Sandhurst-trained son Qabus.

The state of Oman is a British colony. Members of the Cabinet are also supposed to be officers in the British army.

British companies, notably such well-known anti-trade union firms as George Wimpey and Taylor Woodrow have been at the centre of the capitalist development of the country since 1970, mostly building military installations and palaces. The army has been run by officers who are either still members of the British army, or ex-members fighting as mercenaries.

Despite continual claims to the contrary, the bombing of herds and water holes by RAF planes did not defeat the Dhofari guerrillas, who began to extend a whole system of schools and hospitals in the liberated areas of the country, (institutions which had never been seen there before).

By 28th January 1974 The Times said Oman was unable to continue to fight the war, at the same time as doing anything else with its national budget.

This statement in fact appeared within a month of the invasion of Dhofar by the armed forces of the Shah of Iran, who had recently concluded the largest arms deal in history with the United States. The significance of this invasion was two-fold.

It indicated the failure of the British officers to hold back the rebels; and it showed that the United States, albeit at one remove, was taking on the policing activities in the Gulf. The Shah saw his invasion as defending the general interests of imperialism in the area.

The liberation fighters during the course of 1974 put up a bitter struggle against a new group of foreign invaders of Dhofar. According to Le Monde of 4th February, they have killed up to 50 a month of the 3000 odd Iranian soldiers sent against them.

The question of how successful the Iranians have been is difficult to assess. The Times of 18th November, said of the Iranians that 'they have now all returned home' This was a lie. A communique from the liberation forces of 28th January admitted serious losses including important lines of communication. However, their struggle goes on despite claims of the capitalist press of the West that it is over.

Whatever set backs are suffered by those in the Middle East who are fighting for national freedom and independence, the growth of a working class brought about by the industrial development of the area following on oil revenues will undoubtedly in the end pose the biggest threat of all to imperialism.

ONCE AGAIN THE WIGAN MARCH

The centrist politics of the Workers Revolutionary Party are wreaking terrible damage on their much-vaunted Wigan-London march, which is ostensibly organised by the Wigan Building Workers Action Committee.

As the march entered Daventry on Saturday its numbers had dwindled to 30, with few building workers in evidence and the numbers clearly boosted by WRP delegations.

The party leadership, which clearly hoped that jumping on the bandwagon of working class anger at the jailing of the pickets would pull round some much needed trade union contacts, is discovering that this is not a magic key to a working class base.

"Socialist Press" in its last issue stated that it would have been prepared to give conditional support to the march even though disagreeing with the politics of the WRP - if it were genuinely a campaign to unite opposition to the jailing of trade unionists.

We stated also that since trade unionists were being banned from "public" meetings on the march this clearly was not the case. We challenged the Wigan Committee to answer why this took place. There has been no response.

REVISIONIST SUPPORT

Only the revisionist IS and IMG now give the march a veneer of credibility, devoting substantial coverage to it in their press despite the obstacles put in their way by the WRP.

The IMG for example states in 'Red Weekly':

"... all the forces of the revolutionary left have to give all-out support to the march," though they do recognise that:

"The force behind the march are not going to welcome such action"

In Oxford, it was IS members who called for support for the march from the Trades Council (there being no WRP delegates). Yet the 'Workers Press' maintains firmly the position that the revisionists are really opposed to the march!

CHANGED POLICY

But it is on the basic question of policy that the WRP has performed the most blatant manoeuvre, so rapidly as to leave its own members confused. (see 'Workers Diary' p.6)

On the January 14th TUC Parliamentary lobby the WRP distributed only one leaflet, in the name of the 'Wigan Builders' Action Committee', which did not even call for a General Strike, but demanded solely:

"Free the Shrewsbury 2! Defend Democratic rights!"

The Workers Socialist League alone on the march leafletted and shouted slogans calling on the left MPs to fight to remove Jenkins as Home Secretary, and led the call for a General Strike.

The WRP maintained its position of not putting any demands on the left MPs until last Saturday (8th Feb) when they adopted, without a work of explanation of the switch, our slogan.

Worse, however, they combined it with a fanfare of welcome for Sidney Bidwell, opportunist 'Tribuneite' fake left, who voted for Jenkins' so-called anti-terrorism Act, onto the Wigan-London protest march! Thus the slogan 'make the left fight' is printed in the paper but in a way which makes it meaningless.

This resolution was passed at the Charing Cross Branch of ASTMS on Wednesday February 12th:

"Branch supports the march of the Wigan Builders Action Com-

WHAT IS THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE?

The Workers Socialist League was formed on December 22nd after over 200 members were expelled from the Workers Revolutionary Party.

The reason for the expulsions was that Alan Thornett, who was at the time a Central Committee member of the WRP, set out to bring about a discussion within that party on the wrong positions being taken by the Healy leadership and the Workers Press.

The issues were first raised on the Central Committee, and that committee agreed to circulate a document written by comrade Thornett, containing a statement of his differences, and to arrange a 'full and free' discussion within the party prior to the first annual conference. That free discussion never took place. Anyone who in any way supported the document was expelled.

This split was a product of particular political conditions. The rapid development of the economic crisis and the forward movement of the working class all over the world produced the conditions to build revolutionary parties. Yet it was precisely in this period that the WRP began to decline in all its areas of work. It was this decline more than any other factor which raised questions which led to an examination of the political positions of the WRP leadership and to Alan Thornett's documents. As the split emerged, the sectarianism of the WRP, its departure from the Transitional Programme, and the way its maximum programme isolates the WRP from the working class became clear.

To understand the response to comrade Thornett's document in the WRP it is necessary to recognise the period we are now in. The defence of jobs through the fight for the sliding scale of hours without loss of pay; the defence of living standards through the fight for the sliding scale of wages related to rising prices; the challenging of the employer and the preparation of the struggle for power by the fight to open the books and establish workers control in the fight for nationalisation under workers' management; are now called for in this situation in the form of a programme of transitional demands which will form a bridge between the present consciousness and struggles of the working class to the need to take power. Yet the WRP right up to the opening of the discussion by comrade Thornett had never seriously fought for any of these demands. Instead it restricted itself to the sterile maximum demand "nationalise the economy without compensation under workers control".

The impossibility of any kind of opposition within the WRP forced us to found the Workers Socialist League as an independent organisation which will maintain and fight to develop the traditions and principles of Trotskyism. We will continue to maintain a critique of the WRP leadership, but most important for us is our ability to break from WRP method and turn to recruiting and training the new forces thrown into the struggle in this period - trade unionists, professional workers, housewives, students and youth - in the fight to construct the new party.

We will fight against all forms of revisionism - state capitalism and the Pabloite revisionists of the IMG, against stalinism and reformism. Already it is clear that our struggles for Trotskyism in Britain take place under conditions which must create similar splits and discussions throughout the world. We are confident that our movement will soon be able to play an important role in the strengthening of the Trotskyist Fourth International and the development of revolutionary parties in every country to fight capitalism.

Only five weeks after forming the League we were able to assemble the necessary political, editorial and material resources to begin regular publication of a Trotskyist newspaper. We are certain we can win a big response and very rapidly go forward to a weekly paper as the organiser of a movement of considerable political strength.

I would like more information about the WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

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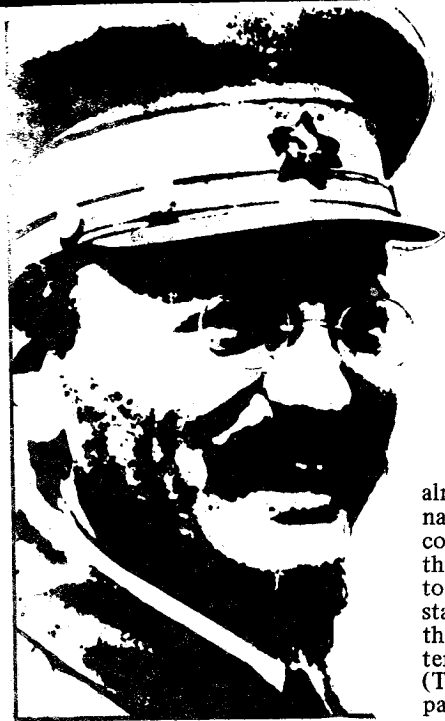
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Name.....
Address.....

mittee against the jailing of the Shrewsbury pickets Warren and Tomlinson, and resolves to send a branch delegation, with banner, to its rally in Trafalgar Square. "Branch also requests the Secretary to write to the Wigan Builders Action Committee asking if the re-

port in "Socialist Press" of February 6th, that trade unionists were excluded from its public meeting in London on January 14th is correct, and, if so, what justification there was for this."

The motion was passed with only four WRP members voting against.



The WRP school of FALSIFICATION

almost immediately into an international civil war. Under these conditions, so the argument went the Stalinist parties would move to the left and in certain circumstances could be expected to take the power as has happened in Eastern Europe and China." (Trotskyism v Revisionism Vol 3, page 3, emphasis added)

EXPULSIONS

Early in 1952 Pablo bureaucratically expelled the leadership and majority of the French section when they refused to follow his directive to liquidate the Trotskyist party by "deep entry" into the Stalinist Communist Party.

Pablo was supported to the full in this by both James Cannon and the Socialist Workers' Party leadership in the USA, and by Gerry Healy in the leadership of the British section.

Only in the autumn of 1953, after it had become clear that Pablo was supporting a faction (the Cochran-Clarke faction) within the SWP, did Healy and Cannon take up a political struggle against Pablo.

This struggle very soon resulted in a split. Following the famous (Open Letter) of the SWP leadership (November 16th, 1953), Cannon, Healy and Lambert (leader of the expelled French majority) came together to form the International Committee of the Fourth International against Pablo.

The International Committee, therefore, although it was based on a wholly principled opposition to Pablo's liquidationism, had also great weaknesses (some of which are only now coming to the surface!) It did not come out of a thorough and developed theoretical struggle within the world movement, and two of its main leaders (Healy and Cannon) had supported Pablo almost up to the last minute.

DISTORTION

How do Cliff Slaughter and 'Richard Bryant' deal with this crucial period? They try to prove that Gerry Healy and the British majority were essentially right all along, and that the real blame lay with Cannon. Slaughter writes:

"From the start the British section viewed the struggle as the organic expression of conflicting class interests within the Fourth International There was not a trace of idealism in this attitude which was totally opposed to treating the opposition administratively, as a conspiracy, or to any propagandistic view of the factional struggle as a point scoring debate" ('Trotskyism versus Revisionism', Vol. 1, p.xiv) Of Cannon, on the other hand, Slaughter says:

"What is abundantly clear is that the SWP leaders were only too eager to get an unprincipled compromise with Pablo based on a redefinition of Stalinism . . . while allowing Pablo a free hand in Europe to liquidate the Trotskyist movement into a Stalinist milieu." (Vol. 1, p.xix)

Cannon's support for the expulsion of the French majority Slaughter calls 'two-faced and incredibly unprincipled' (Vol. 1, p. xviii).

Yet neither in Slaughter's volumes nor Bryant's review is there one single mention of the fact that Gerry Healy, as a member of the international leadership in 1952, also backed Pablo's expulsion of the French. In fact Slaughter is unable, in the whole four volumes, to quote a single word of opposi-

tion to Pablo from Healy or the British leadership before a (confidential) letter to Cannon of May 27th 1953.

SUPPRESSED

This seems bad enough — but there is worse distortion, since the four-volume series deliberately suppresses at least one letter written by Healy in February 1953 which not only supports the politics of Pablo, but also the expulsion of the French, and describes Pablo as the best international secretary the International had ever had!

Since the WRP is too embarrassed

ences of such things count for nothing. On occasions such as this we must bring all our thoughts to bear upon the overall picture of our world movement. The problem is not simply Cochran — all sorts of questions can be posed, with serious consequences for our whole work.

First, the war seems to be getting very near. Since the end of the last one, our sections in Western Europe have had a rough time, splits and sharp internal fights have taken a severe toll, both in England and France. In other countries, lack of cadres has held us back considerably. Over the

I realise that there may be some comrades in your majority who oppose the 3rd Congress resolution on Stalinism. That is a complication. Negativism on this point could very well feed people in the Cochran camp who may be dithering about on the Stalinist issue. We must have clarity all round, no matter whose toes may be trodden on. For instance: S. (Sam Gordon) here took it upon himself to bring to G's notice that he opposes the 3rd Congress on Stalinism. O.K., but it is not *our line* and we should certainly defend the line of the international if called upon to do so.

Since its foundation in 1938, in opposition to the international betrayals of Stalinism, the Trotskyist Fourth International has always been a living leadership. Part of that life is the struggle to grasp objectively its own history, with all its strengths and its limits.

As Trotskyists, we can never let pass falsifications and distortions of our own history.

That is why we take up immediately some of the central distortions contained in the Workers' Revolutionary Party four-volume so-called 'documentary history' 'Trotskyism versus Revisionism' (1974, edited by Cliff Slaughter) and the review of it (*four months* later, by the previously unheard-of 'Richard Bryant') serialised in 'Workers Press' of January 31st to February 8th, 1975.

A fuller account will be published shortly by the Workers Socialist League, but some points must be taken up at once.

REVISIONS

The key political crisis in the International developed between 1951 and 1953. In 1951 the Third World Congress adopted many of Michel Pablo's revisionist positions on Stalinism, with only the French leadership opposing him. Pablo's line, put simply, was that under pressure of class forces, the Stalinist bureaucracy could lead revolutionary movements, and could reform itself.

Bill Hunter, of the British SLL, was able in 1957 to summarise the essence of Pablo's revisionism in this way: "Then in 1947-53 came the period of the Cold War. The question was constantly posed: could we build revolutionary parties in time before war was upon us? During this period certain prominent individuals in the Trotskyist movement, headed by a man named Pablo — under combined pressures of European Stalinism and world imperialism — began to revise and reject the fundamental principles, criteria and method of analysis of the Trotskyist movement. The result of all this was a profoundly pessimistic world perspective and a false orientation based on a sceptical rationalization: the imminence and inevitability of the Third World War. This prognosis presumed not only the organic incapacity of the American and Western European working class to prevent such a war (and thereby dismissed its revolutionary potentialities) but conversely it also attributed to the imperialist bourgeois a power, homogeneity and stability which it did not possess. Trotsky's prognosis of Socialism or Barbarism was consequently replaced with the Pabloite schema of Barbarism first, Socialism afterwards. Pablo developed the theory that since the next war would be again the Soviet Union, it would by its very nature be transformed



Healy: suppressed letter on "nearness of war"



Cannon: with Healy backed Pablo until late 1953

to reprint this letter, it was left to the degenerated SWP to print it in their selection of documents on the split.

Appropriately, they group it together with the documents written by supporters of Pablo (the International Secretariat), and not with those of the future International Committee.

We reproduce it here in full:

London
Feb. 19, 1953

Dear Morris, Farrell and Joe,
Please excuse my delay in commenting on your recent letter which M. showed me. I have also seen the letter from E.G. & P. to you and in addition it has been possible for me to discuss with them on the spot. This letter, however, is purely personal, although John expressed himself in agreement with the general line I take.

From your letter and minutes, the situation appears extremely sharp. Something big is coming up the line — or all our past experi-

past year, it is my distinct impression that the picture on an overall scale has distinctly improved (despite the PCI split). Some very serious work in the mass movements is being done now, and in France in particular. Everyone wants to get on with the job and the nearness of the war adds to their determination.

My first feeling, therefore, is one of extreme worry — are we threatened with another international split? If so we must avoid it at all costs. Our movement must not go into the war, smashed up and divided.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am for the fullest political clarification — this is basic, but it is not wrong to consider all things in an objective way before the fight starts. This is the worst possible time for yourselves and the international. It is not 1939. The steady activity of the Secretariat has co-ordinated and guided our work to a semblance of world organisation entirely unknown then. Whatever happens with you will have almost instantaneous repercussions over the most important countries.

Let me add one thing more. I am fully aware that our secretariat has some defects, but it is the best — the very best we have ever had. Their letter to you, in my opinion, is not too good. What it says politically is O.K., but there was no need for a sermon on Stalinism. The line is what is important. There is agreement to support the SWP against a propaganda orientation towards Stalinism. There is agreement on the line of the 3rd Congress — these are the things which are most important. (emphasis added) So far as we are concerned here, we will stand firm on these two blanks.

It is absolutely necessary to proceed as cautiously as possible (I know you are doing your best) because we do not wish to have a split on our still very weak international movement.

Best wishes,
Jerry

INVOLVED

Notice Healy uses the term "PCI split" to refer to France — whilst having been personally involved in carrying out the expulsion of the majority of that section.

Healy seemed blind to the impact of these actions. His May 1953 letter, mildly critical of Pablo, says, for instance: "Pablo suffers badly from isolation in Paris. That French movement is a 'killer'. It really is impossible to hold an international centre together when you have no national section to help it." (Vol. 1, p. 113)

What Slaughter and Bryant want at all costs to conceal is that Healy had backed Pablo (and Cannon) in 'killing' that French movement through bureaucratic abuse before, only to reunite with the so-called 'killers' six months later.

Bryant's review, rather more sophisticated than Slaughter's introduction, attempts the impossible: he seeks to prove that Healy analysed and fought Pablo's revisionism before the SWP leadership and Cannon. He tries, therefore to quote from Healy's scanty and non-political letters.

The one quote he manages is itself a brazen distortion and an attack on Marxism. The distortion is that he omits the sentence immediately following his quote which says the very opposite of what is implied in the review. The omitted words are here italicised:



Stalin

CIA-nide

'The trouble with Pablo, Jim, is that he is a little disappointed with our terrible struggle to build an international. It must be said, however, that he has been at the forefront of the fight. Great progress has been made over the post-war period in organising a proper functioning international organisation.'

(Healy to Cannon, May 1953)

Yet Bryant is suggesting that Healy was sharply critical of Pablo!

IDEALISM

The attack on Marxism emerges as Bryant, desperate to find some hint of insight in Healy's letters, attributes Pablo's opportunist capitulation to Stalinism and wholesale revision of Marxism to his subjective "impatience" saying:

'... this impatience with the concrete struggles to build cadres was the origin of Pablo's search for 'short cuts' and his abandonment of the Marxist method.'

If this were true, the question remains, what was the origin of Pablo's impatience? Or does Bryant want us to believe that moods and consciousness determine history, as all idealists believe?

Hastily rushing past this 'analysis' Bryant finally resolves to smuggle in a quotation from Healy, not from 1953 (the time of the split) but from 1966 (a mere 13 years later!), which offers a hindsight on the split.

Bryant struggles to backdate Healy's questionable analysis by the incredible statement:

"This retrospective judgement was altogether consistent with the estimation of Pablo that the British Trotskyists came to during the heated activity of the months before the split."

This of course cannot be proved in any way by reference to what is written - in fact the British Trotskyists, if the documents are complete, produced no theoretical analysis of Pablo's revisionism until 1957 - four years after the split, and six years after the first theoretical attack on Pablo by a member of the French section.

Bryant's job however is to falsify history, not to analyse it, and so this theoretical bankruptcy is covered over.

"INFALLIBLE"

Slaughter's volumes and Bryant's review abound in similar distortions and evasions. They sweat to prove that there is (and always has been) some 'infallible' leadership, just as they did in expelling our own leading comrades on the eve of the WRP conference last December.

For us, the Workers' Socialist League, the history of the Fourth International is not to be cynically manipulated. It exists, with all its gains, its limits and its mistakes, and it is the property of the whole working class.

We take up the study of it with all the care and honesty it needs. We shall defend the memory of James Cannon against fabrications. And we shall defend the principled opposition built by Cannon, Healy and Lambert in 1953 against Pablo's attempt to liquidate the International. But we shall do that with the truth.

But basic questions immediately face the leadership of the WRP. Will they now publish the essential documents and correspondence from before 1953, especially that relating to the expulsion of the French majority?

And will Gerry Healy, who above all lived through that crisis, repudiate the distortions of 'Trotskyism versus Revisionism' and publish his own account of the 1951-3 split?

As Healy himself wrote in 'Labour Review' (May/August 1952): "Our workers cannot abide any cult of 'infallible leaders' whether they are named Pollitt or Stalin. They want to maintain full right of free and fair discussion in their organisations."

Philip Agee

Inside the Company: CIA diary (Penguin 1975, 95p)

Radical Research Services The Labour Party and the CIA (1975, 30p)

God himself, according to biblical quotations handed out as part of the basic training programme for CIA agents has given His official sanction to the practice of spying. This is one of the few improbable peices of intelligence in Philip Agee's gripping expose of how US imperialism's Central Intelligence Agency spends its 2,000 million dollars a year budget and employs its 80,000 personnel.

Mr. Agee worked for the CIA from 1957 to 1969, mainly in Ecuador, Uruguay and Mexico. His book - compiled in the form of a diary based on memory and a thorough use of the records available to him after he left the 'Company' - both gives a detailed account of CIA operations in Latin America and a great deal of light on its world-wide activities. He reveals, among many other things, how:

'The President of Mexico, Luis Echeverria, worked in the closest collaboration with the CIA chief of station in Mexico city, Winston Scott. And the same was true of the two previous heads of state, Lopez Mateos and Diaz Ordaz. The CIA was regularly advising Diaz Ordaz when, as President, he supervised the shooting of hundreds of left-wing students on a demonstration in October 1968 on the eve of the Mexican Olympic games.'

SURVEILLANCE

In almost every Latin American capital the CIA organised the most de tailed (and most hugely expensive) surveillance of 'hostile' embassies and trade missions. It is routine, for example, to film conversations in the gardens of Soviet establishments and have them 'transcribed' at CIA headquarters by experts in Russian lip-reading!

CIA work is helped in almost every area by paid agents, often at the highest levels, within the local police and intelligence services. Hundreds of foreign policemen are sent every year to the CIA-controlled International Police Academy in Washington for training, including the most brutal techniques of 'interrogation'

Enormous effort and funds go into the penetration and disruption of left-wing political organisations. In the early 1960's Agee himself was responsible for operations against the Communist Party of Ecuador. At one time its eight man Political Bureau contained no less than three CIA agents!

What emerges from the book is a catalogue of the means imperialism uses to protect its power: assassinations, fake trade unions, 'black propaganda', agents provocateurs, the manipulation and bribery of press and politicians, and all manner of espionage and intrigue.

The alphabetical glossary just of some of the people and organisations employed by the CIA in Latin America alone runs to 26 pages - from the 'Alliance for Anti Totalitarian Education' to the Young Men's Christian Association in Quito (Ecuador)!

Though Mr. Agee's standpoint is essentially that of a reformist, 'for social justice, national dignity and peace', this cannot disguise the importance (and courageousness) of his decision to break with the CIA and expose their methods. He retains the exact, neutral style of a trained bureaucrat of counter-revolution.

His detailed, factual narrative cuts through the swamp of recent liberal 'concern' in the capitalist press over official revelations that the CIA has also been spying on US citizens (a task officially the province of the FBI). The present CIA scandal - which has forced President Ford to assign Vice-President Rockefeller to a top-level 'enquiry' - is of the greatest international importance. The growth of the CIA since the second world war reflects the fact that the USA, as the leading imperialist power, has been forced to take on the role of policeman for capitalism on a world scale.

The first head to roll in the recent wave of CIA 'resignations' was that of James Angleton, Director of Counter-Espionage, who

came to London to be trained by British Intelligence in the latter part of the war. His rise to the top reflected the conversion of the pre-war intelligence services from small teams of ingenious amateurs to the vast standardised bureaucracy that is today's CIA

SHAKE-UP

Angleton himself was one of the main CIA figures pressing for a thorough shake-up of British Intelligence over the Burgess-McLean-Philby fiasco in 1951. A fanatical cold-war warrior from the begin-



ning, his counter-Espionage Division is licenced by its role to conduct spying operations against 'alien' organisations in the US itself, and was therefore the obvious section to pry into the affairs of American citizens suspected of left-wing or radical sympathies.

As Miles Copeland - unofficial 'expert' on the CIA - has pointed out (in the Times of January 11th) the 10,000 names already admitted are only the tip of the iceberg.

Not all CIA activities involve spying in the conventional sense.

The Radical Research Services pamphlet on *The Labour Party and the CIA* (based on an article suppressed by the editor of The Sunday Times) shows how tens of millions of CIA dollars have been channelled since the war to support anti-communist political groupings and publications in the European Social Democratic parties.

RIGHT WING LABOUR

Leading right-wing Labour Party men, including Denis Healey (Chancellor of the Exchequer) Anthony Crosland, Dick Taverne (leader of the right-wing break-away from the Labour Party) and Gaitskell himself, have been heavily involved in magazines, such as *Encounter* and *Socialist Commentary* financed by such bodies as the CIA's 'Congress for Cultural Freedom'.

As even Michael Foot remarked when Gaitskell attacked in 1960 as being a Communist Party fellow-traveller, 'But who are they travelling with?'

Both these publications - and especially Philip Agee's book - are of real value. They must be used to arm and build a revolutionary leadership in the working class, ready to deal with all the vicious and devious methods used by the protectors of imperialism.

reviewed by

ADAM WESTOBY

BODIES OF ARMED MEN

"... it is obvious that the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible not only without a violent revolution, but also without the destruction of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class..."

"What does this power consist of? It consists of special bodies of armed men having prisons etc., at their command."

Lenin; State and Revolution (Pages 10 & 11)

As the class struggle develops towards confrontation, sections of workers refuse... to accept reduced standards of living and loss of jobs, the capitalist state prepares for this with legislation against pickets, and other basic rights, with strengthening the police force and army manoeuvres at Heathrow.

It is particularly necessary at this time to have a clear understanding of the role of the State.

An article in the 'Morning Star' of Wed. January 29th, reprinted

from the paper of the French CP L'Humanite, shows how the Communist Party completely opposes the Marxist understanding of the state.

The article, by Fernand Chatel, is about the demonstrations by French conscript soldiers in Draguignan in France and in Karlsruhe, Germany. These movements are obviously a reflection of the massive class movements in France, which in 1968 brought about a revolutionary situation which was defused by the French CP, and which recently saw troops being used to scab on a dustmen's strike in Paris.

The article starts by saying capitalist Defence Minister Jacques Soufflet (who has since resigned) is "blind and deaf" and will not "face reality" and goes on to say that members of left-wing parties are being prevented from being promoted in the army, that the "training" is inadequate, and not enough "real combatant courses" are being given. If the army, according to the CP, must be trained for "combat", then who are they going to fight? The army of the bourgeois state is a class weapon

and can only serve the interests of the ruling class - and its combat capability can only be used against workers.

Yet more explicitly, the article states "The malaise is being aggravated by it (the army) being given tasks which have nothing to do with national defence.....It intervenes in the 'maintenance of order' which should only be the job of the police....."

If the Stalinist author were only a little more blunt he would say outright that the army is a strike-breaking, anti-working class task force, and the "nation" it is defending is the French capitalist state against workers in struggle. Not content, however, with defending the army, he also defends the continuation of that other 'armed body of men' - the police force!

The Stalinist parties internationally follow on their betrayal in Chile in which they covered over the class nature of the state by using similar language to this, in Portugal, by being in the government of the Armed Forces Movement; in Italy, in Spain, and all over the world.

The policy of the British CP in "The British Road to Socialism" is exactly the same. They talk of "...a transition to socialism without armed conflict is possible today in many countries." (Page 10) and "Consolidation of the political power of the working people by ensuring that those in commanding positions in the armed forces and police, the civil service and diplomatic services are loyal to the Socialist Government."

Their call merely for cutting the arms bill and for only the withdrawal "to their barracks" of the army in N. Ireland shows their position.

The WSL fights for what Trotsky fought for in the Transitional Programme, the founding document of the 4th International, which calls for

"Substitution for the standing army of a people's militia, indissolubly linked up with factories, mines, farms etc."

"Scabs and private gunmen in factory plants are the basic nuclei of the fascist army. Strike pickets are the basic nuclei of the proletarian army. This is our point of departure. In connection with every strike and street demonstration, it is imperative to propagate the necessity of creating workers' groups for self-defence."

Workers Diary

KIDS' STUFF

Are you concerned about what your baby might be putting in his (or her) mouth?

You won't find out from the two biggest US baby-food manufacturers, Gerber and Heinz. They have turned down repeated requests from an American research team to reveal the ingredients in their main products.

The formulation of products in a highly competitive business is privileged information and I think this is as true in the food industry as in any other industry, said a spokesman for Gerber.

The researchers claim that many baby-foods are padded-out with sugar and 'modified' starches which disguise their high water content, while essential proteins, vitamins and minerals are eliminated in processing.

Flavouring is designed to increase appeal to mothers — the babies themselves not being articulate enough to influence marketing policy.

One frequent additive is sodium nitrite — known to be linked to the occurrence of cancer in animals.

The tight-lipped Gerber spokesman denied his firm was 'motivated by commercial rather than nutritional interests'.

But (reassuringly for shareholders) he added 'We have been in the baby business for 28 years.'

We say it's time to open both the books and the bottles.

AFTER SALES SERVICE

The American car giants seem to have entered a new area of competition — that of who can produce the biggest laugh in the history of capitalism's blunders.

At present Chevrolet is looking like a sure winner with its latest model the Monza, developed at massive cost in great haste in a pathetic gamble that new models will lift the demand out of its slump.

Unfortunately for Chevrolet the designers did not have the time to consider such mundane tasks as changing the sparking plugs — the only way to remove them is by lifting out the whole engine with a crane hoist! Since this isn't yet a standard feature of the American private garage, Chevrolet have been forced to agree to do the job — free of charge — every time.

CONFLICT OF OPPOSITES

G. Healy of the WRP has just produced an internal bulletin explaining 'philosophically' why all opposition and discussion within that party must be met by mass expulsions and suppression.

Yet there seem to be divisions even within the pages of the Workers Press, 'organ' of the WRP.

On Thursday 13th February WP carried a lengthy statement by Mick Farley of the Wigan Builders Action Committee, which included this astounding passage:

"It is not a question of replacing Roy Jenkins", as the revisionists have said. The question is replacing the Labour government with a socialist government that will repeal all anti-working class laws, release all political prisoners, nationalise the building industry without compensation and establish workers' control." (ie a revolutionary government).

Yet on page 2 Royston Bull, (obviously in cahoots with Farley's 'revisionists') asks baffled readers:

"Is it not high time that Roy Jenkins was expelled from the Labour Party.....?"

Clearly the purges must continue even to the editorial board level in the WRP!

What dominates this film is the hatred of the population of the Catholic areas in the North of Ireland for the British imperialist army.

The film continuously returns to interviews which show this — from a republican woman who thought the first question had to be to get rid of the British army before you could think of Socialism — to the two torture victims interviewed who, even though one of them twitched uncontrollably; showed great determination; and including the coachload of wives and other relations visiting internees.

One wife told how her husband had first been picked up, and another told how her husband was first put on trial, found *not guilty*, then picked up and interned.

Vivid scenes of the RUC 'B' Special raids on the Bogside, the army (sent in by the Labour government) conducting continuous raids and arrests, and one particularly brutal scene filmed in close up where a man refuses to be led off and is beaten with clubs as he lies on the ground, is dragged by the hair, and finally hauled away, together with scenes of Bloody Sunday, give some of the background to this hatred.

POLITICS AVOIDED

A long section of the film dealt with the 'Free Derry' experience and it is clear that the producers of the film very much idealise the 'liberation' of 880 acres and 20,000 people.

The closure of the Imperial Typewriters factories at Hull and Leicester will bring further unemployment and disruption to the lives of workers in these cities if it is allowed to go ahead. In Hull, the closure of the IT factory will add 20% to an already above average unemployment rate.

The situation facing the IT workers repeats that facing thousands of other workers especially in Steel and the car industry. As a result of the inability of the capitalist economy to meet the needs of the working class, sections of workers have begun to raise the question of the working class itself taking over the management of production.

Such questions however are posed, initially, from within the existing reformist traditions of the working class, and for this reason take the existing capitalist relations of production for granted.

'LEFT' UTOPIANS

This fact is of course seized upon by the reformist leadership, especially through its 'left' face: Wedgewood Benn. Benn and his left talkers seek to steer the rising resistance of workers to the capitalist crisis into all sorts of 'safe' utopian adventures in 'industrial democracy', and even more radically sounding, 'workers' co-operatives'.

Such tactics as these have one aim: to subordinate the working class to the need of capitalism in this period for wage cuts and unemployment, while appearing to fight them.

The unions involved in the Hull factory of IT have already published a 'social audit'. This has been presented to Benn in an attempt to prove that the factory could form a viable basis for continuing production in the form of a workers' co-operative.

Before rushing into such dangerous diversions, IT workers would do well to consider what has actually happened at previous examples of such schemes. Despite the struggle involved, for example, to set up the motor cycle co-op at Meriden, the end result was in fact very similar to that which a capitalist management would have aimed at.

The labour force was halved from 1750 to 870, all demarcation was ended, and wages are at a flat rate of £50 a week — lower than the

IRELAND BEHIND THE WIRE

FILM REVIEW by Tony Richardson

The film shows the profusion of confused ideas that are current in Ireland today, not least those of the producers themselves. The first Civil Rights protest movements, the rent strike movement, and the woman speaker in 'Free Derry' who said: "Your first civil right is your nationality. If you can't call yourself Irish you have nothing," all of course bring out the strength and importance of national feelings.

Yet this is inadequate to explain why British imperialism suppresses and divides the Irish people.

Eamonn McCann shows his complete support for political spontaneity, and on the question of the experience in Ireland all he can say is: "You are now dealing with a community which understands that when it remains together it can have a decisive effect on what happens to it".

This compliments the worship of simple trade union militancy and the refusal to fight for political consciousness which is the main characteristic of the I.S. who have been showing the film on tour. (In introducing it they conveniently forget that they supported the troops being sent in by Wilson in 1969). The film is thus

bankrupt of political perspective to resolve the problems it exposes.

The commentary on the film shows how this avoidance of politics and general confusion can lead to a reactionary position.

They were unable to film in the Protestant areas, and the only mentions of the Protestant working class are when one woman says that some of the slums in Protestant areas are as bad as the Catholic ones, and when the commentators in winding up the film say: "The Protestant community is beginning to learn what the British government is", and go on to link up the reactionary bourgeois-led Ulster Workers Council 'Strike' with the fight of the Civil Rights movement.

SELF-DETERMINATION

One thing that is brought out clearly is that for the revolutionary movement in Britain it is more than just a question of seeing Ireland as a 'training ground' for repression in Britain.

We have to support the right of the people of Ireland to self-determination, which the British army has been sent over to prevent.

The fight in Ireland can only be successful if fought for with the

working class at its head. The fight for leadership in the working class must be carried through against all the confused ideas shown in this film. The *will* to fight is clearly present, but can only reach its full potential with a Marxist leadership as a part of the Fourth International fighting for a United Socialist Ireland.

The film shows why in Britain we must fight not just for the end of internment, and *not* for 'Bills of Rights' to be passed through the British Parliament, thus continuing colonial rule, (as proposed by the Stalinists of the Communist Party together with the reformists and liberals) but primarily for the complete withdrawal of the British imperialist army from Ireland and the ending of colonial rule.

DISBAND ARMY

The withdrawal of troops must be combined with the demand to *disband* the standing army and replace it with a workers militia based on the trade unions.

The actions of the army recently, in driving lorries through picket lines and threatening pickets with guns make it clear that if this force is not disbanded then it will remain as a threat to the organised working class in the coming struggles.

The demand that Labour disband the army will divide socialists from the 'stop our boys getting killed' brigade, and stresses the international class nature of this struggle.

THE MYTH OF CO-OPERATIVES by John Lee

general average in the area.

In other words, in order to make itself 'viable', the co-op was forced, despite the absence of individual capitalist owners, to carry out capitalist policies: wage cuts and redundancies.

It is vital to understand why this kind of result is inevitable for worker co-ops.

DEPRESSION

The capitalist, as Marx pointed out, is only the *carrier* and the *personifier* of the capitalist relations of production. The physical absence of the capitalist in a particular case does nothing to annul those relations.

At a time of increasing world economic depression, the laws of capitalist production dictate wage cuts, redundancies and speed-up as individual firms compete ruthlessly for the diminishing mass of surplus value and profit.

The Hull 'social audit' does not start from these facts, but starts from the standpoint of 'good' versus 'bad' management.

Arbitrary and remote decision — making combined with frequent and unpredictable switches of production programmes and a ruthless attitude to employee security were the constant experience under Litton in Hull." All this is no doubt true. But the report suggests that the release of "hitherto untapped resources of human motivation and worker participation in management and performance" could somehow overcome the objective development of the world capitalist crisis!

PROFITABILITY

The report is concerned to question whether the plant is "inevitably loss making". In other words the purpose which these "untapped resources" are to serve is boosting profitability. And in conditions of capitalist slump it is inevitable that the restoration of profitability involves speed-up, wage cut and redundancy.

This is absolutely clear if the problem of markets is considered. As long as capitalist production remains predominant in the world economy the IT 'co-op' would be forced to make money sufficient to pay their own wages, replace worn plant and purchase raw materials on the market at rapidly rising prices.

To do this, IT workers would have to be assured a market for their typewriters. But the capitalist world economy is now entering its

most serious slump since the 1930's. Production is falling and unemployment is increasing. This leads to massive reductions in purchasing power of both capitalists and workers and so a fall in demand for production including typewriters. The volume of sales for typewriters in Britain alone fell by 1/5 during 1974.

This is precisely why Litton Industries decided to close down IT in the first place: it was no longer profitable.

SPEED UP

If IT is to be reopened as a profitable concern, even if under the regime of a workers' co-operative, this *can only mean* that the productivity and the intensity of labour in the factory has increased as a result of speed-up and the replacement of some workers by machinery together with a cut in the wage bill.

It is precisely by such methods as these that individual capitalist firms seek to reduce the labour time content of the finished product in order to sell it in a shrinking world market at a price marginally below their competitor's. There is no other course open to IT if it is to remain 'viable' in a capitalist economy.

In the last analysis the Hull report *openly admits* that it has no strategy to defend the IT workers.

"We do not underestimate the difficulties in maintaining production in the current circumstances of economic recession. We are aware for example that we can do little to prevent the cyclical decline of the US market . . . but we assume that the recession, however severe, is temporary and urge the government to ask itself whether when the recovery occurs it would be desirable to leave the British economy so vulnerable to imports" (emphasis added)

In other words in the final analysis all IT workers can do is to bury their heads in the sand and await the passing of the recession!

The workers at IT and all over the capitalist world, are looking for a policy not for after the recession but for *now* to defend their living standards.

PROGRAMME

The WSL therefore rejects completely as a diversion the strategy of workers' co-ops. These utopian schemes can lead to nothing but defeat and demoralisation.

The starting point has to be the

development of an independent working class policy to meet the crisis.

On closure both the Leicester and Hull factories must be occupied and a regime of *workers control* established to prevent the owners from selling off machinery or separating the two factories. Workers committees must be elected on a factory basis to organise this.

There must be no lay-offs. The re-establishment of production at IT must be on the basis of division of the work available among the total workforce with *no* reductions in pay.

Yet only in the context of a *planned economy* can this demand be realised. Therefore as part of the struggle for such a planned economy we demand the nationalisation of IT under the management of the workers themselves.

The books of IT must be forced open by the factory committees, and the figures exposed to show the case for nationalisation without compensation.

Workers management is vital to prevent IT becoming subordinated to the needs of capitalist profitability through the State.

STATE CONTRACTS

Furthermore we have seen only too clearly recently how the Labour government is prepared to subordinate the State sector to the demands of the capitalist market through the cut backs in social service and education expenditure and the threat of redundancies in the state steel industry.

Therefore an essential part of the struggle for *effective* nationalisation under workers' management is the demand for *government finance* and *government contracts* to maintain production at IT.

All these demands mean workers must force a fundamental change in the policy of the Labour government.

The present reformist leadership of the Trade Unions and the Labour Party attempts through the social contract to subordinate the actions of the working class to the capitalist crisis. Those leaders who will not take up and fight for these demands must be driven out and replaced by those who will.

The Editorial Board would welcome readers' comments and views on this or any of the articles in "Socialist Press". Where possible letters will be published.

astms

CONFERENCE
AGENDA REFLECTS
ECONOMIC CRISIS

The preliminary agenda for the annual conference of ASTMS, the white collar, and technicians union, shows that as far as the union membership is concerned, the economic crisis, and particularly inflation, is now the dominant factor in shaping Union policy.

In the section devoted to general industrial affairs, a new 'Cost of Living' subsection contains several motions calling for the establishment of threshold agreements to enable wages to keep up with inflation.

Clearly, the Tories' ploy to hold wages down, has now rebounded, and there is a strong move amongst Trade Unionists to establish automatic inflation-related increases in wages to defend against the soaring cost of living.

It is also clear, however, that threshold agreements based on the Government's cost-of-living index are inadequate, since these underestimate the true increases in the day-to-day expenses of the working class.

What is required here is a body established by the Trade Unions to establish their independent measure of the true rate of inflation, and wage agreements to be increased commensurate with this rate.

By far the largest section of the agenda is devoted to political motions, and amongst these there seems little confusion as to the role of the Labour Government's Social Contract. Motions from all areas condemn the contract, correctly linking it with wage cutting and attacks on living standards.

It is left to the Edinburgh branch, however, to point out that ASTMS National Executive accept the contract and that no fight was put up against it at last year's TUC.

OCCUPATION

The mounting threat of factory closures and redundancies as the crisis deepens, is reflected in a number of calls for occupations of threatened factories as a step towards forcing their nationalisation, and another Edinburgh motion insists that trade unionists must have access to the books of industry to establish the basis of workers control as a defence against closure.

A decisive section of ASTMS membership lies amongst the technical and paramedical workers in the National Health Service who show determination to defend the NHS in the face of inflation and Government cuts.

Demands for an immediate injection of capital into the NHS are linked by calls, such as the

one from Oxford Health Service branch which wants elected committees of Trade Unionists representing NHS workers and other sections of workers to examine the day to day running of Area Health Authorities so that they may be best used for the benefit of patients.

This is linked to the need to abolish private practice, a call taken up by most of the other NHS resolutions.

Closely linked to the NHS cuts are those in the education sector. Here the Government cuts are resulting in a cut-back in the number of technical, academic and administrative staff employed, with a consequent increase in job-load and productivity, as well as a fall in the number of students being trained. Already this is felt in working class areas by the shortage of both teachers and teaching materials.

Branches in education are therefore to be supported in their demands for restoration of the education cuts, and for further grants to meet the rising costs of materials.

LEADERSHIP

But although many of the motions are able to identify the problems facing the working class under the impact of the economic crisis, and recognise that the Labour Government is acting against the interests of trade unions and their membership, few of them go beyond demanding that the leopard should change its spots.

Without any programme for independent action, the Union membership is thus left in the hands of those who, actively or tacitly, support the Labour Government's attempts to defend British capitalism at the expense of workers.

In ASTMS, it is now clear that even the much vaunted 'left', General Secretary Clive Jenkins, must be ranked amongst these staunch defenders of capital.

He has shown, in his recent co-habitation with extreme Tory, Enoch Powell, that his opposition to the Common Market has nothing in common with defence of the working class against British and European capitalism, but, rather, with the defence of British monopolists against foreign monopolists.

In doing this Jenkins lines up not only with Powell, but also with the Stalinists of the British Communist Party, and the fascists of the National Front.

To break workers from the grasp of reformists like Jenkins is now the urgent task facing us, and a programme for independent action of the working class is the method by which we can achieve this task.

Slump on Sites

Over half of the 300 workers at the Blue Circle Cement Works at Shipton on Cherwell near Oxford are to be made redundant at the end of this month due to the recession in the building industry.

Over 3 million families depend in some way upon the building trade and already 130,000 workers are on the dole. A survey of companies showed that 75% will be working at half capacity or less by the summer.

Connected directly to this is the slump in demand for furniture, carpets, etc. and new office equipment, therefore carrying over the recession into these manufacturing industries.

COLLABORATION

The treachery of the trade union bureaucrats is again exposed; at Blue Circle where, refusing to struggle to protect jobs, they are collaborating with the management in seeking alternative employment for the 'surplus' workforce; and nationally by their refusal to fight for a sliding scale of wages agreement in the recent pay deal which was accepted under conditions described by the Financial Times "the necessary majority will have been achieved mainly because of fears of wide-spread unemployment..." (Jan 21st)

The CP bears predominant responsibility for the lack of fight on this issue by the Building Workers Charter which fought merely for increasing basic rates.

The employers who threaten redundancies must be fought to concede instead a sliding scale of hours for the whole workforce, with no loss of earnings.

The unions' fight for this demand must be linked to the continuing struggle to eliminate the use of anti-union 'lump' labour.

PUBLIC WORKS

This of course will be impossible for capitalists in their crisis so workers must demand that the books of the firms be opened to elected committees of trade unionists, and the necessity of the nationalisation of the building industry without compensation will be proved.

Crucial to the fight for building workers' jobs is the demand for a massive programme of public works.

For years and years Labour councillors and MPs have voiced concern over the housing and homelessness crisis - will this 'concern' ever be transformed into action?

Increased finance must be made available to Local Authorities to provide decent housing for all, to reverse the cuts in the school building programme and to build new hospitals urgently needed.

for last year has declared that the studio will be reduced to a skeleton staff of less than 50 - a tenth of the work-force three years ago.

Only the shameless retreat of the FFU bureaucrats could have made this new EMI offensive possible. And now they run once again to head off any counter-offensive of the work-force.

At the first breath of the word 'occupation' at Elstree, Alan Sapper, General Secretary of ACTT, told the workers to 'do nothing as yet' so as not to interrupt the one current production at Elstree, 'Confessions of a Pop Singer'.

Delfont has been so encouraged by Sapper's utter servility that he has now offered to let the work-force run the studios on a yearly grant of £¼m - precisely the figure he claims to be losing at Elstree.

Why has Delfont made this charitable offer? Because the last film made at Elstree - 'Murder on the Orient Express' - is now well into profit and well on the way to being a block-buster. Big profits are being made in distribution and exhibition (which EMI together with Rank

SWINDON GOES ON THE DOLE

Swindon, once the centre of thriving boom time light engineering and electronics industries, is now faced with a rising tide of redundancies, short time and factory closures.

The Swindon Branch of the Workers Socialist League has been actively involved in fighting for a programme of opposition to these attacks. A WSL leaflet issued on Friday, 14th February set out the situation:

"The announcement by Garrards that 2,000 workers go on to a two and a half day week with 200 sackings and the closure of Cheney Manor Factory is a disaster. After 2,000 to 3,000 lay-offs at Plesseys last year and the Plessey Interconnect occupation in defence of jobs, it is a savage blow to the hopes of Swindonians already signing on at the dole.

"The international recession is driving deep into the heart of every industry. Engineering, transport, manufacturing, building, plastics, everything is being affected while workers have real wages slashed and the cost of living escalates beyond control.

CLOSURES

"The closures at H.B. Panelcraft and Southern Anodising, huge cut-backs at Garrards, Plessey and Raychem, Torins, Cloverleaf, Square D, Shorko Films, Metal Box and Howards Tenens are swelling the ranks of those on the dole in Swindon. This shows the way in which the working class is made to take the brunt of the employing class' crisis.

"Swindon's largest employer, British Leyland, needs £50,000,000 of taxpayers money for survival. Rationalisation and speed-up are being demanded as the price of the Government loan.

"The workers at Plessey Interconnect were expected to solve its crisis by accepting redundancies and going on to the dole, but decided to put up a courageous fight."

The leaflet went on to show how the call for a workers co-op at Interconnect could offer no escape from the capitalist crisis which had

produced the original rationalisation threat:

"The plan was that an independent workers controlled co-operative could somehow compete in the cut-throat capitalist markets of electronics where the recession had itself necessitated the rationalisation of Plessey Interconnect to Northampton because the Swindon factory was not economically viable. . . .

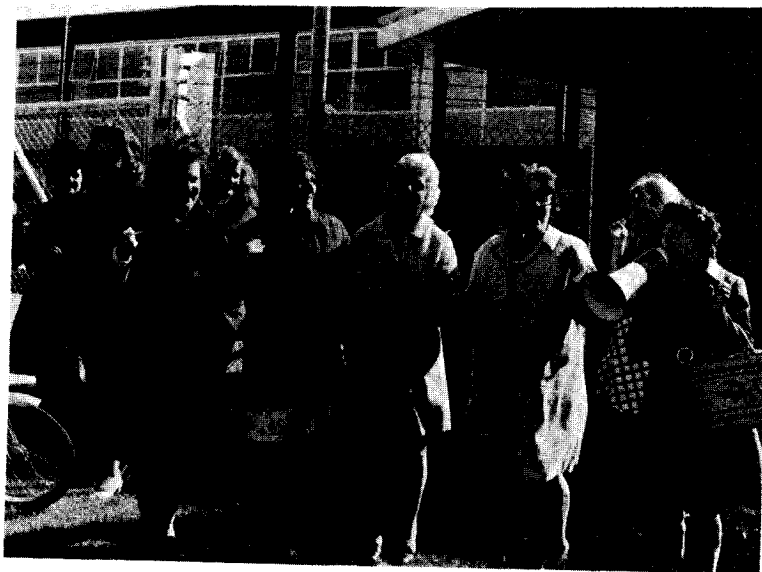
"This minimum programme was separated from the question of the nationalisation of the Plessey company. The separation of the fight to retain jobs and the demand for nationalisation enabled the right wing to isolate the Interconnect occupation and ensure its defeat."

FACTORY COMMITTEES

The leaflet continued to stress the need for a programme for action: occupations must be organised of threatened factories, and joint factory committees elected to control the actions of management and make contact with other workers in linked factories and on a district basis. The Committee must force the management to open the books and expose the real dealings of the company. The leaflet stresses the importance on the basis of these figures of a struggle to force the firm's nationalisation without compensation, and the provision of government contracts - in the case of Plesseys, electronic equipment for hospitals and education could be produced. Since this would create inflation, it must be linked to the demand for a sliding scale of wages linked to the rising cost of living.

In showing the betrayals of both "left" and right wing in the Labour Party, the leaflet demands the left be forced to fight for the workers who elect them. It also calls for maximum support to the town meeting which has been called by the 9a District Committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions to discuss the jobs crisis in Swindon.

The WSL remains at the forefront of the fight to defend jobs and build new leadership in Swindon.



Plessey Interconnect Workers

monopolise completely).

In other words EMI wants to keep the profitable sectors, whilst the workforce takes all the losses - a new concept in "workers control"! Sapper meanwhile has pushed through, with the aid of the Stalinists in ACTT, a new feature agreement based on the one under which 'Orient Express' was made which increases the rate of exploitation.

Workers at Elstree must respond to the threats to their jobs and pleas of bankruptcy by EMI by putting into practice the growing demand for occupation of the studios.

A committee of trades unionists from all the craft sections in the studio must then examine the books to expose the corrupt economic manipulations of EMI - how they sell the products of the studio

cheap (to themselves!) thus creating a 'loss', and then in the sphere of film distribution and exhibition transform this 'loss' into massive profits - little of which finds its way back to the studio where the film was created.

In this way a case will be made for the nationalisation without compensation of all EMI's massive holdings in film, TV and entertainments, beginning with Elstree itself, a case for which ACTT, NATTKE and the ETU must press with all their industrial strength. ACTT is committed to this policy for the industry as a whole. Its leaders must be forced to put it into practice, and film production must be established, financed by government grants and under workers management.

£500 monthly development fund

The escalation of mass unemployment as the crisis bites deep into industry, driving the employers to sackings and plant closures, has already demonstrated that an eight page fortnightly paper is inadequate for the role which must be played by the WSL.

We are therefore appealing to our readers for a £500 monthly development fund to expand "Socialist Press".

It is vital that the policies our paper fights for are read widely in the workers movement as leadership becomes the crucial question.

Donations should be sent to: Socialist Press, 11 Lower Basildon, Near Reading, Berks.

EMI

Faced with the growing recession in the film industry (which in this country is on the point of vanishing altogether, and in Europe is scarcely better) EMI has launched a programme of 'rationalisation'.

It is already affecting the studios directly, and in the near future Thames TV workers are to get some of the same treatment.

Last year Bernard Delfont, the day after publicising combine profits of £17m, announced plans to make half the workforce at Elstree Studios redundant.

The leaders of the Federation of Film Unions, after the usual ritual of left-talking, have allowed the redundancies to go through unchallenged. Now Delfont, having announced pre-tax profits of £3.5m

'TORIES PREPARE' - continued from front page

There is no sliding scale of wages. The only tendency to consistently campaign in the workers movement for the transitional demand. The sliding scale of wages is now central to every struggle of the working class in defence of wages and conditions.

Other sections of workers such as railwaymen will come forward as a result of the miners settlement to fight for wages. But such struggles are going to be bitterly fought. Wilson has told the heads of nationalised industries - 'no more miners-type settlements'. Such struggles will require leadership, and a programme on which workers can fight.

It is precisely because the Labour government, through measures such as Benn's Industry Bill, is dedicated to preserving capitalism, and their counterparts in the trade union leadership refuse to fight them, that workers are deprived of political direction and the Tories are able to make inroads into the ranks of the middle class.

We demand the 'left' MPs and 'left' trade union leaders who are at present silent, come out openly and fight the betrayals of the right-wing and fight for socialist policies.

The Workers Socialist League fights to build a leadership which will campaign on a programme of transitional demands which will take the working class from today's problems, today's struggles and today's consciousness to the only solution - to take power and establish socialism. It is to stop this that the right wing come forward in the Tory party today.

MORE ON THE INDUSTRY BILL

In the first edition of Socialist Press we carried an analysis of Wedgewood Benn's Industry Bill, showing how it provides state finance to capitalist industries and makes disclosure of company information provided under the "open the book" clause a criminal offence carrying a penalty of 2 years imprisonment. This is similar to the "joint surveillance" measure being introduced by the Giscard d'Estaing government in France.

On Feb 13th the Telegraph carried an article by Sir Paul Chambers ex-head of ICI which drew the following conclusion:

"With the controls which the Minister will have over the board, the controls which the Treasury will have over the more important decisions of the Minister and the powers of veto or annulment in certain very important fields which are to be given to both Houses of Parliament, it might be fairly asked whether this bill gives any cause for apprehension about the future of private enterprise in this country."

As Benn himself said "But we must have the investment now. We must fill our chronic investment gap, if necessary with public money. The NEB and Planning Agreements were devised to enable that investment to take place."

Earlier the article had explained that the bill was drafted to give the power of decision to Wilson himself and not to Benn. The Telegraph says:

"This is why the Prime Minister has ensured that the bill is drafted so that he (not the Minister for Industry, nor the Chancellor of the Exchequer) can determine the rate of nationalisation and democratisation of British industry. . . ."

"Again while the Minister has the power and the duty to make "determinations" on the financial duties of the board, he cannot make them without the consent of the Treasury (which in these cases would include the Prime Minister)."

It goes on to say that the power to give private industry money if they get into financial trouble is there but "There is a prohibition against the takeover of any company which does not wish it". This is the clause reiterated by Wilson to the CBI leaders at the Downing Street meeting held on February 12th.

As if such a provision is not enough to satisfy any capitalist a provision is also included to allow the House of Lords, where industrialists such as Stokes sit, to veto any order under the bill - to quote the Telegraph:

"Here again is a 'long-stop'; any order made under this section of the Bill is subject to annulment by a resolution of either House of Parliament."

It is clear that the Industry Bill is designed to underwrite private capital on the one hand, while - to quote the lead article in the previous issue of Socialist Press: "The Labour Government's new proposed Industry Bill, which would set up a National Enterprise Board run by Wedgewood Benn, has the object of drawing the trade union bureaucracy right in to the inner workings of the board-room. The purpose of this is to hold back more effectively the coming struggles of the working class in defence of jobs, wages and conditions."

NUT LEADERS BETRAY continued from Front page

education to be defended by the fight to open the account ledgers of the Local Authorities and for the union to campaign for Labour to nationalise all those firms who are profiting by supplying the education service, without compensation, under workers management.

The leaflet called for opposition to all staffing cuts and a reversal of the government spending cuts first imposed by the Tories.

Central to all these questions however is the struggle to build a new leadership in the NUT and the other teaching unions.

1,000 demonstrate against education cuts in Aylesbury



STOKES FEARS SIT-INS

Giving evidence to a Commons Committee investigating the motor industry Stokes, as chairman of British Leyland, and speaking of the company's avoidance of plant closures said:

"An arbitrary cut-back would have produced a reaction from workers and could have led to sit-ins and caused other social problems while it would have been difficult to find a buyer for any part of the Corporation."

This statement reflects the fear of the employers of occupations and their hesitation in taking on organised sections of the working class in battles on unemployment - battles which must now commence, driven forward by the economic crisis, as with the announcement of 1,000 redundancies at Jaguars.

Stokes' statement also demonstrates the crucial importance of the fight carried out since the formation of British Leyland by WSL members (formerly members of the WRP) in the giant BL plant at Cowley. Cowley was the only major part of the corporation where any occupation policy has been consistently fought for.

MERGER

The fight against plant closures and rationalisation was carried forward from Cowley from the first day of the merger. At the first joint conference of the Leyland and BMC Joint Shop Stewards Committees held on March 20th 1968, Alan Thornett one of the two Cowley delegates, raised the question of the plant closures and rationalisation posed by the merger and moved that immediate preparation begin to organise resistance.

Eddy McGarry as chairman - who had opened the conference with the statement that "this merger is in the best interests of the Company, the nation and our members" (in that order) - attacked Thornett for speaking with the "impetuosity of youth" and said that talk of plant closures was nonsense.

Much has happened since then. Measured Day Work has "rationalised" the standard of living of the workers to about a half of what it was. The only major resistance other than Jaguar's having been a six week strike at Cowley.

Having got MDW in at a heavy price BL now turned to speed up. Pat Lowry, director of industrial relations giving evidence at the same Commons Committee as Stokes, said that the corporation "suffered from overmanning" and that divisional executives were "vigorously" trying to reduce labour needs this year.

Resistance again centred in Cowley. Management began their speed up offensive last winter by breaking the mutuality agreement. The resultant 2½ week strike ended with the victimisation of Alan Thornett who was the architect of the agreement and who had been in the forefront of its defence.

BANKRUPT

Leyland now bankrupt - propped up by Government finance as the Labour Government avoids nationalisation - is driven to undertake the fight it has avoided for so long. As the escalation of the economic crisis internationally finds its sharpest expression in the motor vehicle industry.

At this point McGarry and the Stalinists play the same role now as they did in 1968. They are rushing headlong into Leyland's proposed "National Assembly of Shop Stewards" designed to suck selected bureaucrats from convenor level into close collaboration with corporate management, involving them in their rationalisation and speed up plans on the basis of "making the industry efficient".

In the introduction to their document (drafted by McGarry) compiled for Benn, the Executive Committee of the Combine Committee say "the constructive criticisms offered in our proposals will most certainly assist in making the PLMC a viable profitable organisation that will provide full employment and job security for all our members". (SP emphasis)

It is true they go on to call for 'nationalisation' and 'participation' but everything is centred around 'efficiency'. It is this which will lead them into supporting closures and redundancies and speed up because closures and redundancies and speed up are the only way in which 'efficiency' can be improved.

Leyland proposals include (as in Benn's Bill) for the books to be opened to selected bureaucrats providing 'confidentiality is protected'. In other words so long as the working class don't get a look at the books.

Collaboration goes to the highest level. After the statement by Brian Walden, Labour MP for Perry Barr, that Cowley and Bathgate should be closed, Jack Jones wrote to Wilson as Prime Minister drawing his attention to the benefits the Company had reaped from the victimisation of Alan Thornett last Spring.

Jones says: "With regard to the Cowley operation, our understanding is that there has been a substantial improvement in performance since April 1974 (the exact time of the victimisation struggle - SP) and we believe the Company will confirm this impression."

Jones, of course, was heavily involved in the events at that time and no doubt Cowley was part of the Social Contract worked out with Wilson. The Workers Revolutionary Party in Workers Press February 10th, referring to Jones' letter, incredibly headlined "Wilson snubs Jones" and says the letter has brought out "fresh tensions" between Wilson and Jones. No mention is made to reference to the victimisation.

The opposite is the case. Jones who is now a straight right winger is leading the pack in collaboration with the employers. Strengthened by this collaboration Leyland is on the offensive. In the Cowley plant victimisation is again on the agenda. In an unprecedented wave of disciplinary actions Leyland is cracking down on any worker who shows the least resistance to speed up or objects to his working conditions. In this Leyland responds not only to the pressures of the crisis but to the move to the right in the Tory party with the election of Thatcher.

In Cowley resentment at the wage offer of £5.60, the pressures of speed up, the breach of agreement, the tightening of discipline and individual victimisations grows every day.

Struggle is at this point held back by management threats of plant closure and the collaboration of the leadership - but bitter struggle can erupt with great speed.

Workers in Cowley, as in other parts of the Leyland Corporation face hard struggles in which leadership will be the decisive question. The WSL puts forward the only programme in preparation for this.

Next edition of Socialist Press will carry a full report on wages, short-time and redundancies in British Leyland.

CP HOLDS BACK ON '2'

Less than 150 delegates attended the re-call conference of Liverpool Trades Council on the campaign to free the pickets, as against 800 at the first conference.

This reflects the bankruptcy of perspective being put by the platform, dominated by Communist Party members and supporters, who seek at all costs to hold back any development towards real action to free the pickets.

At the first conference this was done by turning the attention of militants towards lobbying Parliament rather than industrial action.

On this occasion, having shown the complete futility of mere protest action, the CP stalinists concentrated on limiting demands to calling on the TUC to organise a one-day strike, and "if this fails" to organise more action.

Naturally they were anxious at all costs to hammer down the idea of a general strike to force the freeing of the pickets and the repeal of anti-working class legislation, which is certainly the only way effective action can proceed.

Because none of the dominant forces at the conference had any intention of leading a real fight to free the two, none was able satis-

factorily to answer the blatant evasion of responsibility by "left" MP Eddie Loyden, who said at the meeting: "We went to the Law Officers and were unable to get them to change their minds. The battle must be outside Parliament".

The Lefts want to dodge the responsibility they hold to lead a fight in the Labour Party and decisively within the Parliamentary Labour Party to remove Jenkins as Home Secretary and replace him with one who will defend the interests of the working class by releasing the two and repealing all anti-working class legislation.

A recent motion in the P.L.P calling for the case of the Shrewsbury Two to be debated again in Parliament was defeated by 61 votes to 25. Where were the 77 Tribune MPs who on this issue could have voted down the right wing?

The battle is against class collaboration and Stalinism inside and outside Parliament, and for independent working class action to free the pickets.

Special shop stewards meetings and district committee meetings must be fought for in every area to demand that the TUC call a general strike to force the Labour government to release Warren and Tomlinson.

TROTSKY ON THE QUEEN

"How can they make an attack on bourgeois private ownership when they still havenot the courage to refuse pocket money to the Prince of Wales?"

Thus Trotsky attacked the Labour Party leadership in 1925. Little has changed. Still the old arguments are brought forward that paying for the Queen is 'cheaper' than a president. Trotsky replied also to this argument.

"To proclaim a socialist programme and at the same time

to declare that the royal authority 'does not hinder' and works out cheaper, is absolutely the same as, for example, acknowledging materialistic science and making use of the incantation of a sorcerer for a toothache, on the ground that the sorcerer is cheaper."

Yet in the midst of threatening workers with unemployment if they press wage demands, and cutting health and education spending, Labour Chancellor Healey and Prime Minister Wilson set out to increase the state hand-outs to the Queen.