



MASSIVE RAIL JOB CUTS

WILSON KNIFES LABOUR'S ROOTS

Redundancy for 150,000 out of 260,000 railway workers is threatened if the Government's investment plans for British Rail go ahead as announced by Environment Secretary Crosland last week. The plans have far reaching political implications for the labour movement.

In December, Crosland had denounced the rail unions' predictions of just such enormous cuts as 'codswallop'. But his statement to the Commons on February 4th that he is limiting railway investment to £238 million a year must now force him to eat his words.

The present rail system of 11,500 miles cannot possibly be maintained on such a low cash injection. The unions forecast that it would have to be cut to around 4,000 miles - bringing the loss of railways altogether to big towns like Sunderland, Huddersfield and Penzance - while fares, which have risen by 50% over the last twelve months, will be jacked up another 17½% in April, with further increases expected this year.

EFFORTS

This threat to tens of thousands of rail jobs and to any attempt at a public transport system is the latest fruits of the efforts of the Labour Government to solve the capitalist crisis at the expense of the working class.

Labour ministers each day echo Tory calls for attacks on 'unproductive labour', like transport services and on the public sector in general.

OFFENSIVE

The restoration of capitalists' profits depends increasingly on attacking such resources. In this sense rail cuts must be seen alongside the offensive against steelworkers and cuts throughout health, education and the social services.

What stands out in this new twist in the anti-working class policies of the Labour government is the way it is directed with particular ferocity against precisely those sections who were at the forefront of building the working class movement, including the Labour Party itself. The railway workers have historically played a crucial role in making a Labour government possible at all.

The struggle of the Taff Vale railway workers in 1901 led to the

legal attack on one of their unions by the employers through the courts, and this convinced millions of workers that they needed a political party to defend their organisations.

It was precisely the rail workers who transformed the campaign for political representation into a mass movement with deep roots in the working class. Without these struggles of the past neither Wilson nor any Labour minister would be where they are today.

Yet Wilson and his Cabinet are now busily hacking away at these roots with every new policy. Each attack on jobs and wages is a further threat to the labour movement built in generations of struggle.

SCOTLAND

The same anti-working class policies of Wilson lie behind the disintegration of the Labour Party in Scotland. Offered nothing but continual reductions in their standard of living, some Scottish workers have turned to the new Scottish Labour Party, which combines fake left rhetoric with the crassest prejudices of petty-bourgeois illusion. The slightest glimmer of a fighting policy from

the leaders of the labour movement in Scotland would make such a weakening of the movement impossible.

The undermining of the labour and trade union movement is linked directly to the wage-cutting policies of the £6 pay laws and to the deliberate Wilson policy of 1½ million unemployed. Every time the union leaders co-operate with these twin policies they too weaken workers organisations, questioning whether any of the historic gains of the working class can survive under such leadership.

This is why the issue of working class representatives and the responsibility of MPs keeps coming up in the campaign on the rail cuts.

NUR leader Weighell told members in Newcastle last Saturday that "The NUR has remained one of the Labour Party's strongest and most generous supporters", currently paying £36,000, with £60,000 during the 1974 General Election campaigns.

Weighell hastened to add that he had no intention of cutting off this support (though he did not tell members how he could raise this kind of money from a membership decimated by Wilson's cuts!).

The NUR itself sponsors 10



Crosland

Labour MPs. In the fight for jobs in the industry the question that keeps coming up is this:

to whom are these sponsorships responsible - to the working class who put them where they are, or to the Tories and bankers who dictate the policies of Labour government?

Last December Weighell told a rally of railwaymen "We shall hesitate to say to the ten MPs that you will no longer support our government."

If sustained, this kind of militant lead will get a response

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STRIKE !

ON THE

Taff Vale Railway.

Men's Headquarters,
Cobourn Street,
Cathays.

There has been a strike on the Taff Vale Railway since Monday last. The Management are using every means to decoy men here who they employ for the purpose of black-legging the men on strike.

Drivers, Firemen, Guards, Brakesmen, and SIGNALMEN, are all out.

Are you willing to be known as a

Blackleg ?

If you accept employment on the Taff Vale, that is what you will be known by. On arriving at Cardiff, call at the above address, where you can get information and assistance.

RICHARD BELL,
General Secretary.

A poster from the Taff Vale Strike.

MPLA VICTORY NEAR IN ANGOLA

Washington echoed to the rattle of dominoes last week as one US capitalist politician after another ate their words on Angola. For the second time in less than a year the spokesmen of the most powerful imperialist state on earth were driven to a concession of defeat and ramshackle attempts to rally support beneath the tattered banner of 'Never again!'

Leading the pack was Secretary of State Kissinger. In terms which unmistakably recalled President Ford's speeches after US imperialism was driven out of Indochina in April last year, he declared in San Francisco on February 3rd;

The administration has the duty to make it clear to the USSR and Cuba that Angola cannot become a precedent and that this type of action will not be tolerated in the future.

The following day, (speaking

this time from Laramie, Wyoming) this flying sheriff of reaction admitted "It is perhaps too late to do anything about Angola."

Kissinger was soon followed by key figures in Ford's administration and in Congress. By Friday February 6th, Assistant Secretary of State for Africa William Schaefele admitted that the military situation in Angola meant the MPLA would almost certainly prevail.

And Democratic Senator Dick Clark, chairman of the Senate sub-committee for African affairs, called for a new US policy toward Southern Africa.

"We must not make the same mistakes again," he said, adding "As Communist forces continue their resistance we must take a long look at our relations with them."

The events unfolding in Angola are a gain for the colonial peoples and the working class everywhere.

Far from being the last, tactical retreat of American imperialism they give a world-wide impetus to the offensive and confidence of the world's working class.

At the same time they give lie to the treacherous international 'programme' of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

While Brezhnev was busy preparing the Helsinki 'detente' last year, with its pledges of 'peaceful coexistence', the ruling class was preparing to move into the place vacated by Portuguese imperialism in Angola.

And every victory, every inch of territory gained by the MPLA has had to be won arms in hand against the CIA-backed mercenary-financed, mercenary-staffed forces of the FNLA and UNITA. The fact that 'peaceful coexistence' is a fiction was sharply underlined by FNLA President Holden Roberto at the end of last week.

Continued on page 2

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

FRANCE CP REVOLUTIONARY LINE EXTINGUISHED

There is no truth in 'Pravda' and no news in 'Izvestia', goes the Russian saying. Seldom has it been so richly confirmed than in France.

In Paris the leadership of the French Communist Party, at its 11th Congress, was busy burying the goal of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', written into the Party programme at its foundation fifty-years ago. But in Moscow the main dailies were busy burying the burial.

In a move which has opened a long crevasse among the pro-Moscow Communist Parties, French Communist General Secretary Georges Marchais opened the Congress on February 4th with a report which justified the proposal he first put forward (on TV) at the beginning of January - to formally, explicitly abandon the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As he candidly put it, it was dropped because 'it does not describe the reality of our politics, the reality of what we are proposing to the country'. What remained in the working class was a 'leading role' in the struggle for social progress and - it is necessary to underline this - the national interest.

Then, while the French and Western European press furiously speculated on the political significance of this shift and its implications for the Communist Party, the Communist Party 'Union of the Left', led after delegate trooped to the microphone to vent their satisfaction that the perspicaciousness of their leadership had finally brought the theory of French Leninism into line with its practice. But in Moscow, Berlin, Budapest, Prague, Sophia, where readers of the party press are generally

treated in tedious detail to the proceedings of 'fraternal' party congresses.....silence!

Pravda only reported Marchais' speech a day late, and when it did so it used a paraphrase version which fudged the relevant passage into unrecognisable blandness. Only the Polish party paper, *Trybuna Ludu* ventured a sideways comment to the effect that 'while searching out a road that corresponds to French conditions, the French communists propose to take account of fundamental and universal experiences in the building of socialism'.

And from other Eastern European party chiefs came comments which were strong implicit criticisms of the French leadership. On the same day as Marchais' speech *Neues Deutschland*, the East German party paper, carried an editorial on Marx's use of the notion 'dictatorship of the proletariat', commenting that its democratic character must be underlined, 'since it is one of the favourite gambits of bourgeois argument to oppose democracy to the dictatorship of the proletariat'.

And simultaneously the Rumanian Party leader Ceasescu was giving a public speech using the same quotation from Marx and attacking those who espoused a 'so-called pure democracy'.

DISMAY

Why has Marchais' move caused such dismay in the party and state apparatuses of Eastern Europe? The explanation is that the same cause may produce, in different situation opposite effects.

The Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy has never held to any principle of struggle for proletarian power. They sacrificed the Spanish workers

in 1936-39, to the requirements of 'popular front' agreements with 'progressive' capitalist politicians. This they cemented with the notorious Hitler-Stalin pact. After the war they held back the mass, Stalinist-led resistance movements in France, Italy and Greece from a bid for power, and returned these states to imperialism.

In dropping the demand for class power as a sop to bourgeois opinion and the 'national interest', Marchais only recognises explicitly decades of Stalinist treachery. But, unlike Marchais, the apparatchiks of eastern Europe and the Soviet bureaucracy have to deal directly with the political revolution against their autocratic rule - already expressed in the workers' uprisings in Berlin in 1953, in Poland and Hungary in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and in Poland again in 1970.

For them the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' is the political camouflage for their own usurpation of political power, their own bureaucratic dictatorship over the proletariat. It is in the name of the dictatorship of the proletariat that they intend to use tanks and machine guns against the workers of Eastern Europe in the future, with, they hope, indignant noises but careful 'non-interference' on the part of other states.

Thus the Marxist principle of opposites reveals itself as blatant class-collaboration in Paris, and in Moscow as an embarrassed and constipated silence. Class-collaboration in both cases, but seen from Paris on a national stage and from Moscow on an international one.

Yet even the fact that the Soviet bureaucracy is able, through its control of the press, to conceal Marchais' speech from their own working class expresses - in a degenerate and reactionary form -

the fact that their own rule rests on the social gains of the October revolution, in which the dictatorship of the proletariat was established for the first time in history.

And the turn by the French Party has a more than symptomatic importance. As the second largest Communist Party in Western Europe, with a membership of half a million, and more than eighty thousand recruits in the last year, it has now moved towards forming an 'axis' with the right-wing courses of the Italian and Spanish Communist Parties.

COMPROMISE

Needless to say they are not united by any positive principles, but by a common concern to be given a free hand to compromise with their 'own' capitalist class. But this in itself tends to destroy the Moscow Stalinists' attempts to negotiate with imperialism - over Portugal, Spain and the rest of Europe - from a basis of loyal unanimity on the part of the European Communist Parties.

Spanish CP chief Santiago Carillo has already declared that 'internationalism' is historically outdated. For the French CP Marchais echoed him, saying that the international Communist

movement 'is not, and cannot be, a Church, nor a centralised organisation submitting each party to binding decrees, to a uniform law. And the leadership of the Spanish CP, in their turn, duly greeted the dropping of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat' as a correct and welcome move.

Also echoing in the CP Congress was the case of Leonid Plioutch, the socialist mathematician incarcerated for years in Soviet 'psychiatric' hospitals - run by the KGB. Plioutch was freed and expelled to France early in January after a campaign, centred in the French Labour movement, which formally forced Marchais and the CP leadership to request his release.

At a press conference on the eve of the CP Congress Plioutch - who is still recovering from the drugs forcibly administered to him at the Dniepropetrovsk hospital - repeated that he was a communist. He supported the Dubcek 'reform' movement of Czechoslovakia in 1968, stressing that:

The spirit of Dubcek is totally unacceptable to the Soviet bureaucracy. They do not wish to lose the benefits and privileges which they hold. But it seems to me that for the population of the USSR it is the only possible and acceptable way to escape from the political, social and spiritual impasse they find themselves in!

The CP leadership conveniently 'lost' a letter from Plioutch, appealing to them to defend other political prisoners in the USSR. And Marchais' report evaded the issue, referring in general and apologetic terms to 'repressive measures'.

But such comments in no way indicate that the French Stalinists are moving to defend communist oppositionists in the workers states, only that they respond more and more to the pressures of bourgeois 'public opinion'.

SPAIN MASS MOVES IN BARCELONA



On February 2nd the rapidly advancing struggle of the Spanish working class took a new leap forward.

In Barcelona on that day 70,000 demonstrators took to the streets to call for a complete amnesty and an end to the dictatorship.

The fascist authorities using rubber bullets, tear gas and smoke bombs and charges of mounted police failed for four hours to stop the continual regroupment of the demonstrators.

The workers and students overturned cars and tore up manhole covers to make barricades against police attacks.

Thousands of motorists in the traffic-bound streets and residents in surrounding houses hooted and cheered their support for the demonstration.

This is a new illustration of how the demands and actions of the working class are breaking through the bounds within which the Stalinist and reformist leaderships wish to keep them.

At the same time the fascists are hopelessly raising their own barricades against change.

Prime Minister Arias Navarro's speech to the Cortes, Spain's caricature 'parliament', on January 28th was even further to the right than the policy statement he made during Franco's lifetime.

need for 'continuity of the work inherited from Franco'.

This mixture of the most mercenary reaction with the upsurge of workers' preparedness to fight for their demands is an explosive one.

Terror of this explosion is causing widening fissures in the Spanish ruling class. Realising that Arias Navarro's speech supplied little or nothing for the leaders of the Stalinist and reformist parties to cling onto as a basis for their collaborationist policies, virtually the whole of the Spanish press were sharply critical.

This included *Pueblo* the paper of the official corporatist 'unions'. The only exception was *El Alcazar*, the paper of the Francoist federation of civil war veterans.

What none of the papers dared to report was that, while the Cortes applauded all references to Franco in Navarro's speech, it met every reference to King Juan Carlos with stony silence.

The power of Spanish fascism now has all the stability of a sandcastle. Its most sophisticated leaders, such as Interior Minister Fraga, know that the only thing which can stop it being washed away by the tide of the workers' offensive is the collaboration of the Stalinist and reformist leaderships.

With a principled and uncompromising leadership this offensive is powerful enough to obliterate the

Angola - cont from page 1

In an interview with the Johannesburg *Rand Daily Mail* (he declared that 'detente is nothing but a huge joke', and demanded further finance from the 'democratic' states to continue the struggle against the MPLA.

The hired gunmen of imperialism - in the Congo, in Vietnam and now in Angola - have never treated the 'peaceful road' to national liberation and socialism anything other than a 'joke'.

While Roberto was speaking, his agents were in London with suitcase full of American dollars trying to recruit hundreds of former British soldiers and SAS thugs to be sent post-haste to the war zone. Their antics in England, while Washington politicians openly admitted that secret US government funds were providing bankrolls for the likes of ex-SAS Major 'Mad Mitch' Hoare and the Security Advisory Services' of arms dealer, Les Aspin, pose a special responsibility for the British workers movement.

SCANDAL

The fact that the Labour government has permitted London to become the world centre for the recruitment of freelance murderers - many of them trained in the British army in the same methods that are being applied against the Republicans in South Armagh - is an obscene scandal.

All sections of the labour and trade union movement must immediately demand that the Labour government recognise the MPLA as the legitimate government of Angola and put a stop to the use of Britain as a base for military operations against her.

In Angola, events which in Indochina took decades have been telescoped into months. As the colonial struggle drove the original imperialist power into political crisis, the

the colonial liberation struggles brought the collapse of fascism in April 1974, the opening of revolutionary struggles between the basic classes in Portugal itself, and the end of its entire colonial empire.

But imperialism will never yield its place 'peacefully', whatever 'liberal' formulae may from time to time be voiced in Lisbon or Washington. The Portuguese AFM government schemed up till the last moment before Angolan 'independence' to cripple the MPLA, and refused them recognition of any form.

The field was thus left open for the US to step in. The fact that Washington's puppets have been routed in months rather than decades, results directly from the provision of military aid to the MPLA by the Soviet Union and Cuba.

It shows, in the clearest possible way, that the years of bloody war that the peoples of Indochina had to pass through before they were able to free their countries from imperialism are the responsibility of the Stalinists in Moscow and Peking, who could easily have provided them with military aid sufficient for victory, but instead applied continual pressure for a 'settlement'.

The fact that military aid has gone to Angola demonstrates not that Moscow has abandoned its overall strategy of compromise with imperialism, but that the Stalinist chiefs are caught up in a permanent combined revolutionary process which they are far from being able to control. And with the multitude of political and commercial interests reaching out to stake claims in Angola, they are unwilling to risk Angola becoming another Vietnam - a long-running war continually undermining their attempts at compromise on a world scale.

Certainly, Moscow is intent on finding agreement with Washington that Angola is an 'exception', and that once this dispute is resolved the 'status quo' can be cemented, once

for years been bled white by Portuguese imperialism, to which American and Brazilian capitalist interests have more recently added themselves.

The huge resources of oil and minerals were exploited, while the vast majority of the people remained poverty-stricken, oppressed, illiterate, eking out a living - the same conditions that have already driven millions in the colonial countries to revolt against imperialism. This is why the military victories of the MPLA (falsely described as 'communist' by capitalist politicians) is only the beginning of the revolutionary struggle in southern Africa.

NATIONALISATION

The wealth of Angola can only be harnessed to the needs of its people (and turned to the support of other African liberation struggles) by nationalisation and an overall economic plan to repair the damage of war and satisfy the elementary needs of the people. But the MPLA has no such policy, and has already said it will not move against the huge American-owned Gulf oil sources in Cabinda. The imperialists, for their part, look to continuing the exploitation of Angola under different political conditions.

This is why Zaire President Mobutu - who has provided a base for US-backed and mercenary operations across the border - last week reshuffled his cabinet, sacked his foreign affairs minister and moved towards acceptance of the MPLA's offer to 'normalise' relations.

The struggle in Angola confirms, above all, the Marxist perspective of the permanent, combined nature of the world revolution.

The lessons and resources it offers now threaten the racist dictatorship in South Africa, and its rule over the huge territory of South West Africa, the Smith regime in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Mobutu in Zaire.

CUBA: FIRST CP CONGRESS

PART 3: THE CONGRESS.

After being promised for over 5 years, the first Congress of the Cuban Communist Party (now having 203,000 members) finally took place in late December - more than ten years after the Party was hammered together out of the old Stalinist party (the Popular Socialist Party) and the remains of Fidel Castro's 26 July Movement.

Castro apologised for the 'brevity' of his speech, which in fact lasted for over nine hours and took up 1½ days of the 5 day Congress! Its content ranged from the history of the Cuban independence movement in the 19th century to information on the number of pencils distributed to educational institutions in 1974 (46 million of them).

PURPOSE

But the political purpose of the speech was to present the Cuban leadership's current "authorised version" of Cuba's political history of which the main points are: - that the political positions of the late-nineteenth century Cuban writer and independence fighter José Martí, the prophet of Castro's petty bourgeois radical 26 July Movement, were identical to those of Lenin; - that the leadership of the 26 July Movement, though not its supporters, had always been

Marxists; - that the revolutionary political record of the PSP was unblemished;

- that the policies of the 26 July Movement and the PSP in the 1950s were tactically complementary; the former merely added the correct tactic of guerilla war to the correct political positions of the latter;

- that, apart from the 'sectarianism' of 1962 (when the PSP secretary Anibal Escalante was exiled to the Soviet Union) any previous political errors were those of idealism made by the 26 July Movement.

In these gross distortions, there is an attempt to have the long record of opportunistic twists and turns, betrayals and compromises of both political movements expunged from the record, along with the bitter quarrels between the two.

The bourgeois radical and stalinist threads of the history of the Cuban revolution are now claimed to have always been firmly plaited

REHABILITATION

The total rehabilitation of the PSP was formally marked by the addition of Blas Roca and Carlos Raphael Rodriguez (PSP leader since the 1930s) to the Political Bureau of the Cuban CP, hitherto the preserve of Castro and his closest colleagues in the leadership of the 26 July Movement and the Revolutionary Directorate.

Parallel to this, the international

section of the speech was a panegyric of the Stalinist policy of peaceful coexistence.

On Cuba's own international policy, apart from a vigorous defence of Cuba's material assistance to the MPLA in Angola, the emphasis was placed on the development in the last few years of increasingly friendly relations with a large number of bourgeois governments, from the reactionary military clique in Peru (who, Castro said, open 'a new era in the position of certain military forces in Latin America') and Mrs. Gandhi (whose state of emergency he supported) to France and Britain.

SPAIN

In an otherwise exhaustive survey of compromise Castro omitted to mention Spain with which throughout the period since the revolution Cuba has done more trade than with any other capitalist country.

Cubans, however, will not have forgotten that it is barely two months since flags in Cuba flew at half-mast for 3 days to mark the death of General Franco.

The 'work' of the Congress, apart from listening to Castro's almost interminable addresses, consisted in ratifying (not in any serious way discussing) a series of resolutions which embodied some major changes in policy already decided upon by the leadership.

The principle resolutions were about 'Peoples Power' and the new Economic Management and Planning System.

'Peoples Power' is a new system of local government based on elected assemblies for each of the 14 newly delineated provinces.

REINTRODUCTION

The Economic Management and Planning System involves the reintroduction of the categories of price, cost, profit, accountancy, credit and interest in the operation of all state-owned enterprises (that is, the entire Cuban economy apart from 100,000 land-owning peasants, a few taxi-drivers and all chiropodists).

Now monetary payments between enterprises (ineffective since the early 1960s and abolished from 1967) are reintroduced.

All enterprises are expected to make a profit and, while there will be a five year national plan giving output targets for the major industries, economic decisions are in general decentralised to the individual enterprise level.

Loss-making enterprises may be deliberately subsidised by the state or they may obtain loans from the Central Bank at 'commercial' rates of interest - failing this, they must cut costs, introduce speed-up, redundancies or even face closure.

New material incentives will be devised to encourage managers and workers in successful enterprises.

Taxation (abolished in Cuba in 1967) is to be reintroduced in the form of a general turnover tax (similar to VAT) which will form the basis of central and local government revenues.

This complete reversal of Cuba's previous economic policies is a response to the continual economic decline produced in the 1960s by policies which idealistically abolished all relationship between costs and the value of production; these culminated in the economic disaster of the 1970 sugar harvest. For these policies Castro is now (only too rightly) self-critical.

Just as the errors have been extreme so now are the remedies. In 1973 a relationship between work and pay was re-established via a full-scale piece-work system throughout the economy.

While this has helped to produce a very fast growth in production in the last two years, at the same time it involves the loss in practice of the minimum wage provision operating before then.

The resolutions were, needless to say, unanimously adopted by the Congress, as the theses on which they are based were voted for by 99 per cent of the 6½ million Cubans who had (according to Castro) participated in discussions at work centres and in the mass organisation in the weeks before the Congress.

As before the Trade Union Congress in 1973, the Cuban leadership attempted to create the illusion that the resolutions had emerged democratically as the will of the masses.

In fact, policies decided upon by the leadership were submitted to a form of 'discussion' in which it was not possible to advocate any more than detailed amendments to the drafting.

The only partial exceptions to this was a resolution on the peasantry advocating the speedy incorporation of small-holding peasants into cooperative production units and the state



All this was justified by what Castro calls the "socialist" principle of distribution - 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his work'.

TROTSKY

But, as Trotsky pointed out in relation to a similarly argued change in the Soviet Union in 1936, it is inclination rather than ability which is involved; and basing incomes on labour expended is anyway a bourgeois principle of distribution.

Such a principle is historically necessary due to the low development of the material forces of production. It is a serious error to make virtues of necessities.

agricultural plan. Their resistance produced some amendments and an energetic reassurance by Castro that the measure would be implemented very slowly and without any compulsion.

In all other respects the Congress which devoted so many words to discussing democratic reforms showed only a new attempt to consolidate bureaucratic power.

The increasing attention to democratic forms, however, is an indication of the growing resistance of the masses of Cuban workers to sudden twists in policy and economic failures. For the leadership, therefore, it is necessary but contradictory policy

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THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

The Workers Socialist League was formed in December 1974 to struggle for the continuity of the principles of Trotskyism in Britain and towards the rebuilding of the Fourth International.

In the daily struggle to take the demands and principles of Trotsky's *Transitional Programme* into the trade unions, the WSL has been at the forefront of the fight for the sliding scale of wages, and work sharing on full pay - demands which at the T&GWU Conference were the only alternative to Jones' treacherous £6 pay plan and the wholesale acceptance of redundancies by the bureaucracy.

In the Health Service, WSL comrades have led the struggle for the sliding scale of NHS spending and for trade union committees to open the books of the Authorities, along with the fight to end all private practice - policies adopted by ASTMS National Conference.

In local disputes also, WSL comrades have tested and developed the demands of the *Transitional Programme*, putting forward in every case, the only real opposition to the Stalinists and the right-wing. Our struggle for the "open the books" demand in the motor industry has won a mass response.

At the same time we have put forward a policy to fight unemployment, calling for unity of employed and unemployed through the fight to mobilise the trade union movement.

The WSL is the only movement that fights consistently for transitional demands, going beyond mere trade union militancy to pose the political issues to workers.

While these practical interventions have developed the League's grasp of Trotsky's *Programme*, there has been a consistent drive to deepen and enrich the movement's understanding of the history and the present crisis of the Fourth International, as an essential part of any serious initiative towards its reconstruction.

We urge all readers who agree on the need for revolutionary leadership and the demands we put forward to find out more about the WSL and join our fight in the labour movement.

SUPPORT IRANIAN 21!

February 16th marks a new stage in the collaboration of the Labour government with the brutal and repressive tyranny of the Shah of Iran.

On that day 21 Iranian students go on trial at the Old Bailey charged after occupying the Iranian embassy last April 21st under the conspiracy laws.

The protest was against the torture to death of nine of Iran's 40,000 political prisoners. The nine were killed according to the Shah's regime, "trying to escape".

But most of them were close to the end of their sentences; and the regime refused to permit their bodies to be examined.

DAILY

Similar murders are a daily event. Twenty-five are known to have taken place in the last two weeks and well over 300 in the last four years.

In Iran there is one political party, the Resurrection Party: membership is compulsory for all adults. Trade unions are illegal.

Repression is ruthlessly administered by the SAVAK, the Shah's ubiquitous secret police. The Shah's stated aim is that Iran should by 1980 become the world's third-ranking military power.

Assisting him in this is the British Labour government which has encouraged arms deals as a major part of its economic strategy to assist British capitalism.

Iran is one of the two countries outside Britain and France to buy the supersonic white elephant, the Concorde. Iran plays a key role in the Chrysler rescue plan due to its long term contract to buy Avengers.

The Shah has lent money and oil to the British government; some of the proceeds of North Sea Oil are mortgaged to repay these debts. And the Shah's forces are important collaborators of British imperialism in the whole Arabian Gulf area.

In these ways the Labour government is deeply dependent on the Shah's tyranny.

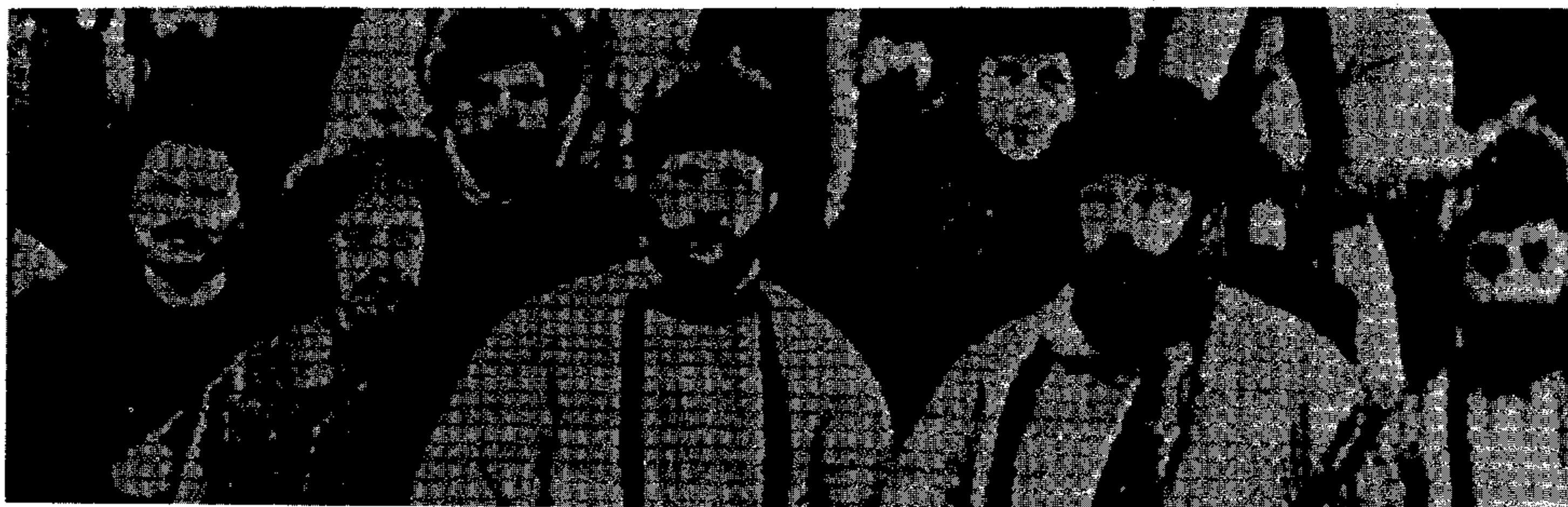
The Shah has used this position to put pressure on the British Home Office to convict and deport the twenty one students back to Iran where they would, of course, face imprisonment, torture and possible death.

DEMAND

This trial should not take place. All organisations of the Labour movement should demand that charges against the twenty one be dropped immediately. The case also points to the need to abolish the conspiracy laws and to break trade, monetary and political links with the Iranian dictatorship.

Readers of *Socialist Press* are urged to support the demonstration organised by the Committee for the defence of the 21 on February 14 at 1 p.m. meeting at Cavendish Square, as well as the picket outside the Old Bailey on February 16th starting at 10.00 a.m.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION



Trotsky (left), with convicted members of the Petersburg Soviet, on their way to exile in 1906.

1905-1914: YEARS OF REACTION

Tsarism scored a temporary victory in 1905, but the Menshevik Party was able to transform this experience into a victorious revolution of October 1917. As Lenin remarked later: "Without the dress rehearsal of 1905 the victory of the October revolution in 1917 would have been impossible."

One of the most significant developments after 1905 was a development of class forces. The liberal bourgeoisie, and its representatives like Struve, openly moved to the camp of the counter-revolution. They held the fear of the working class in greater fear than Tsarism. The Mensheviks by adapting to the pressures of the bourgeoisie, ostensibly sought to relegate the working class to a subordinate role - in which the workers would only provide the muscle to push through the cart of the democratic revolution and then hand over the reins of power to the liberal bourgeoisie.

When, therefore, the liberal bourgeoisie ended its flirtation with the working class during 1905, the Menshevik faction of Social Democracy turned on the working class and blamed workers for the failure of 1905. They claimed that "excessive" demands, like the eight-hour day, had driven the liberal bourgeoisie away from the side of the working class into the arms of the Tsarist class and Tsarism.

The perspective of Menshevism was the forerunner of the later Stalinist theory of revolution in rigidly defined stages - first the democratic stage, and only then, in the distant future, after a period of capitalist development, the socialist stage - which led them to bow before the liberal bourgeoisie and deny the working class a leading role in the revolution.

When the liberal bourgeoisie abandoned the perspective of the overthrow of Tsardom, by revolutionary means, so did the Mensheviks.

In the eyes of the Mensheviks, however, the revolution had come to an end. Tsarism had been transformed from an autocracy into constitutional monarchy and before it was essential for the Mensheviks to water down its programme, become acceptable to the state, dissolve its underground form of organisation and deal with Tsarism.

BOLSHEVIKS

The Bolshevik faction when it made its assessment of 1905 took a different point of view. They felt that Tsarism had only won the first round in a fight which could only be won when the working class rejected the bourgeois democratic revolution as part of the process leading to the socialist revolution.

This revolutionary task had been unresolved and the party during the period 1907-10 needed to take the measures necessary to preserve its political independence under the reign of terror and the rule of Prime Minister Stolypin.

Krupskaya in her book *Life of Lenin* describes the

beginnings of Stolypin's period of terror in June 1906:

"The government, feeling that it could not place further reliance on the Duma, opened the offensive. Peaceful demonstrations began to be broken up, incendiary started in buildings used for public meetings, and pogroms commenced against the Jews".

The period of reaction was the outcome of the Tsarist autocracy's failure to stem the revolutionary tide, which continued from 1905-7, by means of granting a state Duma (Parliament) which included limited working class and peasant representation.

Although the party of the bourgeoisie, the Cadets, won an overwhelming majority, the revolutionary mood of the peasantry was also reflected in the Duma and, as a result, clashed with the Czarist government, who consequently dissolved the Duma.

In following their turn towards non party workers, the Mensheviks were forced to abandon the revolutionary programme of Social Democracy with its demands for a democratic republic and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Liquidationism set out to destroy both the political independence of the party and its programme, subordinating workers to the interests of the bourgeoisie by adapting to bourgeois legality.

ILLEGALITY

The decisive turning point was June 3rd 1907 when the second state Duma was dissolved and the Social Democratic delegates were arrested on charges of conspiracy. A period of illegality began. This was a period of crisis for the party when its very survival came under attack.

Even before the coup of June 3rd, the Mensheviks had responded to the counter-revolutionary movement by writing in the bourgeois press, where they had initiated a campaign for a non-party Workers Congress.

By contrast the Bolsheviks had begun preparations to go underground; they had also issued the illegal paper *Proletarii*. What the Mensheviks, however, were doing by calling for a non-party workers' congress, far from protecting the party, was seeking to dissolve or liquidate the party. This trend was for this reason termed liquidationism by the Bolsheviks.

The years 1907-10 were dangerous years for revolutionaries. Those who remained in Russia faced imprisonment and torture if discovered, or even assassination at the hands of the Russian fascists, the 'Black Hundreds', as they became known. Pessimism and demoralisation became a cancerous rot in the party.

As Zinoviev writes, it even affected the cultural climate of this period:

"Degeneration could be observed - as is always the case after defeats - in all spheres of culture, both in science and literature, which brought forth a flowering of pornography, mysticism and every kind of religious outlook".

There was a marked trend towards philosophical idealism. Party members, especially petty-bourgeois intellectuals, left in droves. This desertion from

Marxism was highlighted in the debate on legal opportunities.

After the June 3rd Coup, the Tsarist government altered the franchise so that peasant deputies had to be approved by the big landowners. As a consequence it was clear that the 3rd State Duma would be brazenly reactionary. At first a majority of Bolsheviks supported boycotting it. Lenin, however, resolutely argued for participation in the Duma, notwithstanding its reactionary character.

In 1905 the Bolsheviks had adopted a position of boycotting the so-called 'Bulygin Duma' but that had been a purely consultative body and had been an attempt to divert the revolutionary movement, then still on the boil, into legal channels.

The conditions in 1907 were entirely different. The State Duma, argued Lenin, afforded a very precious opportunity to use a legal opening to direct revolutionary agitation at the masses.

THE BOYCOTTERS

The faction which was in favour of boycotting the State Duma became known as the 'Otzovists' (Recallists) because they wanted to recall deputies from the State Duma. Their arguments, though very revolutionary sounding, were a form of desertion - a retreat from the harsh struggle to contact the working class with the Party's agitation by whatever channels were available.

Their arguments would have led the Party away from the trade unions also, as these were reactionary. This was sectarianism, which sought to cut the party off from contact with the working class. If successful, it would have transformed the Bolsheviks into a sect which turned in on itself.

Opportunism in these years of reaction thus took two apparently opposite but related forms - liquidationism on the one side, and sectarianism on the other. The logic of both was to destroy the independence and effectiveness of the Marxist party of the working class.

A particular danger arising from liquidationism was that in seeking to dissolve the Party into the working class and transform it from a vanguard into a rearguard party, prey to the influence of the bourgeoisie, it encouraged an undisciplined attitude to the party, provided the ideal soil in which spies and 'agent provocateurs' could flourish.

After the 1905 revolution, the Tsarist government attempted to infiltrate the Party with spies.

The mood of disillusionment and despair which bore down heavily on Party members created ripe conditions for the autocracy to recruit unstable Party elements as spies.

In this way, Malinovsky, a talented though unstable revolutionary, was able to occupy a leading position within the Party whilst being in the pay of the Okhrana, the Russian secret police.

PLEKHANOV

Not all Mensheviks succumbed to liquidationism. A group of

Mensheviks, around Plekhanov, although supporting the Mensheviks on other questions, roundly condemned the liquidators.

Lenin therefore formed an alliance with this small section of the Party against liquidationism both in the ranks of the Mensheviks and against what he termed 'liquidationism from the left' - the 'Otzovists' or boycotters. In 1909, the boycotters were expelled from the Bolshevik tendency.

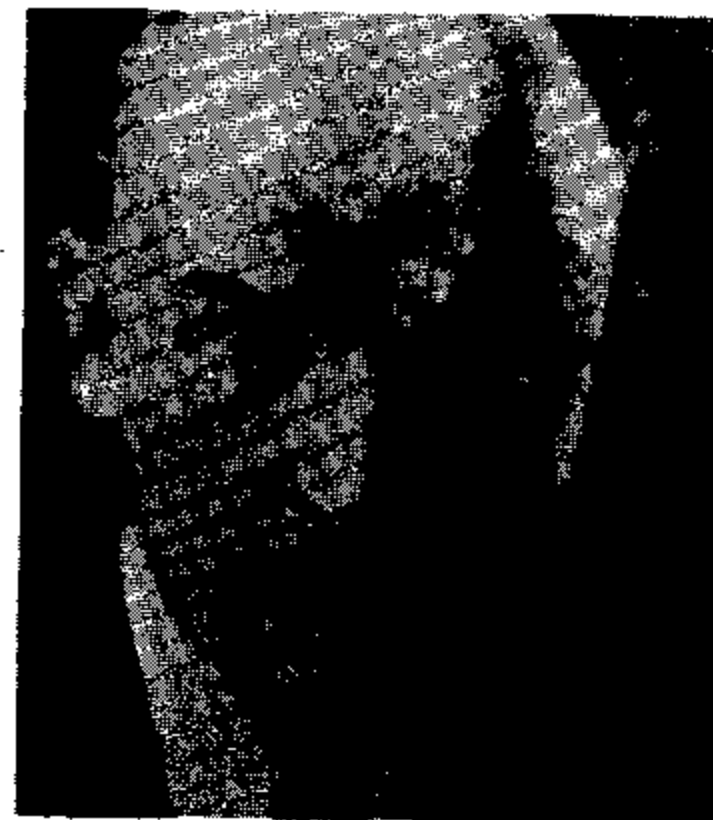
PHILOSOPHY

A number of boycotters, headed by Bogdanov and Lunacharsky, also came out openly against Marx's materialist philosophy. In its place they adopted the idealist views of Ernst Mach, called 'Empirio-Criticism'. In his book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* Lenin defended materialism against idealist philosophy. Again he was joined by Plekhanov.

This dispute was not academic, although it was fought out at a high theoretical level. Lenin grasped that philosophical questions were intimately bound up with practical issues: it was no coincidence that the empirio critics were sectarians in their practice.

Their most blatant revision of Marxism was a pernicious attempt to reconcile Marxism and religion, the latter being a weapon in the ideological armoury of the ruling class. While they did not believe in the outward trappings of the organised church, they believed in a kind of "Marxist version" of god.

Gorki, the famous Russian writer, was also involved in the



Lenin

'God-builders' faction, as it was known. His efforts to organise a Party school on the island of Capri to propagandise these views to worker members, came to naught when a number of the workers present, as soon as they were treated to a lecture on 'God-building', upped and went to join Lenin in exile outside Paris.

Lenin, almost alone grasped the need for a break with liquidationism, whether of the left or right variety. Many, including leading Bolsheviks, preached the need for unity. Lenin, too, argued for party unity but he did not include liquidationism or 'Otzovism', trends which were intent upon destroying the party.

A leading advocate of unity was Trotsky, who stood outside both the Menshevik and Bolshevik factions and attempted wrongly to reconcile Bolsheviks, pro-party Mensheviks, liquidators and

'otzovists' within one party.

The only basis for united party could be a struggle against liquidationism, both 'left' and 'right'. Any other unity would dissolve the party on the liquidator's terms. Moreover unity in this form meant uniting with "those who [quite literally] spread bourgeois influence among the proletariat".

ISOLATED

Later, Trotsky in a discussion about the state of the Party said that, in 1910:

"In the whole country there were a few dozen people. Some were in Siberia but they were not organised. The people whom Lenin could reach by correspondence or by an agent numbered 30 or 40 at most. However, the tradition and the ideas among the more advanced workers was a tremendous capital which was used later during the revolution, but practically, at this time we were absolutely isolated".

Once the working class began to stir again, it became necessary to break from the liquidationists, if the party were to gather its scattered forces and resist the efforts of the bourgeoisie and its agents within the working class to undermine it.

The period, beginning in late 1910, up to the start of the war in August 1914 was marked by a revolutionary revival.

"Every month," wrote Krupskaya, "saw an increase in the strength of the labour movement. But this movement was now growing under conditions entirely different from those in which the labour movement grew before 1905. It was developing on the basis of the experiences of the 1905 revolution... The proletariat had gone through a great deal - a wave of strikes, a number of armed uprisings, a tremendous mass movement; and it had experienced years of defeat."

UPSURGE

The revolutionary upsurge began with the mass strikes in response to the shooting of 270 strikers from the Lena goldmines in Siberia. Immediately, the Bolsheviks founded *Zvezda*, an agitational newspaper, in order to contact the resurgent workers' movement.

Although they collaborated with the pro-Party Mensheviks, it gradually became a solely Bolshevik organ. Like the pre-1905 paper *Iskra* it became a weapon in the struggle against opportunism within the working class movement, especially the liquidators.

The break with the liquidators was confirmed at the Prague Conference of 1912. Here, as Zinoviev puts it:

"A handful of delegates (some 20 to 25 in number) led by Comrade Lenin... took upon itself the presumption to proclaim itself the Party... This conference deposed the Old Central Committee which had half rotted away and said to itself: it is we who are the Party; whoever is not with us is against us; we will conduct a sharp struggle against everyone who refuses for his part to struggle against liquidationism".

One of the most important decisions of this historic conference was to establish a daily paper, *Pravda*.

SUPPORT

Pravda gradually won leadership of the working class. This was reflected amongst other things, by the kopecks which literally flooded in from the pockets of workers to help finance the paper. Also in the elections to the State Duma, six Bolshevik deputies out of a possible six were elected from the workers' districts.

The split with the Menshevik liquidators was historically justified. It was the struggle by the Bolsheviks to safeguard the leading role of the working class in the revolution that enabled the Party to sustain the enormous pressures which the bourgeoisie exert on the workers movement.

These pressures which came to the fore most clearly with the outbreak of the First World War, were to produce the greatest divisions within the movement internationally. Only Bolshevism withstood them.

GOING NOWHERE

Review of 'WORKERS' POWER' - forerunner to 'WORKERS' ACTION'

This exceedingly shabby publication is the product of a group of people who, posing as a Left Alternative to the leadership of the International Socialists, were recently expelled from that organisation. For IS it was their fifth national purging in as many years and that they felt threatened by the innocuous criticism of such members as these can only testify to the desperate and degenerate state that the organisation is in.

Any attempt to understand the present practice of IS and from that understanding to advance a principled and coherent alternative to it, cannot avoid, as *Workers Power* persistently do avoid, an examination of the politics of that organisation and the historical conditions that produced those politics.

Within IS this left centrist left alternative always ducked such principled considerations. Diplomacy required silence on the IS theory of the Permanent Arms Economy and State Capitalism, the cultivating of the membership proceeded by duplicity and equivocation leading to the remarkable fact that an opposition which they say 'commenced in 1972' leaves IS more than three years later without having expressed an opinion on a single one of IS's basic revisions of Marxism!

SECOND NATURE

Whatever may be thought of this tactic from within IS, when we discover that *Workers Power* from outside and supposedly independent of IS continues the same policy of theoretical evasiveness we can only endorse Trotsky's view that while "for the masses centrism is only a transition from one stage to another, for individual politicians centrism can become second nature".

The IS group was formed in the period of the Cold War (October 1950 was the date of the founding conference) and reflected the pressure of the Cold War ideology upon socialists. Its political positions were based upon the 'impression' of post-war capitalist strength in the West and Stalinist strength and stability in the East.

For the group that was to become the International Socialists the failure of socialism to emerge out of the 2nd World War produced not a deepening of their Marxist understanding to enable them to grapple with the new world reality but a rejection of Marxism altogether.

The gains of October they thought had been lost in Russia to a new state capitalist class that had extended its "empire" across Europe and as the second of the world's two "imperialist" super powers had parcelled the world out for capitalist exploitation with the United States at Yalta. Capitalist stability in the West had been secured by investment in arms, which being wasteful, they claimed, did not raise the organic composition of capital and consequently did not create the tendency for the rate of profit to fall.

"THEORY"

For the IS theoreticians saw in their "theory" of the Permanent Arms Economy capitalism's incapacity to overcome its own contradictions. Thus imperialism was not (as Lenin and Trotsky believed) the highest stage of capitalism but in Kidron's telling phrase it was the "highest stage but not the end".

It is from this belief that we were not in the imperialist epoch but instead at the beginning of a new epoch of capitalist and state capitalist expansion that the IS

obsession with rank and fileism derives.

As IS theoretician Duncan Hallas put it, today's conditions demand "putting aside grandiose ideas of international leadership, world congresses and the like in favour of the humdrum tasks of propaganda and agitation in one's own country . . . In the existing situation the analogy of Marx and the First International is in some ways more relevant than that of Lenin and the Third".

For a materialist, one consequence of this view that capitalism had overcome the contradictions of the imperialist epoch and now had a new epoch of expansion in front of it would be to

working class is much more than the three or four shopping lists that are scattered about the pages of *Workers Power*!

How hostile *Workers Power* are to the Transitional Programme of Trotsky is made very clear in their article on Portugal where we are told that "left centrist groupings are more healthy in the short run" (p12) and on the National Abortion Campaign "we must work in the NAC to improve it not to take it over". (p14)

A recent struggle in Wolverhampton, grossly misreported on the first page of this magazine gave *Workers Power* the opportunity to continue the IS tradition of "doing serious and



conclude that the Russian Revolution of 1917 was a premature adventure that the Mensheviks were right to oppose.

ATTACK

IS do not shirk this conclusion. In their journal (issue no. 40) Duncan Hallas attacks the Socialist Labour League on precisely these grounds.

"The SLL claims to be the embodiment of 'orthodox Trotskyism'. The claim has considerable justification. The League's present policies are rooted in the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International. Its errors arise fundamentally from the attempt to apply this analysis to a world situation in which it is irrelevant or false."

It could not be more clearly put, yet *Workers Power* who hope to escape the consequences of IS practice while refusing to face the revisionist theory that underpins it, already give ample evidence in this first issue that they will repeat much of it. Indeed far from attacking the Keynesian economics that are at the base of IS theories we are told that the main problem with IS was not its bourgeois ideas but the failure of the IS leadership to hammer a programme out of these ideas!

"IS has done serious and often splendid work for workers in struggle (in every way a crucial task). But its socialist (!) policies have remained on the level of abstract propaganda for socialism and workers' control".

But a programme for revolutionary intervention in the

splendid work" for workers in struggle.

In collusion with the shop stewards, two militants were dismissed from their place of work by management. Because of the initial acquiescence of the work force, WSL comrades had a hard fight persuading the two victimised workers to fight on what was clearly a basic trade union principle.

At the stage of having won the two militants around, a Mr Pratt representing *Workers Power* made his appearance. He argued that the trade union principle was "not the important question".

"RANK AND FILE"

The important question according to Mr Pratt was to build a "rank and file movement" for democracy in the T&GWU (the union of the two victimised members). For one of the two this 'alternative' was the ideal way to rationalise his reluctance to fight and Mr Pratt's intervention served as the pretext to retreat from a struggle.

When the WSL proposed that Mr Pratt and his colleagues join with the WSL in a campaign in defence of this trade union principle Mr Pratt declined on the grounds that the WSL were only interested in "using such a campaign to recruit members". At least Mr Pratt showed the opportunist instinct that his organisation stood to gain little and the WSL much from a campaign on principle (though it does throw some doubt on how meaningful is WP's talk of united front work).

Fighting on alone the WSL took the issue up at factory and regional level in the TGWU. While the implications of shop steward collaboration with management were clearly posed in leaflets distributed at the factory an inquiry was also forced through at regional level that instructed the shop stewards to fight for re-instatement.

When the convenor and his stewards called a mass meeting and tried to do exactly the opposite, he was shouted off the platform, new elections of stewards were called and a strike resolution passed if the two were not reinstated. In the face of this display of real workers' power, what do our friends from *Workers Power* have to say?

PRAISE

Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Instead they find space to praise a bureaucrat. "The full time official tried to argue with the stewards but got nowhere." (p. 1) This full time official (who incidentally sold out the Yarnolds strike in the same town) refused to initiate any action on behalf of the two militants beyond advising them to go to the Industrial Relations Tribunal!

Having seen how *Workers Power* measure up in a real fight against the reformist leaders we are not surprised to discover that this tendency believe that the positions of the WSL towards the reformist leaders - such as 'Make the Left MPs fight' and 'Kick out Wilson' - "sow criminal illusions in the left fakers, Tribunites and Benn type mavericks . . . Of course it is necessary to challenge the Labour Party to expose it and to put demands on it. But these demands must be put by real forces capable of doing the job themselves." (p. 15)

Unhappily if real forces already capable of doing the job themselves actually existed then what would be the purpose of exposing the reformist leaders? Only gratuitous malice to discomfort parliamentarians could explain such superfluous exposure. Indeed the purpose of the "united front" which these innocents imagine they support arises precisely because such forces do not exist and have to be created in the process of a struggle against their reformist leaders.

Trotsky makes this very clear when in an 'historical review of the united front' he observes "Were we simply to unite the working class around our banner . . . by eliminating the reformist parties or trade union organisations that of course would be the best way. But in that case the very question of the united front in its present form would be non-existent."

'VACUUM'

Here again *Workers Power* repeat IS who believed that they had discovered a 'vacuum on the left' in the early 1960s because workers in that period had advanced their interests without recourse to the parliamentary leaders. We call on workers to force the 'lefts' to fight because as Trotsky said:

"We are interested apart from all other considerations in dragging the reformists from out of their lairs and in setting them beside us at the head of the struggling masses. With a correct tactic, we alone stand to gain thereby. The communist who is dubious or is afraid of this behaves after the fashion of a swimmer who after approving the propositions as regards the best method of swimming dares not risk jumping into the water."

In a perverse way the shoddiness of this magazine is its most attractive feature, preparing the reader as well and as honestly as it does for the confusion of ideas that reign within. Sad and surprising such a long labour in IS has failed to produce anything more than commonplaces badly expressed. A recognition that they have nothing to say is probably responsible for the tone of false chumminess that pervades the magazine, 'we' must do this and 'we' mustn't accept that is the ingratiating method by which the presumably hope to pass themselves off as part of the workers movement.

REBOUND

Before this review of the first issue of this magazine could be written *Workers Power* went out of existence. On the rebound from a long and protracted affair with IS

they were emotionally ripe for rushing into a hasty marriage to Workers Fight, an organisation expelled from IS in 1971 whose economic practice bears many similar features to the object of *Workers Power's* disappointed suit.

While having a similar method of work to IS, Workers Fight shared the same political outlook as the USFI, the Pabloite International led by Ernest Mandel. Once they declared their solidarity with the USFI, the USFI not unreasonably suggested that Workers Fight should join the IMG which is the British section of the International they claimed to be in solidarity with.

Notwithstanding their commitment to build a "democratic centralist" international Workers Fight found it impossible to join their national section whose main offence in the eyes of Workers Fight was a propagandistic passivity that refused to issue calls to action. This approach was enshrined in the perspectives, accepted at the IMG's 1972 Conference.

Shortly afterwards when the IMG did begin issuing calls to action - no less than organise a general strike - one of their leaders and co-author of the 1972 perspectives, Tony Whelan, resigned in disgust and took his supporters with him to continue the strategy of passive propagandism.

It might have appeared that with Tony Whelan out of the way the main obstacle on the road to uniting with the International with which one 'was in fundamental solidarity' had been removed.

Far from it! Instead of linking up with the IMG, Workers Fight linked up with . . . Tony Whelan and his passive propagandists! The contradiction which this unprincipled manoeuvre led to with Mandel's International was easily resolved. It was declared to be 'dead'.

BELATED

This belated discovery that what they thought were declarations of solidarity were in fact no more than essays in necrophilia flowed not from a principled reassessment of the Fourth International. Nothing in the recent history of the USFI could justify such a turnabout. In fact it was the sectarian desire to maintain a separate organisation that made such a conclusion inevitable.

No less dramatic a turnabout was produced by Workers Fight on the Labour Party. In the first issue of their theoretical journal you can read about identical arguments for abstaining in a fight with the labour lefts as are to be found in the first issue of *Workers Power*. But having failed with this 'revolutionary' hot air to raise Workers Fight's modest balloon off the ground, the third issue of the journal finds the entire membership - inside the Labour Party!

Presumably it is to such sterile battle grounds that Workers Fight will wish to take their new bride though they will probably find her far too coy and embarrassed in her new surroundings to be capable of "sowing criminal illusions" in anyone.

SAME ROAD

Clearly *Workers Power* is going nowhere and in these inflationary times it is eminently sensible to share the costs with a group that for many years have been travelling the same road. For us the desire to unite the class around a revolutionary programme forces us into an implacable struggle against all these unprincipled manoeuvres which for the revisionist groups are no more than a desperate clutching at straws.

"Before we can unite and in order that we may unite we must first of all draw firm and definite lines of demarcation. Otherwise our unity will be purely fictitious, it will conceal the prevailing confusion and hinder its radical elimination". (Lenin: *Collected Works* Vol 4 p. 354).

In this brief passage Lenin opens up the alternative road to revolutionary regroupment that stands out starkly against the unprincipled combinations of 'Workers Fight' and 'Workers Power'.

by Joe Quigley.



TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND!

While thousands of demonstrators in Derry and London on the first week-end in February remembered those murdered by British soldiers on Bloody Sunday four years ago, the Tory leaders have begun to build up pressure for a more 'positive' role for the troops in 1976.

It was disclosed in the *Daily Telegraph* of 6th February that Tory front bench spokesmen Airey Neave and Biggs Davidson had spent several days observing the operations of the army in South Armagh. Their report, which no doubt reflects the views of senior officers, says that too much emphasis has been placed on keeping a 'low profile' in the area. This is a clear call for more mass searches and other forms of harassment of the nationalist population.

STEPPED UP

With the increasing inability of British imperialism to discover any 'political' solution in Northern Ireland, there can be no question but that repression by the troops will be stepped up. It has thus become more urgent to fight in the working class movement throughout Ireland and Britain to force out the troops.

As part of this struggle the WSL now considers it necessary to correct the wrong positions contained in the article 'Unite to Force

Troops Out of Ireland' which appeared in *Socialist Press* 25 (dated 14th January).

Partly acting on wrong information, and through muddled formulations, the article welcomed the large Catholic-Protestant demonstrations protesting about 'sectarian killings' in Armagh, and went on to call for 'joint protestant-catholic workers' defence patrols with the aim of preventing sectarian murders'.

MISTAKE

In saying this we made the mistake of accepting the divisions created by imperialism, and expressing the need for workers unity only within those limits.

In fact it is vital to begin from the needs of the whole of the Irish working class, North and South, and the tasks of the unfinished national revolution.

At the same time, we implied that the 'sectarianism' of both sides can be equated. Socialists, however, have to make a distinction between the outbursts of the oppressed, and the sectarian actions of the oppressors.

In Ireland, the UVF and UDA terror gangs, which have support among Protestant workers, act in general as agents of imperialism. The IRA, on the other hand, for all their radically false politics, is actually fighting imperialism. We must therefore place ourselves unconditionally in the camp of the anti-imperialist forces while reserving our complete right to criticise

tactics. Our task is to build an alternative revolutionary leadership within that camp which will take the national liberation of Ireland through to its end.

It was on this basis that we participated in the Bloody Sunday commemoration demonstration held in London on 1st February, advocating our policies by calling for the immediate withdrawal of British troops and self-determination for the Irish people.

Today it is essential to put forward a programme of action which can unite Irish workers with a class struggle method of fighting for national liberation.

The starting point is the struggle for democratic rights. This must include complete opposition to the Special Powers Act in the North, and measures such as the Criminal Jurisdiction Bill in the South. This latter proposal aims to indict people in the Republic for 'crimes' committed in the North, thus introducing a 'United Ireland for oppression only'.

SOLDIERS RIGHTS

Workers must demand that all soldiers, whether British or Irish, have the right to form trade unions, where there must be freedom of propaganda for all working class and republican tendencies.

Relying on their own strength, the working class should begin to fight for control of transport and strategic industries so as to put a stop to military collaboration bet-

ween the Southern government and British troops.

Workers must also demand that the books of the multinational firms that super-exploit the Irish people should be opened to their elected representatives. They must not only expose their profits and plans, but must prepare the way for nationalisation of these industries under workers management.

CONTROL

In order to prevent the murderous attacks by loyalist gangs on the Catholic population, all anti-imperialist forces, including the various wings of the IRA, must work under the democratic control of the nationalist masses.

The fight around such demands puts the working class on the offensive, makes it possible for them to express their power in such a way as to begin to organise a genuinely independent Irish Workers Republic with the eviction of foreign troops.

It is of course the case that all workers in Ireland, whatever their political or religious opinions, are faced with vicious attacks on their wages and their right to work. However, no struggles around wages and jobs will be successful unless it goes to the heart of the matter: imperialist domination of Ireland.

We have to explain to the Protestant workers of the North that as long as they remain under the domination of the loyalist gentry, they will not be able to

effectively defend a single job or fight for a single wage increase. It is on this basis that unity must be forged between the Catholic and Protestant workers.

In Britain, socialists must take the struggle for the immediate withdrawal of troops right into the labour movement. This must be done in such a way as to connect with the struggles of the British working class.

We have to explain that spending on the Irish war, running into millions, contributes to the cuts in social services, housing, health and much else. We have to demand that all spending on this war be stopped immediately.

HYPOCRITICAL

The trade union leaders who make hypocritical noises about unemployment must be forced to come out against recruitment into the army, and instead recruit workers into the trade unions to fight against the bosses.

In the same way, opposition must be built to attacks on democratic rights contained in such measures as the so-called 'Prevention of Terrorism' Act. This has given the police enormous and arbitrary powers which have already been unsparingly used against republicans, socialists and trade unionists.

These laws are directly opposed to the interests of British workers. Nor are their interests served by having republicans locked in British jails.

TASK

The urgent task of the day for us in Britain is to build a movement within the working class that is strong enough to force the troops out of Ireland at once. From this point of view, the 'lowest common denominator' politics of the organisers of the February 1st demonstration in London, and particularly of the IMG who predominated there, was an unprincipled diversion.

It is not a question of seeking to trick the working class, and advocating our real policies in an underhand way, but stating clearly and truthfully how we see the role of British imperialism in Ireland, and what we see as the next step that has to be taken to defeat it.

Hull Branch Fights Witch Hunt

This motion was passed at the Hull AUEW No 2 branch on January 26th unanimously:

"That this branch views with disgust the unwarranted interference by the national press and television coverage on elections within our movement, as occurred just recently over shop steward positions in the car industry. Elections for these positions are the concern of members only and we as branch members of a democratic movement condemn such an intrusion as a challenge to the independence of trade unionists to choose their own representatives and reject the motive and implications of any employer who states he will not recognise a steward's credentials even if chosen by a democratic procedure.

In view of the fact that such elections for shop stewards are a daily occurrence, this branch requests that, the NEC of our own union would under such conditions issue the following directives:

1. Immediate cancellations of elections.
 2. Elections to proceed when unwarranted interference has elapsed.
 3. A TUC enquiry into such methods of disrupting internal trade union democracy.
- A copy of this resolution to be forwarded to the NEC, District Committee and also the Hull Trades Council for further discussion.

LIBERALS' DIVERSION

On the same day as Norman Scott was making allegations about a Barnstaple court about Jeremy Thorpe, John Pardoe was announcing in London that the first priority in Liberal Party economic policy was the complete emasculaton of the Trade Unions.

Pardoe, who makes no secret of his ambition to replace Thorpe as Liberal leader, is one of the most vociferous opponents of the trade union movement.

He insisted that trade union bargaining power must be reduced, and that "the sacred cow of free collective bargaining" must be replaced by a "new wage determination process".

No doubt his speech was music to the ears of Jack Jones. Jones, architect of the £6 pay limit which is already cut deeply into living standards, is now pressing for another limit - expected to be about £3 a week.

And Jones himself is no stranger to the conferences organised by the *Financial Times* and the *Investors Chronicle*, at one of which Pardoe was speaking to an appreciative audience of businessmen.



however, was unlikely to include Gerald Caplan, who prefers to live in Monte Carlo rather than London at the moment.

Caplan was chairman of the collapsed London and County Securities Group, the spectacular record of which, according to Thorpe, "was almost entirely due to the genius and drive of the chairman and managing director, Mr. Caplan..."

The inspectors appointed by the Department of Trade to investigate London and County also noted Mr. Caplan's "genius". Making allegations of frauds

relating to loans of up to £5 million the inspectors refer to "Mr. Caplan's inherent deviousness, a capacity almost amounting to genius not to give a straight answer to a straight question".

The full story is consequently hard to unravel, involving cheques with no backing, but with a face value of £4 million; the invention of a non-existent J. Cartwright with whom to do deals; Avon, a company with an issued share capital of £2 which was owned by Caplan and his wife and which kept no books of account. The meticulous attention given

by the capitalist press to the alleged payments to Norman Scott by ex-MP Peter Bessell (a fiver a week), contrasts sharply to the payments by Caplan's company to Jeremy Thorpe - £100 a week, or twenty times as much.

As the Department of Trade inspectors point out, Thorpe was "mainly of use to the London and County group in opening a number of in-store banks, with considerable publicity...No doubt this helped to create confidence in such banks on the part of would-be depositors.

RESCUE

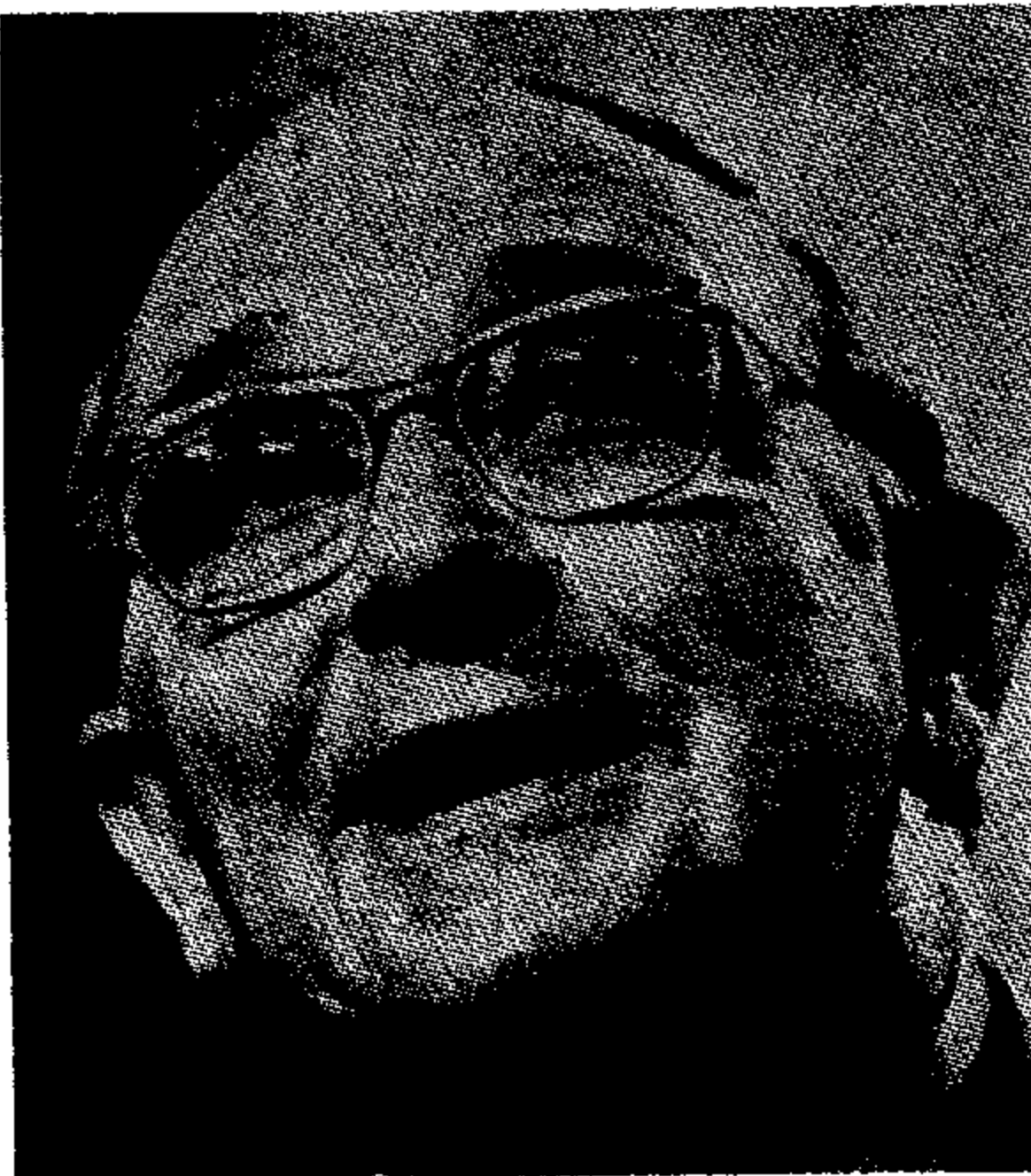
In fact, most depositors lost nothing because of a rescue operation organised by the Bank of England - a nationalised industry. But as many as 13,000 depositors with Fidelity Life may suffer as a result of the London and County collapse.

The titillation and trivia in the capitalist press concerning the private affairs of Scott, Bessell and Thorpe are being used to obscure the tip of the iceberg discovered when London and County was investigated: the deliberate manipulation of company accounts in the interests of shareholders.

BACK ISSUES!

We have back issues available of both 'Trotskyism Today' and of 'Socialist Press'

UNION DEMOCRACY SUPPRESSED



Jack Jones - holds office 'during the pleasure of the Union'.

There is only one conclusion that can be drawn from the manoeuvres of the Region 5 bureaucracy of the Transport and General Workers Union to block an enquiry into the December ballot for regional and national positions.

This is that the non-elected full time union bureaucracy of the T&GWU treats the democratic rights of members within the T&GWU with complete contempt.

NO RULE

It emerges for instance, that within the T&GWU there is not a single rule which provides for disciplinary action of any kind to be taken against a branch, district or regional officer who violates the rules of elections or rigs a union ballot.

The sole action within union rules which could flow even from conclusive proof of corruption and ballot rigging is that the

particular branch result be declared invalid!

Not only that, but there is no procedure whatever for complaints or queries by branches or individuals in relation to ballots to be dealt with. This is what has left the Region 5 Committee free to ignore complaints and demands for an enquiry from branches representing over 5,000 workers, together with documented evidence which shows conclusively that anything over 5,000 votes in the publicly announced December ballot figures can not be accounted for.

Two of the major Oxford cars branches, the 5/293 (BL Assembly Plant) Branch, with 3,500 members, and the 5/55 Branch, with 1,500 members, lodged demands for an enquiry into the election in which the extreme right wing slate supported by the Oxford District Committee returned huge and completely unsubstantiated votes in the Regional ballot for General Executive Council, Regional Committee and National

Committee positions.

Most blatant of these results was the 6,134 votes claimed for Jack Addams, the unknown right winger the Oxford District put forward for Regional Committee as an automotive group candidate. Addams comes from the tiny MG factory at Abingdon, where he has less than 100 T&GWU members.

In the Cowley Assembly Plant 5/293 Branch he won only 167 out of 3,500 possible votes. The 5/55 Branch cast none of its 1,500 votes (having decided not to participate in the ballot). This meant that Addams' votes had to come either from the 6,500 members in the Cowley Body Plant or from Coventry, the other main area covered by the election.

COVENTRY

All the available Coventry votes can be seen to have been cast for Coventry candidates in the election, while a major branch in that area, the 5/920, with 6,000 members, also did not vote at all.

In other words, to amass 6,134 Addams would have needed upwards of 5,000 votes from the Cowley Body Plant. But it can be shown conclusively that only a few hundred workers in the Body Plant voted at all in the election! And, despite continuous pressure from stewards, the leadership of the Body Plant (5/60) Branch will not reveal the voting figures from that factory ballot.

TWO MORE

The case is similar for the other two positions, in which Body Plant convenor Bill Roche was elected to GEC with 11,442 votes, and Assembly Plant convenor Reg Parsons polled 6,700 votes coming second in the election for National Committee.

There is a discrepancy in each case of something like 5,000 5,000-5,500 votes between published results and possible votes cast.

And in each case the 5/60 Branch leadership refuse to answer questions or give figures. And now the intervention of Region 5 bureaucracy has given them full protection from any further enquiry.

The manoeuvre was simple. The Regional Committee after receiving the Branch complaints opened a "preliminary investigation". This "investigation" took the form of summoning the two scrutineers from the 5/60 Branch to Regional Office. None of those who had lodged complaints was interviewed or given any opportunity to present further evidence. As a result of their "investigation" the Regional Committee decided that a "minor technical infringement" had taken place, declared the results null and void, and called for a re-run of the entire election.

Having declared the results null and void they cleared the way to destroying any remaining evidence of the Body Plant voting figures!

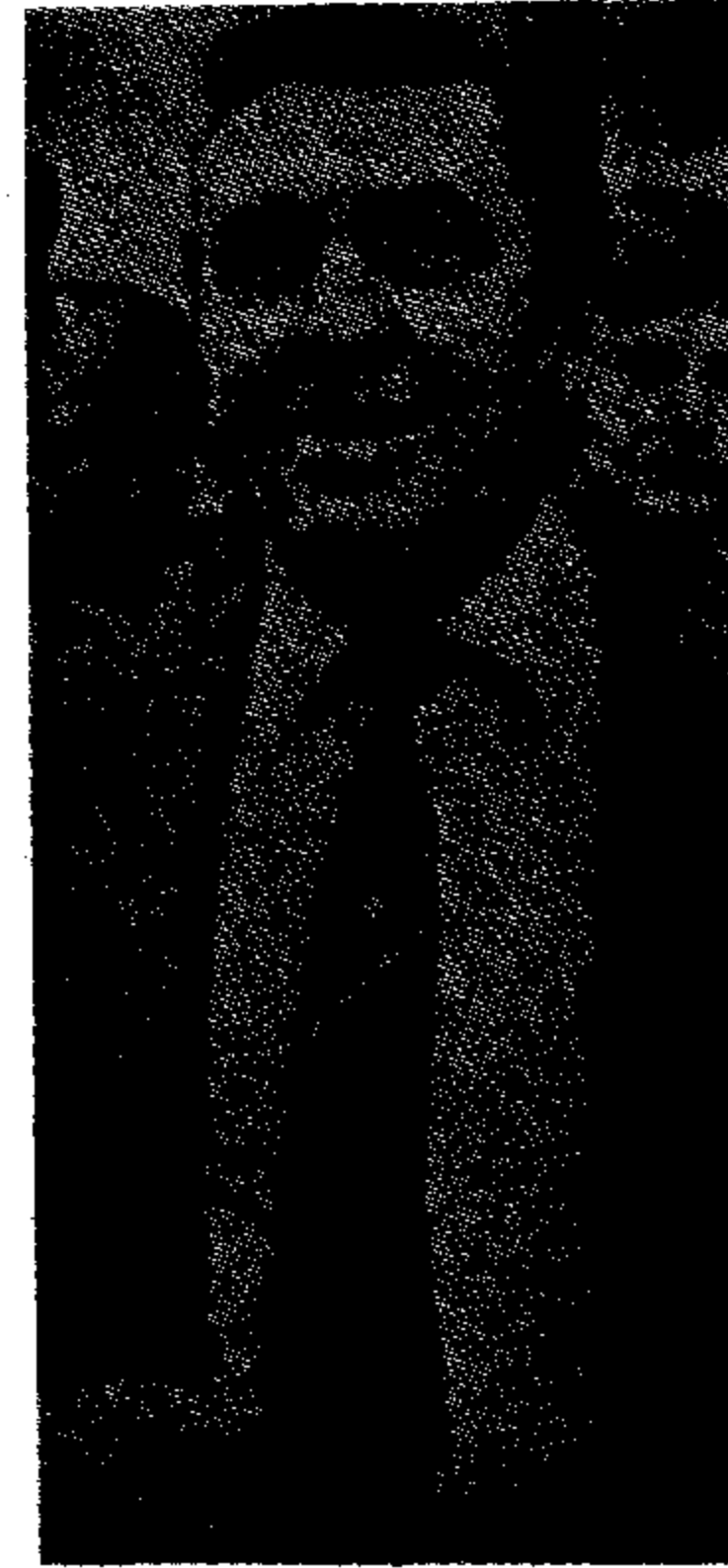
What was the "minor technical infringement"? It was destruction of the evidence! It turned out that the ballot papers needed for the enquiry had been destroyed after one month instead of the three months asked for in the Regional Committee circular.

AFTERWARDS

Yet even this "minor infringement" means it would appear that the ballot papers were destroyed after the first complaint and demand for an enquiry was lodged by the 5/55 Branch!

Along with the "technical infringement" story from Region 5 came the allegation that the votes in this election "did not seem unusually high". Regional Secretary Brian Mathers made great play of the previous Regional Committee election in which Alan Thornett had won the position with over 7,000 votes, while Addams had won this time with "only" 6,134.

deputy convenor of the Assembly Plant, and the stewards campaigned for his election on the tracks. As a result he won 3,500 votes from his own plant, while the Oxford District nomination won him a further 3,000 votes from the Body Plant. Thus from only two factories 6,500 of the 7,000 votes can be accounted for. Yet Mathers is now expecting workers to take seriously the election of Addams with 6,134 votes when no more than 500-600 of his "votes" can be accounted for!



Mathers - unelected.

For the bureaucracy the unanswered questions of the December ballot are now a thing of the past. They do not intend to start an investigation which could only raise serious questions as to the role of the extreme right wing 5/60 Branch leadership and serve to further discredit them in the town.

But most workers in the Cowley Body Plant are in no doubt on the question. They know only a handful voted in the last election, and why the leadership refuse to declare the results.

For this reason the results from the re-run ballot in the Plant will carry little conviction. But the experience of fighting these issues means more and more militant workers are beginning to wonder what action they can take within the union to assert their democratic rights in elections.



Parsons - 5,000 unaccountable

If the bureaucracy can evade an enquiry and exonerate a branch leadership simply by declaring a result invalid and rebalotting, is there any way forward?

This is a particularly sharp issue when we remember that none of the full-time T&GWU District and Regional Officers is elected, and none answerable to anyone other than the General Secretary Jack Jones who in practice carries the power of the union's elected General Executive (and who himself, once elected, "shall hold office during the pleasure of the union").

WIDE OPEN

The biggest union in the country thus has a rule book which is wide open to the most flagrant breaches of democratic procedure by its officials. This is the political platform on which Jones stands in leading the fight for wage-cutting pay laws and suppressing the struggle against speed-up and redundancies. To fight this bureaucracy workers now need to take more than a political programme - they need to take up an unremitting struggle for the most basic guarantees of democratic rights within the unions.

To do this every avenue for manipulation and corruption must be shut off, and the process of elections brought out into the open where they are beyond dispute.

The secret ballot, in which all information is concentrated in the hands of the bureaucratic apparatus itself, must be opposed on principle, and the fight taken up for all elections to be conducted by show of hands at branch meetings with candidates having equal rights to address the meeting prior to the vote. In this way votes would be visibly cast and the voting system no longer open to corruption by branch officials.

This system would also make witch hunting by the capitalist press more difficult. Candidates would have the chance to answer these slanders before the vote was taken.

In instances where ballots do take place, workers must pressure in every way for the election of rank and file branch members as scrutineers, and for voting figures and procedures to be open for inspection at any time to members of the branch.

New rules providing for the automatic removal from all office of a scrutineer or branch officer who is party to a dishonest election must be brought forward along with demands that all full time officials of the union be subject to regular election and recall by the membership.

PRESS

In fighting for such changes workers will confront not simply the bureaucracy but the concerted action of the Tory press which, in defence of the bureaucracy, will continue to suppress the truth of this ballot and support the existing corrupt electoral system.

For this reason Socialist Press called on Friday February 6th a labour movement news conference, inviting participation of Workers Action, Red Weekly, Socialist Worker, Workers Press, Militant and the Morning Star as a start of launching a workers offensive on these questions. Despite the enthusiasm of Workers Press to attend recent news conferences given by anti-communist witch hunter Reg Parsons, they together with the Stalinists of the Morning Star, the fake lefts of Militant and the "rank and file" specialists of Socialist Worker failed to attend the news conference.

We challenge these groups to state where they stand on these questions, and demand that they take up with us these basic issues of workers democracy in the unions. Demand a full union enquiry into these elections; and

TASS MOTIONS

As part of the continuing fight of the WSL in the labour movement for the adoption of the programme which will provide the basis for the transition to socialism, WSL members have successfully fought in their branches for the following amended motions to be presented to the 1976 AUEW-TASS national Representative Council:

GENERAL MOTION NO 6 amended by Coventry NO 6 branch to read:

"This Representative Council, recognising the difficulties that members now face at plant level in pursuit of wage increases, instructs the Executive Committee to pursue a national wage claim for a substantial across-the-board

increase together with a sliding scale of wages which would automatically increase the basic wage of all members at weekly or monthly intervals to keep pace with inflation. The rate of inflation should be determined by elected committees of trade unionists and working wives in each division and the membership should be prepared for this campaign with propaganda and meetings of members at all levels. This campaign to be organised with the closest possible co-operation with the Engineering Section at all stages."

GENERAL MOTION NO 84, amended by Coventry No 6 branch:

"This Representative Council gives full support to the immediate implementation of industrial democracy, in both the public and private sectors of industry by the annual election by trade union membership within each company and industry of committees empowered to gain full access to the books (accounts, investment and production plans etc.) of the companies and industries in which the members work. Such information would allow the members to know the state of their company and industry, and should be used by the members to expose any plans by the management which would adversely affect the members' interests, and enable the members to prepare alternative plans which defend their jobs

LETTERS

We welcome readers' comments and criticisms on Socialist Press articles. Letters should be addressed to the Editorial Board,

c/o 31, Dartmouth Park Hill,

BLACKWELLS STRIKE FOR RECOGNITION



Pickets outside the Blackwell's office block.

Fifty of the 100 T&GWU members employed by Blackwells, the Oxford booksellers, have been on strike since January 28th, demanding union recognition and the reinstatement of a Branch Committee member, Ted Heslin, who was sacked for persisting on union representation over his job.

The sacking was the final episode in a systematic campaign carried out by the company over the last few months to weaken existing trade union organisation. Union membership has grown steadily in the firm following the company's unsuccessful attempt to sack a leading union activist 18 months ago.

effective opposition to their plans for further drastic speed-up and rationalisation which they have begun to introduce during the last year.

Students from many of the local colleges have given help on the pickets which are being maintained from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day at several Blackwells premises, and the Oxford University Students Union have called on all students to stop using the firm.

Ruskin and Balliol Colleges have given over their JCR facilities to the pickets and Ruskin have also organised a weekly levy of students for the strike fund.

T&G Warwick 5/04; ASTMS Oxford NHS; ASTMS Publishing 516; NUJ Oxford Mail; NUJ Book Branch; NUPE Oxford University; ATTI Oxford; ACTS Dillons.

Blackwells have continually attempted to separate the question of union recognition from Ted Heslin's reinstatement, and are insisting on everything being dealt with by ACAS.

This has been unanimously rejected by the strikers, who regard arbitration as irrelevant, and are calling for the dispute to be given official union backing.

Resolutions of support and strike fund contributions should be sent to Dave Thompson, Branch Secretary 5/833, 8c Crick Road, Oxford. Picket Committee are also requesting that copies of resolutions are sent to Bro. B. Mathers, Regional Secretary, Transport House, 211 Broad St., Birmingham.

A mass picket is being organised for next Saturday outside the Broad Street shop at midday. We urge all readers to support.

SUPPORT

Trade Union support has already been significant, with the Post Office and NUR blacking deliveries. Oxford Trades Council voted unanimously to support and the following branches have also passed resolutions of support and finance; T&G BLMC Service 5/55; T&G British Leyland Assembly 5/293; T&G Export Packing Services, Banbury 5/104;

PROVOKED

There is no doubt that management have provoked the present confrontation in the hope that they can put an end to the union for good and destroy any

LEYLAND SUES SIT-IN

The workers occupation of British Leyland's bankrupt Innocenti plant in Milan has continued since the end of November.

The occupation continues to be at the centre of the Italian political stage, posing major problems for the tottering Christian Democratic government and occasioning huge demonstrations of trade union solidarity through the streets of Milan.

The long Innocenti occupation is also, therefore, an embarrassment for Italy's Communist Party, anxious above all to preserve its "respectability" in the interests of its cherished ambition of forming a coalition government with the Christian Democrats.

SUPPRESSED

All the major political parties in Italy thus have an interest in giving as little publicity as possible to the situation at Innocenti. The Italian government is trying to head off the problem by trying to organise a purchase of the plant.

A plan by Honda to manufacture cars in the plant was pushed out by another project of Fiat to assemble vans. That too has been abandoned in favour of a plan involving the specialist motor cycle and sports car firms Guzzi and Maserati.

The Italian union leaderships have totally failed to offer workers any alternative perspective to this desperate search for some other capitalist to buy up the plant. It is only the determination of the occupying workers not to give in that has so far prevented this solution.

NOT PAID

British Leyland has still not paid out a penny in promised redundancy payments. Not content with having thrown several thousand workers out of a job, Leyland are now suing them in the Italian courts for the repossession of the cars and equipment which they now control.

The cars, alone (Bertoni minis) are worth £7.5m - enough to offset about one month's losses at last year's level.

In bringing this legal action Leyland are trying to force the Italian government to send in the police to break the occupation. Such a move would provoke massive resistance from the workers in Milan and the rest of Italy.

SWALLOWED UP

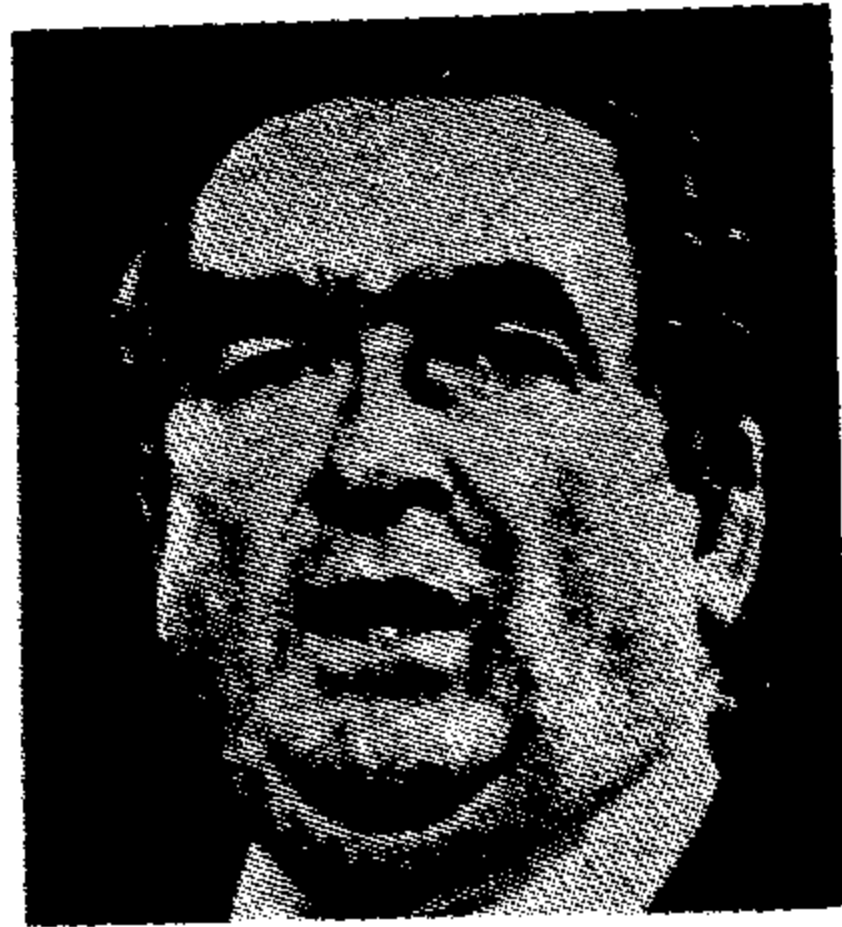
Only a principled and uncompromising leadership, fighting for nationalisation without compensation, which will prevent the interests of Innocenti workers being swallowed up in Leyland's search for money and the Italian CP's hunger for a part in the government.

CRISIS

So a Leyland victory in the court case (which begins on February 17th) could worsen Italy's already profound political crisis.

NEW PAY LAWS?

The TUC leaders are again putting their heads together with the Labour government and the employers - this time to work out Stage Two of the state pay laws, to follow from Jones' notorious £6 limit.



Healey - demanded £6 limit.

impact on workers' living standards of this abolition of free wage bargaining. No longer do trade unionists take into account forced increases in effort or the massive increases in the cost of living in putting in for a new pay increase. Instead all argument is restricted to a haggle around the £6 figure.

The consistent policy of the Workers Socialist League is to oppose all forms of state control of wages - whether this be a flat rate figure or a percentage limit.

The defence of living standards demands we fight instead for a sliding scale of wages to be written in to all wage agreements to fully compensate for inflation, and to come on top of substantial wage increases needed now to make up for last year's huge inflation.

At a time when January's rise in wholesale prices was 1 3/4% every one of the proposals floated so far amounts to a massive wage cut for the working class.

According to the *Sunday Telegraph*, a 4% limit is being suggested - with a £2.40 "safety net" minimum to protect "low paid workers", and a £10 maximum.

OWN FIGURES

This means that by the government's own figures a low paid worker is seen as anyone earning less than £60 per week. This, thanks to repeated betrayals by the TUC leadership, includes the vast majority of industrial and state sector workers. That this large number should be described as low paid also indicates the impact of the inflationary policies pursued by the Wilson government in defence of

capitalism.

It was in attempting to impose state control of wages that the Tory government was forced out of office by the miners in 1974. Now, with state pay laws already six months on the statute books under a Labour government union leaders like Jones are falling over themselves in the rush to devise further restraints.

At the same time the 'lefts' of the Tribune group who claim to oppose Wilson's policies have at best abstained in the voting on his policies in Parliament and not led any fight in defence of free collective bargaining.

It is hard to overstate the

£500 monthly development fund

The great success of our Anniversary Rallies in London and Birmingham indicates the big advances made by our papers over the last year.

Our £500 Development Fund is to enable us further to improve its coverage, and prepare for the weekly *Socialist Press*. Send donations to: WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

INFORMATION

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LEEDS

Sunday 15th February, 7.30
Trades Council Club

WSL EDUCATION CLASS

OXFORD

Lake St Community Centre, Sunday, 15th February, 8.00.

"The General Strike"

RAIL

Continued from Front Page

from the working class. But Weighell, petrified at the prospect of launching a real fight, within 24 hours had written an abject letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons, offering his "humble apologies for this discourtesy".

The real issue is not of course one of parliamentary manoeuvring - even *Tory* spokesmen are to be heard now promising to subsidise certain commuter lines as a "social service"!

The question is to prepare the organised power of the railwaymen and all other sections of workers for action in defence of jobs and conditions. Such action must direct towards kicking out Wilson and the trade union leaders who connive with him.

(whose constituency party is so riddled with dubious practices that even the NEC is to investigate them) to continue to receive the financial backing of the union? It is high time these people were told by workers to fight Wilson or get out.

STRIKE

Neither Weighell, nor ASLEF leader Buckton has called for any industrial action to defend jobs. Crosland's plans show clearly that the time has come for a campaign of strike action from the rail unions. The demands of the strike call must be:

- * Stop all interest payments to the banks!
- * Open BR's books to committees of railwaymen and rail users to draw up plans for an integrated transport system.
- * Government cash to finance such a system.
- * On this basis prepare the abolition of the British Rail Board and full workers' management.
- * Work-sharing with no loss of pay - no redundancies and no attacks on conditions on the railways.

Only by fighting for such a coherent programme can the labour and trade union movement defend itself against Wilson's latest attacks.

NOTHING

Labour MPs must be called to account by the working class. The 'Lefts' have done nothing to remove Wilson. The NUR sponsored MPs have lifted not a finger to defend railwaymen.

Can NUR members allow such people as Gordon Bagier, MP for Sunderland South (and well-known supporter of extreme right wing regimes), or Michael O'Halloran of Islington North,