



STOP TUC CHIEFS' PLOT TO CUT PAY!

The Marxist will say to the English workers: 'The trade union bureaucracy is the chief instrument for your oppression by the bourgeois state. Power must be wrested from the hands of the bourgeoisie and for that its principal agent, the trade union bureaucracy, must be overthrown.'

Trotsky, 1929.

As British capitalism enters a still deeper phase of economic crisis, with every weapon being brought into play in the drive to attack the working class, the TUC leaders are preparing yet another historic betrayal of their members as they discuss proposals for extending the £6 state pay limitation for another year into a Stage Two.

After nine months of devastating cuts in working class living standards under the present pay laws, recent speeches by Scanlon, Bassnett and Jones, leaders of the three biggest TUC unions, show that these men are now searching for a way to force workers into another legal straitjacket.

At all costs the bureaucracy want to avoid the outbreak of struggles against the employers and, crucially, against the pay legislation itself.

CONNECT

Any such struggle could unpredictably connect up with the smouldering hostility to the pay laws in the mass of the workers movement and unleash a major confrontation.

The determination of the union leaders to shackle workers and prevent struggle is shown clearly in the case of the SU Carburettor workers and other car workers last week.

The SU workers had actually won their increase from the

management: the *only* thing stopping the implementation of the agreement was the £6 pay limit!

PREPARED

The SU men were clearly prepared to fight both the company and the government to win their legitimate demand - but they had a more treacherous enemy still - their own leadership in the AUEW.

The Executive of the AUEW ('lefts' and all) voted *unanimously* to instruct the men back to work - even though during the whole period AUEW policy had been opposed to the £6 limit not a *single* instruction for action had been issued, and not a single strike actively supported by the Executive against the pay laws!

The Executive instruction was backed up by manoeuvres with the employers and public attacks by Scanlon designed to isolate and weaken the strikers, eventually forcing a return to work.

But the bureaucracy have drawn a lesson from these recent

confrontations. They are now calling for a measure of flexibility in Stage Two, to attempt to prevent the prospect of all-out confrontations between their members and the employers.

But this new call is also completely in line with the demands of the employers. They want sufficient "flexibility" to enable them to introduce rationalised corporate payment structures, and force through still further speed-up.

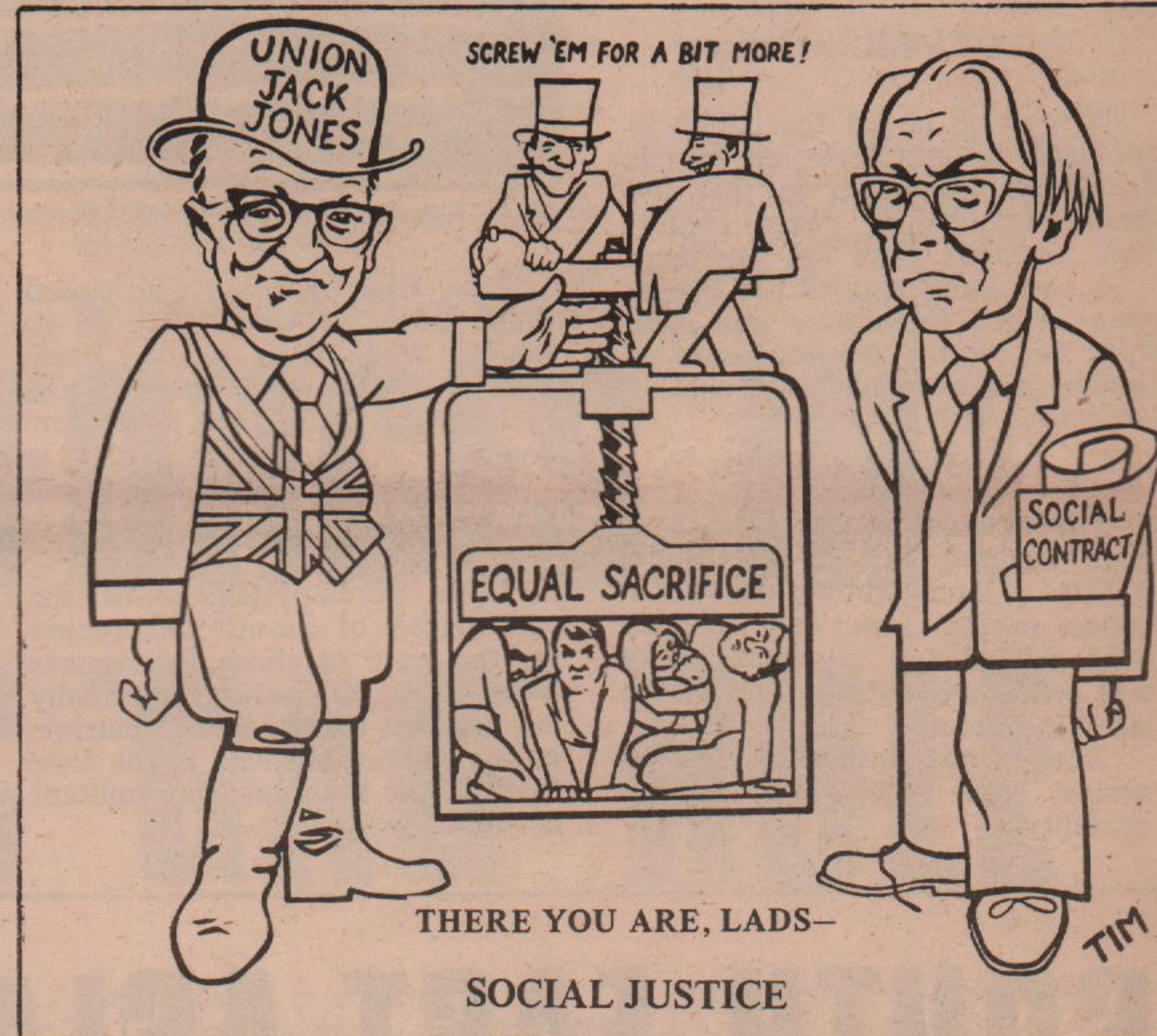


Scanlon - used his influence to get SU men back to work.

Jack Jones has expressed this most clearly, saying this weekend that:

"Provision should be made for a margin to allow for incentives to be attached to improvements in productivity and some movement of differential payments against proper evaluation of work performed".

Such talk is of course linked to Jones' conception of a union leader's job as assisting each management to squeeze the



maximum production out of its workforce, and to throw surplus workers onto the dole.

His speech (made at the opening of a new T&GWU Midlands Regional Office in an area which has seen huge redundancies as a result of the policies of Jones and Wilson) pointed out that in Jones' view a shop steward's job is *not* to defend his members, but that:

"Branch Officers and Shop Stewards have a role to play in the improvement of industrial

performance".

Jones speaks with the arrogant treachery of a General Secretary who is not answerable to anyone. The T&GWU bureaucracy is one of the most undemocratic and rigidly controlled in the labour movement.

This is how Jones is now able to carry out his role as leading advocate of state pay laws while his own union policy as decided at last July's T&GWU Biennial

Cont'd on back page, col. 4

STALINISTS CONDONE ARGENTINA COUP

The military coup in Argentina, together with the ban on five workers' parties and the jailing of an estimated 5,000 political and union leaders is a massive set back to the working class in South America.

It comes less than a year after President Peron's administration was forced to withdraw state pay laws by a general strike, and after the working class in Argentina again and again had shown its militancy and willingness to fight in defence of living standards.

Only a bankruptcy of leadership held back the working class within the limitations of Peronism.

Scandalously, Argentina's small Communist Party (which has *not* been banned), has in effect now *welcomed* the coup. It issued a statement emphasising the similarities between the aims of the junta and its own programme.

REESTABLISHMENT

In Moscow, *Izvestia* saw the coup as being a 'reestablishment of order'.

These reactionary statements confirm the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism in Argentina as in the international workers movement.

The coup is much *more* than the replacement of one repressive bourgeois government by another.

It marks a change of strategy on the part of the Argentinian ruling class from one of incorpor-

ation and arbitrary terror to one of head-on collision with the whole workers' movement.

Peron's government had been crippled as an instrument of the capitalist class by internal conflicts related to Peron's own refusal to resign.

The symptoms of this weakness have been the rapid worsening of Argentina's economic crisis. Production has been falling sharply and inflation has risen to more than 600% over the last year.

DEAL

Peron attempted to deal with this crisis partly by incorporating the trade union leadership into the state. She obtained the support of the Peronist metal workers' leader Lorenzo Miguel for the anti-working class econ-

omic measures promulgated by economy minister Mondelli at the beginning of March.

And while the leadership of the CGT, the main trade union federation formally opposed the measure, in practice they conspired with the government to squash all protests against them.

The other arm of Peron's policy was terror and repression. The right-wing terrorist organisation, the triple-A (Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance) set up by Peron's deposed advisor Lopez Rega has conducted systematic murders of local workers' leaders.

In the last three years, the murder of almost 700 workers and local trade union leaders has been reported in the press; and over the last few weeks hundreds more have been kidnapped.

In addition, Peron's government banned the 'left' Peronist Authentic Party in December and introduced new draconian security legislation which, as if to symbolise the elements of continuity, came into force on the morning of the military coup.

Far from stabilising capitalism in Argentina these measures have led to growing resistance from the working class and have exposed the corrupt and collaborationist nature of the Peronist workers' leaders.

The military government has lost no time in instituting the kind of policies towards which the Peronist government was moving but which it did not have the political strength to implement.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

MIDDLE EAST

The struggle of the Arab people will not be held back by Zionist brutality or efforts to foster religious divisions.

This is the main conclusion that must be drawn from the violent confrontations in Lebanon and Israel over recent weeks.

The balance of forces throughout the Middle East has been affected by the progress made by left wing forces in Lebanon in their fight against Falangist provocation.

QUESTION

The question of whether the latest ceasefire will hold cannot be determined at the time of going to press, but it can be said that this time the left wing forces will be negotiating from a position of strength.

Dangers of course remain, as is clear from the announced reconciliation this week of PLO chief Yasser Arafat with George Habash, who has led the 'rejection front' group of guerrilla organisations.

REVERSION

It is to be hoped that this will not lead to any reversion of the Palestinian leadership to the UN-diplomacy Geneva peace conference methods they are pursuing.

A new awakening of the Palestinian masses themselves was clear from the recent developments in Galilee, just over the Israeli side of the border with Lebanon.

LAND-GRABBING

The Zionist authorities have been engaged in their traditional policies of land-grabbing and confiscation in this area, and on May 30th a 'land day', a general strike was proclaimed against one of the latest instances.

The Zionist authorities reacted against this with the utmost brutality.



Arab youths stone Israeli occupation forces

They beat up those who closed their shops or would not go to school. When their victims retaliated by throwing stones and Molotov cocktails, they shot them down.

At least six were killed and many wounded.

These developments show the real hatred of Zionist occupation on the part of those Palestinians living in Israel itself, traditionally less militant than their compatriots across the borders. And in the forefront of the struggles were militant groups of youth.

The desperation of the Zionist authorities is shown by such statements as the one from the Israeli embassy in London saying the strike was only a "communist plot".

They know that the advance of the left wing forces in Lebanon presents a threat to them as well as to the reactionary regimes of Lebanon, Jordan and elsewhere.

These new signs of upsurge in the Arab masses will not stop short at any national boundaries. They raise the need to struggle for a socialist programme and perspective throughout the area.



Peron with AAA organiser Lopez Rega.

ARGENTINA

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

The right to strike has been abolished and trade unions and the Peronist "62 organisations" have been banned from all activity. All political parties have been suspended and five parties of the revolutionary left have been declared illegal.

The five are the Workers Socialist Party (PST), the Workers Political Party (PPO), the Revolutionary Communist Party (PCR), the Trotskyist Workers Party (POT) and the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (PCML).

All civil servants are under direct military control and all factories and workplaces are subject to martial law. Political offences are punishable by death.

CAPITALIST

One of Argentina's largest industrial capitalists, Eton-educated Jose Martinez de Hoz, has been appointed economy minister.

His policy is to enhance the profitability of capital in Argentina through imposing huge cuts in real wages. The wage increase of 20% granted by Mondelli last month is confirmed.

But between February and March prices (even according to the underestimated official index) went up by a record 54%, (the equivalent of an annual rate of inflation of 17,400 per cent!).

At the same time he plans to cut government spending, of which 90% at present is financed simply by printing money.

Martinez, a close associate of the Rockefeller family, has also introduced generous new concessions for foreign capital investment in Argentina.

For this economic strategy to work will require the total repression of all working class organisation. Even what has happened up to now, therefore, is only a prelude to what the military rulers are planning.

The reactions to the coup have shown up not only the gross treachery of Peronist and Stalinist working class leaders but also the failure of revolutionaries to offer an alternative leadership.

ABROAD

The coup found many of Argentina's main trade union leaders conveniently out of the country.

Textile workers' leader Casildo Herreras, who is Secretary General of the CGT made a statement to the press in Uruguay:

"I am completely disconnected, erased from the picture. It would be better if you forgot you had seen me and did not say I had been in Montevideo".

Peronist union leaders have spent a lot of time abroad since the withdrawal a few weeks ago of 4000 police exclusively charged with protecting them (against their own members, not against the employers).

Peronists, the Montoneros, have continued their guerrilla activities and were probably responsible for killing the chief of operations of the Federal Police on the day of Videla's inauguration.

But politically they have been presenting a series of demands for bourgeois democracy combined with economic nationalism.

NO PROGRAMME

More serious is the fact that the largest party claiming allegiance to Trotskyism and the Transitional Programme, the PST (recognised Argentinian section of the USFI), has put forward a programme which does not differ fundamentally from that of the Montoneros.

The PST has correctly pointed out that the best way to combat the danger of a military coup was not to support Peron's government but to organise maximum mobilisation of the working class against it and its policies.

But it has then gone on to present a set of political demands which venture scarcely a step beyond the limits of bourgeois democracy.

They simply call for the resignation of Peron, her replacement by a President from the trade union leadership, the election of a constituent assembly which 'would allow a broad discussion of the crisis and its solution...in which socialists would propose socialist solutions'.

General Videla's military coup puts an end to such dreams of socialism through discussion in parliamentary assemblies.

The failure of "revolutionaries" to break from parliamentary illusions has conceded valuable time to the military regime and the capitalist and imperialist interests they are in power to serve.

THUGS

The PST, which has had numbers of its members gunned down by fascist thugs, right to the very point of the coup, made no call for the organisation of workers' defence squads to protect the labour movement.

The complete unpreparedness of this, reputedly the largest 'Trotskyist' party in the world, is a sorry reflection on the political state of the 'United Secretariat' and in particular the public faction grouped round the US Socialist Workers Party of which the PST was a part until recent months.

Of course our political differences with the PST and other banned Argentinian workers' parties in no way prevent us from demanding unequivocally their freedom to organise and agitate for their programme.

*Release all political prisoners!
*No bans on workers' parties!
*Armed self defence squads to defend the labour movement against fascist and state violence!

SOUTH EAST ASIA

A sharp attack came last week from the Stalinist-dominated government in Laos on the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in the country. Official statements denounced its reactionary role and emphasised that Catholicism was brought into Indochina in the first place as one of the weapons of French imperialism.

The hostility to the Church on the part of the Laotian government stands in striking contrast to the amiable relationship between the Communist Party and the Church in neighbouring Vietnam.

GREETINGS

There, the Catholic hierarchy was singled out for warm New Year greetings by the Hanoi authorities and, more recently, the Vatican reciprocated by disowning some of the extreme right wing clergymen who had fled Saigon as the fall of South Vietnam approached last year.

Catholic officials also denounced a 'plot' against the Saigon administration, centred on one of the city's churches, which was recently unmasked by security forces.

But - reflecting the conflicting national policies pursued by the Stalinist governments of Indochina - the situation in Vientiane, the

The attacks on the Catholic church there are certainly connected with the sabotage operations being carried out by right wing nationalists. On March 27th they blew up an important bridge across the river Lo, less than a hundred miles south of Vientiane.

It is thought that their main bases are on islands in the Mekong River, which for a considerable distance forms the frontier between Laos and the northern area of Thailand.

These forces have, of course, the declared support of the thousands of Laotian 'refugees' - capitalists, speculators and functionaries - who fled across the Mekong into Thailand as it became clear that imperialism was on the point of being driven out of the Indochinese states.

But they also have the more discrete sympathy of the Bangkok government, the numerous US agents and 'advisors' whom they permit in Thailand, and important sections of the Catholic church.

PRESSURE

The armed pressure on the Indochinese revolution in Laos (together with recent reports from Cambodia and China that US aircraft based in Thailand had bombed coastal areas of Cambodia) reflects the desperate attempts of US imperialism to scratch together the social and political forces in South East Asia which can prevent the

Substantial US forces - particularly warplanes and marines - remain in Thailand with the permission of the Pramoj government even though the official 'final deadline' agreed for their withdrawal has already passed.

And at the same time the government continues a vicious war against liberation forces in the hills in the northern areas of the country, and openly connives in a series of attacks by ultra-right gangs on student and working class political organisations in Bangkok.

DANGER

The border attacks on Laos are not yet of decisive military importance. But what they highlight is the danger posed to the advance of the social revolution in South East Asia by the Stalinist, nationalist policies of those who lead the liberation forces.

While Thailand continues to serve as a base of operations for imperialism those - like the regimes in Laos and Cambodia - who are directly threatened are forced to react.

But at the same time the Vietnamese leadership are vigorously pursuing a policy of 'peaceful coexistence' with Thailand - as well as many of the other puppet regimes of imperialism in the area.

Where what is above all required is a common, internationalist

DHOFAR: LIBERATION FORCES DEFY IMPERIALIST ALLIANCE



Roy Mason, Labour Minister of Defence, with British officers during a visit to Oman. With him is his Parliamentary Secretary Pat Duffy MP

In the Persian Gulf, the CIA-installed Shah of Iran is fighting desperately to carry out the wishes of his masters and patrons.

With his new-found oil wealth, he has built up a ferocious arsenal of arms both as a threat to the Soviet Union and also to suppress democratic and working class rights both in Iran itself and in any of the surrounding countries where efforts to attain them are actively pursued.

We have had occasion in a number of issues of *Socialist Press* to notice the role played by Iranian troops fighting alongside British mercenaries and various officers 'seconded' from the British army.

This continues in the Omani province of Dhofar, which lies next to the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen in the South of the Arabian peninsula. The Iranian and British forces are fighting against liberation forces led by the Peoples Front for the Liberation of Oman.

John Akenhurst, commander of the so-called Dhofar brigade.

Despite this, there have been continued reports in the British press of the suspension of hostilities. The *Observer* announced on 16th January the 'end of Britain's war in Arabia' and the *Spectator* on 7th February 'a communist defeat'.

The PFLO have continued to report military actions throughout Dhofar, including the shelling of an RAF base on 26-27th January and a big battle to the south a month later.

The *New York Times* on 18th January reported heavy fighting at the other end of the country on the border with Yemen.

crushed is shown by the continued presence in Dhofar of the forces of the Iranian Shah.

As the *International Herald Tribune* put it on the 27th January the Shah, 'who has never fought a major war, has been using the remote Arabian Sultanate as a practice field for his armed forces'.

Iranian troops have been carrying out a whole series of bombings and other attacks near the South Yemen, though according to the same American newspaper the "military value" of these activities was generally considered 'questionable'. Large scale fighting was reported on Iranian radio on 11th February between Iranian and liberation forces.

Of course the Iranian troops are not carrying out these operations against the insurgents for fun.

The troops are there, as they are also stationed in South Africa, North Yemen and Pakistan, because they need practice in fighting against popular movements to their job of preserving the Shah's dictatorial rule in Iran itself.

MERCENARIES

A further confirmation of the claims of the PFLO lies in the fact that the Omanis continue to advertise for mercenaries in the British press, particularly for pilots.

The thugs of the British Special Air Services are also still operating there, though we are assured by their spokesmen that they are engaged solely in such philanthropic activities as reopening water holes previously bombed by the RAF or herding people into newly built villages.

These operations bear all the hallmarks of the classic techniques of counter-insurgency against a military force that commands widespread popular support.

Perhaps the strangest proof that the liberation forces have not been

TREACHERY

With this background, the treachery of the Labour government's continued support for the war in Oman and obsequious support for the Shah's regime is clearly exposed. The demand that the Labour leaders break such diplomatic relations must be taken up throughout the workers' movement.

STATEMENT

This struggle is still going on, despite the statement by the semi-feudal ruler of Oman, Sultan Qabus, on 11th December, that he and his 'foreign advisers' had achieved the 'complete destruction' of the liberation forces.

This claim was somewhat belied by the shooting down on Christmas Day of a helicopter carrying British army officers, including Brigadier

CP FORCES IN TUC 'GAG' RULE

In their attempt to quell workers' resistance to the Labour government's pro-capitalist policies, the TUC bureaucrats have no stauncher ally than the Stalinists of the Communist Party.

In one Trades Council after another they have acted the "reluctant" agents for the TUC's new Black Circular Model Rule 14 ("we don't like it but everybody must vote for it or the Trades Council will be disaffiliated").

After the Camden Trades Council, at its Annual General Meeting in February had rejected the new rule over the protests of the Communist Party, Stalinist Secretary S.A. Gregory forced another discussion and vote at the March meeting, leaving a trail of broken procedures in his wake. Waving a letter which he claimed threatened immediate withdrawal from the Trades Council of recognition by the TUC, Gregory managed a vote of 36-30 for the new Rule 14, far short of the two-thirds majority constitutionally required for its acceptance. At the same time, the Chairman ruled out of order a motion from the Charing Cross ASTMS Branch aimed at launching a campaign against the rule.

The letter from the TUC did indeed contain a threat, although a milder one than the Secretary had let on. On March 1st, Ken Graham, Secretary of the TUC's Organisation and Industrial Relations Department, had encouraged Gregory to pursue adoption of the rule, adding:

"Unless this is done your Council will not be entitled to be represented at the Trades Councils' Conference, and ultimately your

will be placed in jeopardy".

Gregory, however, was off and running. Having twice failed by "democratic" means, he turned to yet more cowardly and dishonest manoeuvres. Union branches and delegates were informed that the April meeting would not take place and that the Trades Council would next reconvene in May at an unusual date and venue.

And Gregory devised an ingenious new condition for membership: "only delegates who can produce written evidence on their Branches notepaper or whose Secretary has previously notified me that their Branch is prepared to accept Model Rule 14 will be admitted".

Gregory's motive is not hard to discover. The balance of forces on Camden Trades Council has shifted over the recent period to the point where the CP no longer commands a clear majority, nor even maintains a sure hold on the Executive Committee.

CHANCE

For them, the battle over Rule 14 has an extra dimension; it offers a chance to sweep out the left and restore 'peace and quiet' in the club.

After some hesitation the TUC have now declared support for Gregory's actions and confirmed the once fraudulent suspension.

The assault on Camden Trades Council is a grave threat to labour movement democracy. It shows what other Trades Councils can expect when they resist the gag rule as several already have.

A national campaign against this vicious attempt to still the voice of opposition to the gag rule is



TUC General Secretary Len Murray: attempting to hamstring Trades Councils

picking off, one by one, of pocket or resistance.

As part of that campaign we call for a lobby of the May meeting of the Camden Trades Council by trade union branches, Trade Councils and individual trade unionists in support of the delegates who oppose Rule 14.

The May meeting is due to take place at 53, Doughty Street on Tuesday 11th May at 7 pm.

Those wishing further information or to express their support are urged to write to 164b Haverstock Hill, London NW3.

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

PUBLIC MEETING

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Thursday 7th April at 7.30

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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.

MORE INFORMATION

I would like more information on the Workers Socialist League.

Name

Address

SPAIN

CRISIS OF WORKING CLASS LEADERSHIP

A recent survey of position politics made by a Madrid evening paper, listed less than 100 known illegal groups, parties and organisations.

Of these well over half claimed to be socialist or workers' parties. Many of these "parties" are no more than tiny groups of intellectuals; but a significant number of them are organisations of the working class and its allies, set up during years of repression, in which militant workers have fought tenacious struggles for their rights.

The clandestinity which fascist repression has forced on any workers' organisation has stamped itself on the character of the movement.

Many organisations have been small and sometimes restricted to a particular area or town because of propaganda and communication has been difficult. Even the major political tendencies in the labour movement tend to have numerous, mainly autonomous, regional organisations, though this is also partly because of Spain's strong regional nationalisms, such as that of Euskadi and Catalonia which both had autonomy during the republic in the 1930s.

'AUTONOMY'

The best-known example of an autonomous regional party is the unified Socialist Party of Catalonia (SUC); the 'autonomy' of this communist party is shown-up for a price by the fact that members of the Central Committee have been recently expelled simply on the instructions of Santiago Carillo, the national secretary of the Spanish

Clandestinity has also tended to create divisions within the leaderships of parties between jailed leaders and those operating in Spain.

This is most true of the Socialist Party (PSOE) where the old leadership under Rodolfo Llopis are still in exile, calling themselves the 'historic section' of the party. They continue to issue statements in its name, and these are subsequently disowned by the new leadership in Spain under Felipe Gonzalez, who was elected

Secretary-General of the PSOE in 1974.

The party which has best survived the years of repression and clandestinity is of course the Spanish CP which is by far the largest of Spain's workers' parties.

This is true even if its claims to have about 100,000 members and a larger number of close sympathisers are exaggerated.

Internationally the Spanish CP has strongly supported the 'historic compromise' with the bourgeoisie and the French CPs abandonment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

And in Spain the party has developed a consistent policy of class collaboration. It advocates the restriction of the objectives of the working class to bourgeois democracy 'like the rest of Western Europe'.

COALITION

It advocates the establishment of coalition provisional government to prepare the way for national elections. In such a coalition it is prepared to cooperate not only with the bourgeois opposition but also with past and even present ministers of the Franco regime.

For some years the CP has been the dominant political force in the Workers' Commissions, Spain's illegal trade unions which were first established in the 1960s.

The party is, however, very far from having complete control of the Commissions. The last few months of major working class offensive has in many areas weakened the CP's control of the Commissions as workers have seen the party systematically attempt to limit and control their activity.

RIVAL

In some areas where the CP has lost control of the Commissions it has set up rival commissions under its own dominance. Under pressure from the rank and file however the CP has recently been forced to abandon its previous policy of complete liquidation of the Commissions into the state 'trade unions' (CNS).

This was to have completed the 'takeover' of the state union apparatus by the workers begun last

year when 'united democratic' candidates, supported by the CP most other political tendencies in the workers' movement, won nearly all the local offices of these 'unions'.

In the recent struggles in Spain the almost universal experience has been that, even where the CP has used the CNS locally to nominally call a strike or demonstration, workers have looked for organisation to independent organisations in the first instance the relatively bureaucratic Workers' Commissions but increasingly to elected strike committees whose growth has been very rapid.

The CP has been turning continuous somersaults in its attempts not to get left behind by the mass struggle.

POLITICAL

At the political level the CP's chosen instrument of class collaborationism has been the Democratic Junta, an umbrella organisation through which the CP has attempted to unite all the forces of the 'democratic opposition'.

The objective of the Junta has been for a "democratic break" as opposed to gradual democratic reforms.

But the vast distance between the "democratic break" and a socialist policy is well illustrated by the following extract from a pamphlet recently distributed to members of the army by the Madrid Region Democratic Junta:

"The Democratic Junta, and the opposition in general have long ago overcome the drama of our war... Those whom the System still calls "victors" and "vanquished" have for a long time lived and struggled together within our ranks without problems..."

We ask you (the army) for nothing but neutrality... The Junta recognises the important mission which you must fulfill as a guarantee of the period of building the new constitution and the urgency for the Provisional Government, assuring respect and dignity for all components of the armed forces, initiate an immediate solution to their specific problems..."

The Democratic Junta has now formally united with the Socialist Party's Democratic Platform to form the Democratic Coordination.

SIMILARITY

The fact that this has been possible shows the similarity between the political lines of the Socialist and Communist Parties.

The PSOE, like the CP, pays lip-service to a socialist future. But all its propaganda and demands are related to bourgeois democracy.

And, like the CP, the PSOE defines the objectives of the workers in terms of the needs of the bourgeoisie. It justifies its unwillingness to mobilise the strength of the working class by constant



Mass demonstration in Spain to mark the funeral of workers in the Basque region shot down by fascist police.

conference of Southern European Communist Parties, Felipe Gonzalez put it this way:

"The balance of power between different social classes in our country, clearly in favour of the industrial and financial right wing, strengthened also by the ultra-right, can be modified in the course of events which the dynamic of political change from dictatorship to democracy..."

Obviously we do not attempt to construct in Spain a common programme of the left [!], but to arrive within the framework of democratic freedoms where every political force will see what its influence is among the people..."

Such deference to the power of the right and such hostility to the establishment of an alliance of workers' parties, is one of the reasons why the PSOE has in the last few months been permitted by the fascist regime to hold large widely advertised public meetings addressed by Gonzalez.

The PSOE, which probably has in the region of 10,000 members, is far from united on the present line put by Gonzalez (adopted at the 13th Congress in 1974).

OPPOSES

There is a small right-wing, allied to the historic section of the party which opposes all forms of alliance with the CP.

There is a larger 'left' opposition which to some extent opposes the class collaborationist line in Spain and the great weight which the Gonzalez leadership places on the PSOE's membership of the 2nd International - the "international" which contains such reactionaries as Wilson, Germany's Schmidt and Israel's Golda Meir.

The 'left' line is allied to the position of the youth sections of the party, the Juventud Socialista (JS).

At its 6th Congress in 1975 the JS passed a resolution opposing inter-class alliances and advocating instead a Common Anticapitalist Front and a revolutionary general strike to bring down the dictatorship.

The resolution, however, accepts the notion of the 'democratic break' and by implication, therefore, it accepts the possibility of a bourgeois democratic phase of the revolution even though it advocates putting 'anti-capitalist programmatic points' within the fight for the democratic break.

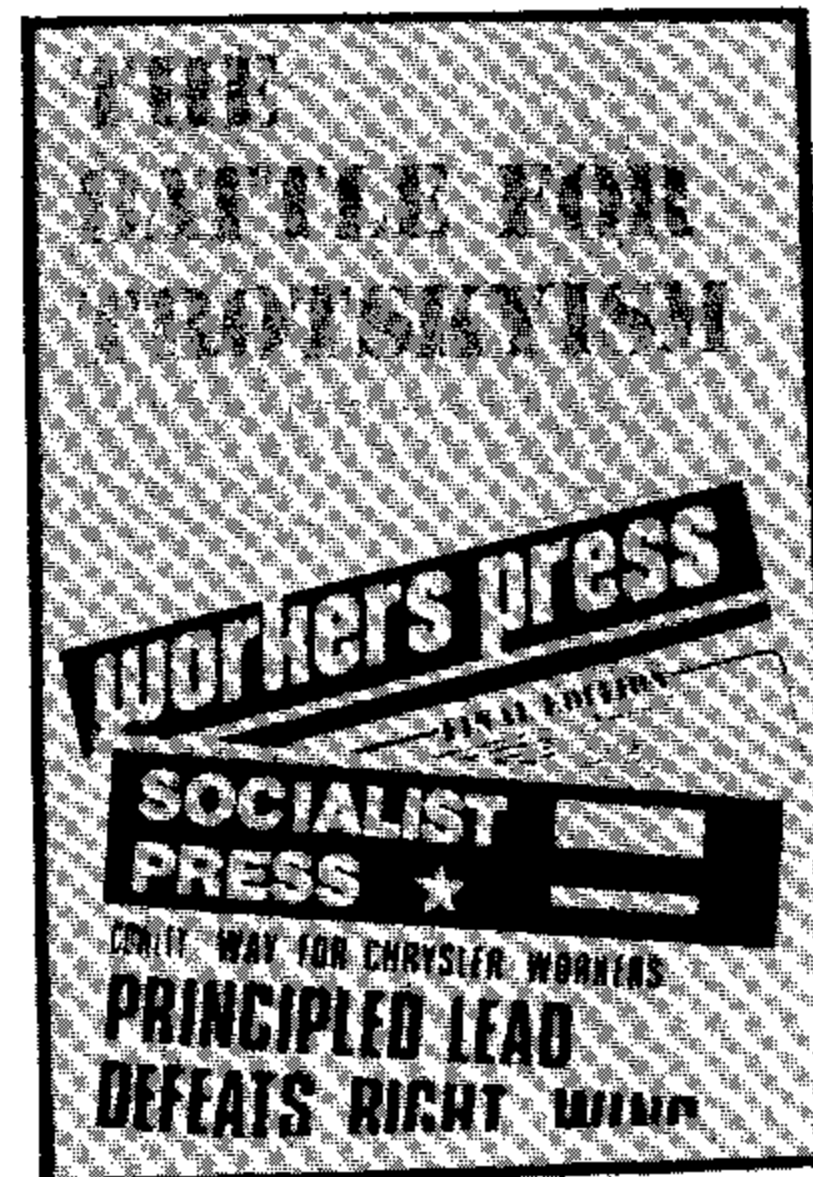
RESOLUTIONS

These resolutions, while they invoke bitter hostility from the PSOE leadership are a long way from being a revolutionary programme and still do not represent a qualitative break with the political methodology of the CP or the PSOE.

But they are symptomatic of the growing dissatisfaction within the rank and file of the workers' parties with the class-collaborationist positions of the leadership.

The same dissatisfaction has helped build the strength of several other parties which claim to represent a revolutionary alternative to the CP and PSOE and which will be examined in a later article.

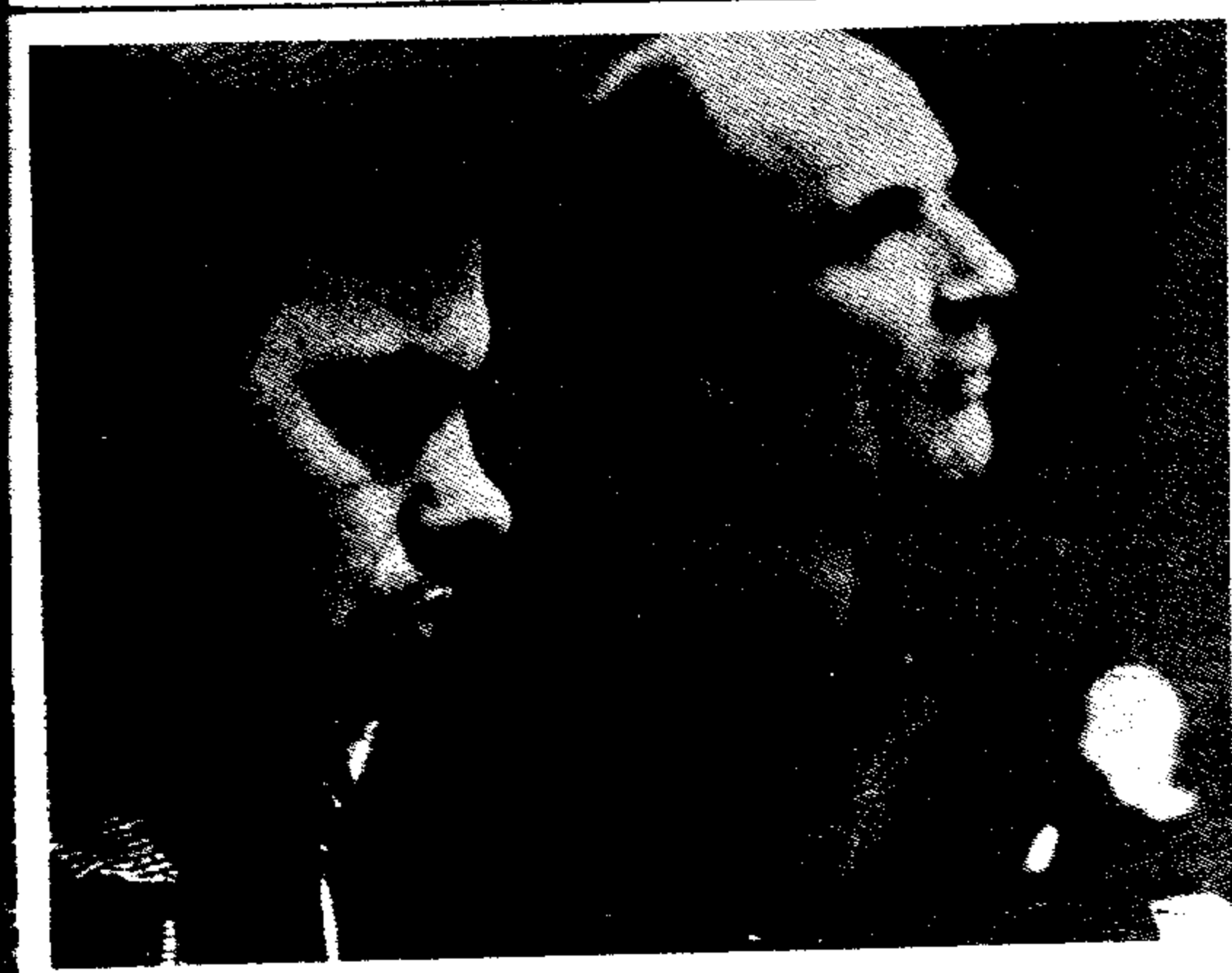
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LEYLAND: WORKERS UNDER RYDER WHIP.

Behind the capitalist press rantings about "the end of British Leyland", "Leyland lemmings" and "Leyland workers commit Hari Kari" which have poured out of Fleet Street over the past three weeks, there is hidden a carefully co-ordinated offensive against Leyland workers by the combined forces of the government, the management and the treacherous supporters of the Ryder management participation scheme.

The recent spate of strikes, which the media claims have "rocked the pound to its foundations" have an important political significance. They reflect the growing opposition of the working class to the state pay laws of the TUC and the Labour government,

an opposition which begins in sporadic ways because of the open treachery of the trade union leaders.

The initial decision of the 32 toolmakers at SU Carburettors to defy the return to work order issued unanimously by the AUEW Executive Council reflects the strength and determination of the working class.

It was also a mark of the growing suspicion and hostility of the workers to the trade union bureaucracy who demonstrate at each stage their commitment to the employers.

The SU Carburettor men only returned to work after tactics designed to isolate them had obtained return to work decisions in most of the other plants involved in action and the massive pressure of the media turned on them alone. Friday's *Daily Mirror* called on them to

"surrender" and Scanlon used his personal "left" reputation to achieve this end.

The defiance of the SU toolmakers was matched by the action of skilled men at the BL Washwood Heath axle plant who also struck for a £10 parity claim and by the bitter hostility of many workers after the return to work decisions at the Triumph and Rover plants in Coventry.

In Coventry the AUEW District Committee in a surprise decision even *rejected* the executive instruction for a return.

Scanlon's disgraceful statement that "not all the problems of British Leyland are caused by Leyland workers" conceals the real nature of these struggles - workers are fighting against an employers' offensive on manning levels and protective agreements backed up by government policy.

Alongside this attack manage-

ment have another strategic objective in view.

Working through the "participation" committees they are determined to *destroy* the right of individual plant bargaining and institute corporate negotiations carried out by national union officials.

This management strategy is supported by the union bureaucracy. Speaking last week on the wages issue, Harry Urwin, deputy to Jones and a member of the Ryder Commission, pointed to the "need for flexibility" in the next stage of wages policy.

This, he made clear, was *not* to defend living standards, but to "enable companies to continue with long term wage restructuring", which was the only way of solving the present "anomalies" which arose out of the plant bargaining system.

When Jones repeated this proposition last Saturday he took it a stage further, saying "it is the job of the shop stewards to improve efficiency". This ties right in with the objectives of the Ryder plan. The essence of Jones' speech is not simply that he wants to create the conditions to get Stage Two of state pay legislation through the TUC but that a more "flexible" policy is what the employers want.

To underline this, speaking on Midlands TV, Geoffrey Whelan, Leyland's Industrial Relations Director made the same point.

The Labour government's wages policy, he said, was "too rigid" and did not allow Leyland to proceed with the "restructuring" which was the only way of solving the present "anomalies" which arose out of the plant bargaining system.

HAMSTRING

Corporate bargaining sets out to hamstring workers by surrendering their independence to the national officials who are even less exposed to pressure from the shop floor conveners. It submerges the strength of individual groups of workers and takes the wages pressure off management.

This was Leyland's objective when they introduced Measured Day Work (time studied flat rates as against the previous piece work system) but it was not achievable at that time.

The same union bureaucrats who accepted Measured Day Work, though at the time they pronounced themselves in solid defence of plant bargaining, are now the same ones favouring corporate negotiations. These same gentlemen are also the backbone of the state pay laws of the Labour government - which is corporate bargaining on a national scale.

Today, the key role in forcing in new wage structures will be the 'participation' committees. This emerged clearly in the March meeting of the BMC Joint Shop Stewards Committee, where Derick Robinson - a leading Stalinist who is also chairman of the highest body in the Ryder set-up - announced without warning that he was now in favour of corporate bargaining.

CHANGE

He went on to argue that the Committee should consider changing the position it has held, since Measured Day Work was first mooted nearly 10 years ago, in favour of plant bargaining.

Robinson proposed to the Combine Committee that the factories affiliated to the Committee be circulated proposing a change of policy.

This was not supported but it now emerges that this had already been raised by management in the Ryder set-up. A document advocating corporate bargaining is being discussed at the next meeting of the BMC Joint Shop Stewards Committee.



Ryder

Shop Stewards Committee.

Robinson's advocacy of management's wages policy is therefore shown to be connected directly to his further shift to the right, (along with many other conveners and shop stewards) since his involvement in the Ryder class collaboration committees.

The March meeting of the BMC Committee also demonstrated in a clear way, the effects of six months of 'participation' on the shop stewards movement.

Discussion no longer centred on support for sections in struggle against management but on assisting productivity and the viability of Leyland.

Problems, when raised, were directed *not* into the Shop Stewards Movement, but into the 'participation' set-up. Attendance at the meeting of delegates from plants had dropped to nearly half of its traditional number.

Some speakers were able to refer to their three day trip to Paris, organised under Ryder a week earlier, to observe work effort in the Renault plant.

Whilst these 'participation' delegates were in Paris workers all over Leyland were confronting management over speed-up.



Jones

In Cowley, internal drivers were resisting massive manning cuts and the cleansing sections were striking to defend manning levels whilst scab labour was being brought into the factory to do their jobs.

One of the areas regarded by management as a 'problem' (because workers there defend agreements and conditions) is the Princess track in Cowley.

A management sub-committee of Ryder is now carrying out an 'investigation' there which will be the basis for a further confrontation and attack on individual operators and working conditions.

One of the arguments of the right wing against the shop stewards Open the Books Committee in Cowley was that Ryder provided for the books to be opened to the participation committees anyway and therefore no Open the Books Committee was necessary.

Six months later the myth has been exploded. Not only have the books been kept firmly closed (with the exception of selected information to strengthen management's "viability" argument) but 'participation' committee members are now sworn to secrecy and walk around with confidential documents highly damaging to workers concealed in their pockets.

From this it is clear that every attack of the employers and the Labour government is aimed at destroying the independence of the working class.

All attempts to introduce corporate bargaining must be resisted, the Stalinists must be fought on the combine committee. Decisions must be taken to withdraw from Ryder in those factories where committees have been set up.

The moves of the bureaucracy to institute Stage Two of the pay law must be resisted. Any section such as the SU toolmakers or the skilled men at Tractors and Transmissions must be fully supported and their action extended in an effort to break the government's wage legis-

READERS' LETTERS

IS THERE A SPLIT IN WORLD STALINISM?

Dear Comrades,

I would like to raise certain questions about two articles in *Socialist Press* Numbers 28 and 29 concerning the so-called 'split' in world Stalinism.

The moves of the Western European CPs to denounce the dictatorship of the proletariat and proletarian internationalism have been described as a split from Moscow policies.

I, on the other hand, would see these moves as completely in line with the wishes of the Soviet bureaucracy. They must be looked at internationally in the context of detente, peaceful co-existence, 'socialism in one country', and the demands made by capitalist politicians on the Portuguese CP at

the time of the Helsinki conference.

When the CP in Portugal was being forced, by the forward movement of the working class, to take militant left-wing positions, capitalist politicians demanded that the CP must not bow to pressure from the working class, but must keep their activities within the bounds of bourgeois democracy.

All the CPs of Spain, Italy, Britain, France and Switzerland (to name but a few who have openly declared their position) are doing is heeding these demands.



British CP General Secretary McLennan. British Stalinists have moved to make right-wing criticism of the Soviet Union from standpoint of bourgeois democracy - while European CPs abandon call for 'dictatorship of the proletariat'.

They are saying they are 'respectable', willing to work within capitalism, and most important that they will actively work against the working class when they take that road.

The NATO Generals and capitalist politicians can rest easy because all the Stalinists want in return is privileged positions within the labour aristocracy and the continuing rule of the Soviet bureaucracy.

There are, and will be more, splits within the Stalinist movement, but these splits will be more within national CPs rather than between CPs internationally.

We have seen in Britain how the members of the CP have been thrown into disarray because of the nationalist and right-wing positions they have taken up and when this policy of complete servility to capitalism is enforced, militants working closely with the working class in the trade unions are bound to break from Stalinism.

The Soviet bureaucracy was forced to mildly attack the positions of the Western European CPs because they themselves rest upon the gains of the Bolshevik

to paper over the cracks in their movement by hiding behind their support for national liberation movements in the Far East and Africa.

They give this support *not* to spread revolution, but to spread their sphere of influence.

I think we must now recognise a new turn of the Stalinist movement. We have seen how ruling classes have been prepared to use CPs to head off workers in struggle - up to the point of allowing them to participate in government in coalitions.

Now that the Western European parties have declared themselves the servants of the bourgeoisie and willing to work within the confines of bourgeois democracy the working class can expect treachery and back-stabbing on a much higher level than before.

Not just because the Stalinists are willing servants, but because the ruling class know they are. That is the qualitative turning-point.

Yours Comradely,
H. L.
BLMC Body Plant, Cowley.

REPLY

It is crucial for a Trotskyist movement in today's crisis of leadership to have a correct assessment of the manoeuvres of world Stalinism. We take these questions very seriously.

Comrade L's letter raises some important questions on the current evolution of world Stalinism - questions which cannot satisfactorily be answered in the space we have available in this edition of *Socialist Press*.

For this reason we print the letter only, with an extended article to take up the questions involved to appear in our next edition.

LETTERS

We welcome letters from readers, whether critical or with additional information on matters raised in these pages. Letters for publication should be kept as brief as possible.

Send to:
31, Dartmouth Park Hill,
London, NWS 1HR.

WRP CRISIS

"TRUST THE LEADERSHIP"

Dear Comrade,

I should like to point out an error which appeared in the article 'WRP Crisis' (*Socialist Press*, March 10th). The article quotes Stephen Johns at the WRP's Manchester Public Meeting, as having said that the closure of *Workers Press* was a 'step forward'.

As the person who put the question to him, I am in a position to say that Johns made no such remark at that meeting.

Whilst it is necessary in itself to correct any such error, in order to set the record completely straight it is perhaps worthwhile to note Johns' actual reply.

In answering my question, which was a request for a political analysis of the reasons for the closure of *Workers Press*, Johns was compelled to ask his audience - at this recruitment meeting - to 'trust the leadership'. (!)

Absurd as it may sound, the remark was by no means out of place. Since in his opening speech one vital factor had been completely missing - ie, any mention of the practice of the WRP, obviously the only basis on which any recruitment was to be made was through trust in 'the leadership' - a simple 'act of faith'.

It also necessary to correct the error mentioned in order to avoid giving Johns more credit than he deserves.

Such a theoretical summersault will have to be reserved for the mental gymnastics in the leadership of the WRP - in whose abilities the more pedestrian Johns can only beg us to place our trust.

Yours fraternally,

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Part 7: THE APRIL THESES

"The Bolshevik slogans and ideas on the whole have been confirmed by history; but concretely things have worked out differently; they are more original, more peculiar, more stratified than anyone could have expected.

To ignore or overlook this fact would mean taking after those "old Bolsheviks" who more than once already have played so regrettable a role in the history of our Party by reiterating formulas senselessly learned by rote instead of studying the specific features of the new and living reality".

Lenin *Letter on Tactics* (CW Vol. 24, p 44).

The February revolution established dual power in Russia. The power of the state was no longer the monopoly of the old ruling class. State power was now divided between the Provisional government (dominated to begin with by the Kadets, the bourgeois liberal party) and the Soviets whose Executive Committee and membership were dominated at the start by Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

These two powers rested on the backs of two different opposed classes - the Provisional Government's power on the bourgeoisie and landowners; that of the Soviets on the working class and the peasantry (the soldiers of the army).

These two powers were bound in a long run to be irreconcilable. The such duality of power was destined then the historical pos-

(including the Bolsheviks), were still in March more or less united on three things: that the limits of the revolution were bourgeois and democratic; that consequently the role of the Soviet should be to give support, tempered perhaps with some pressure, to the Provisional Government; and that Russia should continue to participate in the war against Germany and its allies.

COOPERATE

All the socialist leaders were ready, therefore, with some reservations to cooperate with both the national and the international aims of the bourgeoisie.

Bolshevik policy was, to start with, slightly to the left of that of the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. This was due to the influence of Molotov who was then editing *Pravda*.

But in the middle of March, Stalin and Kamenev returned from exile in Siberia to take over the leadership of the party. They

through!"

Following this line, the policy of the Bolsheviks became indistinguishable from that of the Mensheviks and in many areas the two groups began operating as one organisation. By the beginning of April the revolutionary situation was sharpening; but the revolutionary party was being liquidated.

RETURN

This was the situation which greeted Lenin on his return from Zurich on April 3rd. He was officially welcomed at the station by Chkheidze, the Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, who expressed the hope that Lenin would work with the other Soviet leaders.

Lenin replied not to Chkheidze, whom he ignored, but to the workers and soldiers standing by; he referred to the imminence of the socialist revolution. The effect was electrifying; it was the first time that any leader of any party had made such a statement.

Lenin went straight to meet the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks to whom he expounded the ideas which were published two days later as the *April Theses*.

He attacked the view that the revolution was restricted to bourgeois and democratic objectives. Quite the contrary, he argued, its gains could only be defended if it went on to become a proletarian revolution; this was the only way to resolve the instability of dual power. The Russian proletarian revolution would be a prelude to a European proletarian revolution.

APRON-STRINGS

Yet, in the face of these needs, the present Bolshevik leaders were still 'holding on to the old dirty apron strings'. They must abandon the proposals for unity with the Mensheviks, withdraw all support from the Provisional Government, and completely cease their support for the imperialist war:

"It is impossible to make a democratic peace, one that is not imposed by force, without destroying the power of capitalism....In order to bring a permanent end to war it is essential that the proletariat take power".

One leading Bolshevik remarked that the effect of Lenin's intervention was 'like an exploding bomb'. His ideas were the opposite of the resolutions passed at the all-Russia Party Conference the previous day under the guidance of Stalin and Kamenev.

Scarcely a single leading Bolshevik supported Lenin on any of the questions he had raised. When the *April Theses* were published in *Pravda*, the editors declared that:

"Lenin's scheme seems to us unacceptable in that it starts from the assumption that the bourgeois revolution is ended, and counts on an immediate transformation of the revolution into a socialist revolution".

In fact Lenin advocated not an immediate taking of power; he knew that support for that was not yet sufficient.

Before that, he proposed that the question should be prepared by the 'patient explanation' of his uncompromising policies to the working class. But even before that it was necessary to convince the party of his perspective

BARRIER

In this the greatest barrier would be the "old Bolsheviks" unable to come to grips with the new transformed situation. The Party was confronted with an urgent need to change. As Trotsky analysed in *Lessons of October*:

"The fundamental instrument of proletarian revolution is the party,

even taking only one year, from February 1917 to February 1918 - and on the basis of the supplementary experience in Finland, Hungary, Italy, Bulgaria and Germany, we can posit as almost an unalterable law that a party crisis is inevitable in the transition from the preparatory revolutionary activity to the immediate struggle for power. Generally speaking crises arise in the party at every serious turn in the party's course, either as a prelude to the turn or as a consequence of it. The explanation for this lies in the fact that every period in the development of the party has special features of its own and calls for specific habits and methods of work. A tactical turn implies a greater or lesser break in these habits and methods. Herein lies the direct and most immediate root of internal party friction and crises.

"It happens all too frequently", wrote Lenin in July 1917, "that when history makes an abrupt turn, even the most advanced parties are unable for a longer or a shorter period of time to adapt themselves to new conditions. They keep repeating the slogans of yesterday - slogans which were correct yesterday, but which have lost all their meaning today, becoming devoid of meaning "suddenly", with the self-same "suddenness" that history makes its abrupt turn". Hence the danger arises that if the turn is too abrupt or too sudden, and if in the preceding period too many elements of inertia and conservatism have accumulated in the leading organs of the party, then the party proves itself unable to fulfil its leadership at that supreme and critical moment for which it has been preparing itself in the course of years or decades. The party is ravaged by a crisis, and the movement passes the party by - and heads towards defeat".

In fighting to reverse the policy of the Bolsheviks, Lenin was carrying out the fight necessary to prevent just such a defeat.



Lenin

He knew that, however astonished were the Bolshevik leaders, however much they thought his ideas were anarchist or lunatic, thousands of Bolshevik workers and soldiers would immediately see the correctness of his line, since it was they who could most clearly see the real nature of the Provisional Government.

They had seen the efforts of the government (with help from the Soviets) to resist the eight-hour day or to send them to continue to fight against the workers of the German army.

Soldiers responded enthusiastically to Lenin's call for fraternisation, as workers responded to his demands to get rid of the capitalist ministers of the Provisional Government since these were their own bosses.

By the time of the next all-Russia Party Conference on April 24th, Lenin's line had in formal terms won through.

The conference (at which a total

represented by 150 delegates) voted against union with the Mensheviks, and branded the Provisional Government as 'a government of landowners and capitalists'.

It made the call for a transfer of power to the working class in the belligerent countries in order to end the war.

There remained however, leading Bolsheviks who continued to argue against these positions such as Dzerzhinsky, Kamenev and Kalinin.

COMMUNIST

Stalin preserved a politic silence. And on two issues Lenin remained in a minority of one: on his demand to break with the Zimmerwald grouping of social democrats and to change the name of the party to the Communist Party.

But in less than a month Lenin had begun to reforge the Bolshevik Party into a revolutionary party. The backwardness and conservatism of the old leaders had suffered an irrevocable reverse.

Partly this success was because the speed of events in the revolution made it clearer how Lenin was correct about the needs and possibilities.

At the end of March, Miliukov, the Foreign Minister of the Provisional Government, had made a declaration that Russia rejected territorial annexations in the war but supported "complete observance of the obligations undertaken to our allies". This had been welcomed by the Petrograd Soviet - and by *Pravda*!

Then in April, Miliukov, asked by the Soviet leaders to repeat his pledge, spoke of:

"the universal desire to carry the world war through to a decisive victory".

He expressed confidence that the victors:

"will find a means to attain those guarantees and sanctions, which are necessary for the prevention of new bloody conflicts in the future".

In the thieves' jargon of diplomacy, as Trotsky pointed out, this meant nothing less than annexations and indemnities.

PROVOCATION

This was not what the Soviet leaders wanted to hear. They realised that it would act as a naked provocation to the workers and soldiers. On April 17th, Miliukov staged a grotesque demonstration of wounded and limbless ex-soldiers with banners demanding "War to the end!"

The next day his message was published in the press and, before the Soviet had even discussed it, tens of thousands of armed soldiers were on the streets in protest. Factories stopped and workers



Workers march in 1917

ies became polarised: between the one side the establishment the power of the Provisional Government which would have at full-scale counter-revolution, on the other side the establishment of Soviet power, which would be a proletarian revolution.

BALANCE

An uneasy balance might exist some time, but in the long term there was no middle way. In one direction or the other stable class would have to be reestablished. The question of moving from democratic revolution to the socialist revolution was not one which simply existed in the minds of the most audacious political leaders: it was posed in the situation itself.

is, of course, not hard to see in prospect that the question was being asked by the socialist leaders in the street. But those on the spot either did not see it or sought to put it behind them like an ugly spectre; or they

instantly shifted the line to the right.

Trotsky quotes an example of their defencist position, supporting the Russian bourgeoisie in continuing the war, from *Pravda* of 15th March 1917:

"When one army stands opposed to another army [we read in one of its editorial articles], no policy could be more absurd than the policy of proposing that one of them should lay down arms and go home. Such a policy would not be a policy of peace, but a policy of enslavement, a policy to be scornfully rejected by a free people. No; the people will remain intrepidly at their post, answering bullet with bullet and shell with shell. This is beyond dispute. We must not allow any disorganization of the armed forces of the revolution".

He then points out: "We find here no mention of classes, of the oppressors and the oppressed; there is, instead, talk of a 'free people'; there are no classes struggling for power but, instead, a free people are 'remaining at their



Bolshevik factory meeting in 1917

The Petrograd Soviet met and calls by the Bolsheviks and even others that all power go to the Soviets were received with applause. One speaker summed up the truth, however, when he asked: "Who will take the place of the government? We? But our hands tremble..."

The following day even larger numbers of workers and soldiers came onto the streets, this time partly organised by the Bolsheviks. They planned a peaceful demonstration, but shooting began when officers tried to tear down slogans attacking the Provisional Government.

Lenin later held that Bolsheviks were to blame for the violence because they were being adventurist. During the demonstration the reactionary military commander Kornilov attempted to bring armoured vehicles onto the streets against the workers.

The Soviet asserted its authority under Order No. 1 to stop this. This order which forbade troop movements without Soviet permission had been the first act of the Petrograd Soviet, and according to Trotsky, its only worthy one during its domination by the compromisers.

In spite of this decisive move the Soviet's hands trembled too much to take any action against Kornilov who was left to play an even more dangerous role a few months later.

DISLODGED

The disturbances subsided and Miliukov softened the words of his statement. But the events - Trotsky called them a 'quarter-insurrection' - had delayed reaction. Miliukov's position had been fatally loosened and ten days later he was dislodged from office.

The Provisional Government was restructured and now admitted six 'socialist ministers', one of them being Tseretelli, the main Menshevik leader in the Soviet.

The other main consequence of the April events was the enormously strengthened position of the Bolsheviks.

They had been seen to be the only party giving voice to the growing feeling among the masses that the leaders of the February revolution were increasingly ready to throw away the gains which had been made.

By the start of May one third - and the most active third - of the Petrograd workers were behind the Bolsheviks.

The strength was further enhanced by the return from New York of Trotsky on May 4th (he had been held for five weeks by the British in Nova Scotia).

Trotsky was not yet a Bolshevik but he strongly supported the line which Lenin had taken in the April Theses and came increasingly

Trotsky used his immense personal prestige, as leader of the 1905 Soviet, and his extraordinary speaking powers, to spread these revolutionary positions both in the Soviet to which he was coopted and in daily meetings of thousands of workers and soldiers which he addressed at the Cirque Moderne.

The economic situation, too, was partly responsible for the more uncompromising mood among the masses. The standard of living was falling and food was becoming more scarce.

In May and June protest strikes developed especially among the less experienced groups of workers. The more organised groups, like the metalworkers (whose union doubled in size during the month of May) gave a restraining lead.

These workers were increasingly aware that the problems could not be resolved by strikes but needed much more fundamental measures.

EIGHT HOUR DAY

The capitalists for their part had begun by being forced into concessions, especially over the introduction of the eight-hour day in March and April.

Now they switched to a policy of toughening resistance. From the beginning of May they initiated a 'creeping lock-out' and the resulting unemployment became a new source of both hunger and of revolutionary political ideas.

At the beginning of June the first all-Russia Congress of Soviets assembled. There were over 1000 delegates (representing over 20 million workers and soldiers) and less than one fifth were Bolsheviks or their supporters.

The compromisers' huge majority, however, gave them no confidence. They knew that the Bolsheviks' strength was growing throughout the labour movement.

On the day the Congress opened, the Petrograd conference of factory and shop committees passed a Bolshevik resolution by 335 out of 451 votes. They were already the



The Petrograd Soviet.

largest party in the Moscow Soviet and were winning nearly every by-election in all the others.

the demand for the eight-hour day and refused to condemn the government's plans for an offensive. It seemed more intent on taking action against the Bolsheviks than on anything else. The opportunity arose when a bomb exploded at the Congress.

Chkeidze linked this to the Bolsheviks call for a demonstration the following day (June 10th): if this were allowed to go ahead it would be 'fatal'. The Congress banned all demonstrations (thus asserting its share of the dual power which it claimed not to exist!).

The Bolshevik Central Committee after some debate called off the demonstration (a decision condemned by numerous Bolshevik workers). The Congress delegates toured the Petrograd suburbs at night in support of the ban and were received with great hostility by the workers.

Two weeks later on June 24th the Congress organised its 'own' public demonstration. The Bolsheviks decided to participate. The result was a sensation.

Instead of seeing the cautious slogans of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries which had been planned, the organisers were faced with a great ocean of Bolshevik banners - "Down with the ten capitalist ministers!" "Down with the offensive!" "All power to the Soviets!" - dotted with the occasional island of banners supporting the Soviet majority or the Provisional Government.

It was a triumph for the Bolshevik policy of 'explaining carefully' to the masses.

CHALLENGE

The Bolsheviks were now a direct challenge to the power of both the Soviet majority and the Provisional Government. At the Congress Tseretelli had made the statement that:

"At the present moment there is no political party which would say: 'Give the power into our hands, go away and we will take your place'. There is no such party in Russia".

But Lenin, from his seat had replied: "There is!"

The demonstration of June 24th had made the compromisers realise that indeed there was a political party ready to take power. For the Mensheviks this meant, as Trotsky put it:

"The policy of union with the bourgeoisie had arrived at a point where it became necessary to paralyse the masses who were not reconciled to the coalition. To carry the compromise policy through to a successful end...demanded the disarming of the Bolshevik party. And it was not many days before an attempt would be made to carry this out during the crushing of the "semi-insurrection" of July.

GORMLEY'S BID TO SAVE HEATH

The abject collaboration of the NUM bureaucracy with the Heath government is revealed clearly in a recent series of articles in the 'Sunday Times'.

For the past twelve months, the trade union leaders have been the main support of the Labour government's attacks on the standard of living of the working class.

Instrumental in this concerted effort to cut the wages of the working class was the decision by the miners last summer to abandon their claim for £100 a week.

The right-wing of the NUM opposed the proposed claim on the grounds that a Tory government would be the inevitable result of a split between the trade unions and the Labour government. All that was needed was for the 'lefts' led by Communist Party Stalinist Mick McGahey and left-talking Yorkshire President Scargill to back down and this vital section of the working class was prevented from taking on the government and defeating the wage cutting.

The argument of the trade union leaders, that workers must accept wage cutting in order to prevent a rift with the Labour government and the return of the Tories is false to the core.

Secret talks

This is proven by the fact that trade union leaders were prepared, at the time of the miners' strike in 1973 to hold secret talks with Heath and other top Tories, aimed at reaching a settlement well below the claim and when that proved impossible, to promise the Tories that any wage increase given to the miners that overstepped Phase Three of the pay laws would not be used by other unions as the basis for further breaches of the pay laws.

These revelations appeared in the articles on the fall of the Heath government published recently by the *Sunday Times Review*.

According to these articles, secret meetings between Gormley and Tory cabinet ministers took place in the summer of 1973, six months before the miners strike.

Fearing that the militancy of the miners which had been displayed very effectively in the winter of 1972 might endanger Phase Three of the pay laws, Heath, Gormley and Armstrong (head of the Civil Service) met secretly to arrange a deal whereby the government would concede everything possible to enable the miners' leaders to accept Phase Three. This would then leave the way clear to foist the pay laws onto other sections of the working class.

Militant

The mood of the miners that winter was very militant. The coal industry had been run down over the previous ten years and wage levels had fallen considerably in relation to other industries.

With the price of oil increasing in leaps and bounds and the Arab leaders threatening to cut off oil supplies altogether, the miners now knew they were in a strong bargaining position.

Support for strike action amongst miners was greater than at any time since the 1920's and this was reflected on the NUM executive where the right-wing opposition to the strike collapsed.

The Tory government was in no mood to surrender to the miners however. Heath had introduced the three-day week, electricity supplies were rationed and as each day passed thousands more workers were laid off.

At this point Whitelaw was brought in, and he immediately arranged a secret meeting with Gormley. This right-wing leader of the NUM offered a way out of the impasse through the idea of paying for washing and waiting.

Gormley was trying, in effect, to reach a settlement within Phase Three of the pay laws, whereby the miners would be paid a pittance over the offer for time spent waiting for lifts and washing at the end of the shift. This attempt at a compromise came to nothing.

Eager

If Gormley was eager to settle the strike as quickly as possible, then the same was certainly true of the rest of the TUC. At a meeting of the NEDC, the six TUC representatives, without, it would seem, any consultation with the NUM (and certainly unknown to the striking miners!) proposed to the government that if they treated the miners as a special case and allowed them to settle outside of Phase Three, then other trade union leaders would promise not to use the settlement as a precedent for wage claims submitted by members of their own unions.

Chancellor Barber was not prepared to accept this offer and demanded to know if the TUC felt the miners should get every penny they were asking for. The TUC representatives stated that in their view the miners were not entitled to the full claim.

Barber then wanted to know if the TUC were prepared to tell the miners what they should settle for?

The TUC were even prepared to agree to this providing the government were prepared to promise that more money would be made available to the miners outside of Phase Three. This, the government were not prepared to do.

The failure of this TUC offer to get off the ground and the continuing impasse led Heath to call a General Election which he lost while the miners remained on strike until the minority Labour government was returned and then forced to concede the miners' claim in full.

Failure

It is clear from this account that the failure of the TUC and the right-wing of the NUM to sell out the miners' strike was not due to a lack of trying on their part. Given the extremely militant mood of the miners these "leaders" of the working class were prepared to give up everything they thought they could safely concede.

What prevented them going any further was the militancy of the miners on the one hand and the "No Surrender" attitude of the Tory government on the other.

Heath and the Tories sorely wanted to inflict a defeat on the miners, realising the effect it would have on the organised working class. The Tories went to extreme lengths to inflict such a defeat, putting the whole country on a three-day week, cutting electricity supplies and conducting an ideological war against 'militants', 'wreckers' and 'extremists'.

Undeclared

But the bourgeoisie and its political representatives cannot do just as they please. The working class is organised and remains undefeated after 30 years of struggle. The strength of the miners and the passive but sympathetic support of the working class for their strike, support which would have become active, as it had been the previous year, if the need had arisen, thwarted the plans of the Tory government and the betrayers of the TUC and led to one of the most significant developments in the class struggle since the war, the downfall of the Tory government as the result of industrial action.

But the revelations in the *Sunday Times* series show once again that a crucial preparation for further class confrontations and opposition to the government is the exposure of the treacherous role of the bureaucracy and the promotion of revolutionary leaders.

1953: WHY THE INTERNATIONAL SPLIT TOOK PLACE



James P. Cannon

'Red Weekly', paper of the International Marxist Group has recently completed a series of articles polemicising against the Workers Socialist League. We welcome this public discussion of political differences. In this article we reply to the IMG version of the split in the Fourth International in 1953.

The struggle for the reconstruction of the Fourth International as the world party of the socialist revolution can under no circumstances be carried forward in a non-political manner.

It can in no way be separated from the real history of the international workers movement, the political questions which face it and the fundamental divisions which have taken place among the revolutionary cadre.

All this is part of the continuing struggle to build parties which can solve the crisis of political leadership in the workers' movement.

For this reason it is important to examine the points raised by 'Red Weekly', paper of the International Marxist Group, on the history of the Fourth International. In a recent series of articles, the leadership of the IMG, speaking for the majority tendency within the USFI polemicise against the positions taken by the Workers Socialist League.

WELCOME

We welcome such an open discussion. We have already replied to the - quite artificial - line of the IMG towards 'unity' in the workers' movement.

We have also exposed the way in which they distort the history of Lenin's struggle for a Bolshevik Party (see *Socialist Press*, March 1975 and March 24th).

In this article, we will therefore take up the political significance of the 1951-53 split in the ranks of the Fourth International, the importance today of the issues involved in it, and the apologetic approach of the IMG leadership to the history of the International itself.

The first point to make is that *Red Weekly* has scarcely a word to

say in defence or even assessment of the political record of the USFI (or, before the 1963 'reunification', the International Secretariat [I.S.] of the Fourth International).

They simply put the position that in 1953 certain differences - regrettably - arose within the Fourth International.

SILENT

They are silent on the fact that the majority of the FI leadership then supported the positions - for liquidation of the Trotskyist cadre into Stalinist parties - put by Michel Pablo.

This difference led, they tell us - even more regrettably - into a split into two "public factions"; Pablo and Mandel's 'International Secretariat' on the one hand, and the 'International Committee' on the other (supported by Cannon and the Socialist Workers Party in the USA, the majority of the French movement led by Lambert [previously expelled by Pablo] and the majority round Gerry Healy in Britain).

But by 1963 *Red Weekly* tells us, these differences had happily waned, and a "principled reunification" to form the USFI took place between the I.S. and part of the IC - most importantly the American Socialist Workers Party.

And since then - claims the IMG - the USFI is the Fourth International, and since it has not committed any betrayals of the working class comparable to those of the Social Democrats or the Stalinists, the only correct course for revolutionaries now is "principled fusion" with the USFI - naturally, as a distinct faction, should you wish it.

All this is proposed on the basis of a fraudulent rewriting of the history of the Bolshevik Party -



Yugoslav workers committee

claiming that the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks were in a real sense simply two factions with a common party between 1903 and 1912! (see 'IMG Attacks Bolshevism', *Socialist Press*, March 24th).

But perhaps more important still, the IMG proposes "principled fusions" with not a word about the political principles which should - in their view - form their basis.

If you agree with us join our faction; if you don't form your own. But above all unity, unity, unity! - so runs their refrain.

SECONDARY?

Now we ask the IMG were the issues that split the movement in 1953 secondary ones? Were they resolved by 1963? And can they now be brushed aside in this way? We do not think so.

Nor did the leadership of the SWP when it issued its famous 'Open Letter' Against Pabloist Revisionism (see *Fourth International* September-October 1953).

The 'Open Letter' starts from the political divide opened by the Pabloite revision of the Trotskyist position that world stalinism is a counter-revolutionary force. It summarises:

"The working class is transformed into a pressure group, and the Trotskyists into a pressure grouping along with it which pushes a section of the bureaucracy leftward towards the revolution. In this way the bureaucracy is transformed from a block and a betrayer of the revolution into an auxiliary motor force of it.

"Such sweeping conclusions on the changing character of the Kremlin dictatorship and the dissolution of world Stalinism have a logic which is bound to assert itself. If the objective processes are marching along so fast and so far, then an equivalent reorientation must be made by the revolutionary vanguard if it is to be on top of the unfolding events. A general turn would have to be made towards the Communist parties and into the Communist parties to help along the disintegration already proceeding at an accelerated rate and take full advantage of the transformation and impending breakup of

Stalinism'.

And how did James Cannon assess to the SWP cadre their experience of the faction fight against Pablo's supporters in the USA (the Cochran-Clarke tendency)?

He clearly explained how the Pabloite adaptation to Stalinism struck at the roots of the Trotskyist party:

"Leadership is the one unsolved problem of the working class of the entire world. The only barrier between the working class of the world and socialism is the unresolved problem of leadership. That is what is meant by 'the question of the party'. That is what the Transitional Programme means when it states that the crisis of the labour movement is the crisis of leadership.....

"And if our break with Pabloism as we see it now clearly; if it boils down to one point and is concentrated in one point, that is it - it is the question of the party. That seems clear to us now, as we have seen the development of Pabloism in action. The essence of Pabloist revisionism is the overthrow of that part of Trotskyism which is today its most vital part - the conception of the crisis of mankind as the crisis of the leadership of the labour movement summed up in the question of the party.

"Pabloism aims not only to overthrow Trotskyism; it aims to overthrow that part of Trotskyism which Trotsky learned from Lenin. Lenin's greatest contribution to his whole epoch was his idea and his determined struggle to build a vanguard party capable of leading the workers in revolution. And he did not confine his theory to the time of his own activity. He went all the way back to 1871, and said that the decisive factor in the defeat of the first proletarian revolution, the Paris Commune, was the absence of a party of the revolutionary Marxist vanguard, capable of giving the mass movement a conscious programme and a resolute leadership. It was Trotsky's acceptance of this part of Lenin in 1917, that made Trotsky a Leninist.

"That is written into the Transitional Programme. that Leninist

concept of the decisive role of the revolutionary party. And that is what the Pabloites are throwing overboard in favour of the conception that the ideas will somehow filter into the treacherous bureaucracy, the Stalinists or the reformists, and in some way or another 'In the Day of the Comet', the socialist revolution will be realised and carried through to conclusion without a revolutionary Marxist, that is, a Leninist-Trotskyist party. That is the essence of Pabloism'. (Speech to the Open Plenum of the NC, November 1953).

ESSENCE

In our opinion these words ring true to this day. They accurately capture the essence of Pabloism in its accommodation to Stalinism.

It is impossible to give in one article a rounded account of how this tendency has worked through over more than two decades.

But let us examine Pabloism's record where the 'question of the party' is sharpest - on the political revolution, in the degenerated workers states where the Stalinists hold state power, in particular in relation to Yugoslavia and Cuba.

It was from Tito's break with Stalin (June 1948) that Pablo's political course first took sail.

Tito's Yugoslavian CP, he said, had ceased to be Stalinist. The 1951 FI World Congress resolution on Yugoslavia pointed to the day when its leadership would, as:

"a workers current coming out of Stalinism succeed in reuniting with the tradition and the programme of Bolshevism, and definitively and decisively transcend Stalinism".

In line with this perspective the European sections of the International organised youth to travel to Yugoslav work camps, etc., as part of a political bloc with Tito against Stalin.

Only the IC, after the 1953 split broke with this accommodation to Tito.

But had Tito, in breaking with Stalin, ceased to be Stalinist?

DICTIONARY

No! The political dictatorship of the bureaucracy in Yugoslavia was preserved. Oppositional currents were not permitted, within or outside the Yugoslav CP.

And, from 1953 on - after the death of Stalin - Tito began his opportunist rapprochement with the Kremlin.

For Khrushchev - whose visits to Yugoslavia put the seal on Tito's return to the camp of Soviet Stalinism - the main objective was clear - to give himself a free hand and (as far as possible) political support in dealing with the political revolution in Eastern Europe.

And this is exactly what he got! In Autumn 1956 the revolution erupted in Poland and Hungary - and in Hungary it was put down by the Soviet army.

The second Soviet 'intervention' in Budapest was made only after a secret trip by Khrushchev and Malenkov on November 2nd to see Tito, to ensure his support.

Without the promise of Tito's backing it would have been infinitely more difficult to isolate and crush the Hungarian working class. But the promise was willingly given



Mandel urges "unity"



Tito (left) and Stalin. Pablo's revision of Trotskyist programme began with Tito's break in 1948.

and at dawn on November 4th Red Army tanks opened fire on Budapest - thousands of Hungarian workers died in the fighting.

And Tito backed the intervention with, naturally, numerous 'regrets'. Retailing the Kremlin's line that the Hungarian rising fascists were gaining the upper hand, Tito told his party members that:

"if it meant saving socialism in Hungary, then, comrades, we can say although we are against interference, Soviet intervention was necessary".

And he recommended the Kadar regime, installed by the gun:

"I know these people in the new government and they, in my opinion, represent that which is most honest in Hungary". (Speech at Pula, Nov. 11th, 1956).

BLOOD

This is clear enough. The 're-marriage' of Tito with Stalin's heirs was toasted in the blood of the Hungarian workers' movement. Tito, as a Stalinist, stood four square with world Stalinism and against the working class.

And he showed this in the sharpest and clearest possible material test. In the same way, the other 'anti-Stalinist' Gomulka in Poland showed his real colours when Khrushchev agreed to leave him at the head of the Polish CP in return for Gomulka's promise - wholly fulfilled - to use state force to repress the support for the Hungarian revolution which was surging up within Poland.

But how did the Pabloite faction of the International assess Tito in the light of these events? Did it reverse and correct the assessment of Tito and point clearly to his counter-revolutionary role? Did it - the central question - point to the need for a Trotskyist section and the struggle for the political revolution in Yugoslavia itself?

Quite the contrary! In 1957 the main resolution on Stalinism of the 'Fifth World Congress' of Pablo's International Secretariat glossed over Tito's role in the Hungarian events as follows:

"It was not only subjectively but also objectively that the Yugoslav Communist Party became an

obstacle to the full and complete unfolding (sic!) of the revolutionary forces in Eastern Europe.... Unquestionably the absence of a living and victorious example of a democratic workers' state delayed the ripening of the revolution and especially in the case of Hungary contributed to preventing a rapid revolutionary solution of the crisis created by the popular rising of 23rd October. The scope and audacity of the revolution also frightened the leadership of the Yugoslav CP and produced its hesitant attitude (sic!) during the decisive days in Budapest". (Resolution: *The Decline and Fall of Stalinism*).

And during 1957 and 1958 the main journal of the International Secretariat - stressing the polemic between Tito and Moscow which broke out again in 1957 - carried long articles by Pablo and Ernest Mandel speculating on the 'positive' features of developments in the leadership of the Yugoslav CP.

We should make it clear that the Pabloite faction did not renege on the defence of the Hungarian workers against Khrushchev's tanks.

CENTRIST

But, as a centrist current, it vacillated on the political role of world Stalinism - and this example is only one of many: others include equivocation on the political character of the Cuban leadership to this day; the politically lethal accommodation of the Portuguese section of the USFI to the 'left' shifts of the Portuguese CP last year; the continual refusal of the Pabloite tendency to stand on the principled need for Trotskyist sections and the political revolution in Stalinist China and Vietnam.

Always seizing on the 'left' aspects of particular national Stalinist formations, they disintegrate the struggle against the international counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism.

SUPPRESSED

The Hungarian revolution - which was already beginning to echo through the rest of Europe - was suppressed not just in Moscow and Budapest itself, but equally in Belgrade and Warsaw.

Without grasping this fact, it was and is impossible to lead a principled struggle for internationalism or the rebuilding of the Fourth International.

Now - were these principled questions, which were in essence those that divided the International in 1951-53, resolved in the reunification of 1963?

The answer, without any doubt, is 'No'.

The reunification Congress adopted several documents, the main one dealing with Stalinism being *'The Sino-Soviet conflict and the situation in the USSR and the other workers' states'*.

ed, the resolution calls for political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy:

"its strategic aim in the USSR and the people's democracies of Eastern Europe remains the anti-bureaucratic revolution in order to carry out the programme laid down in the Transitional programme".

EQUIVOCAL

But as far as China and Yugoslavia are concerned, there is equivocation. In China the resolution called for greater democratisation and rights of communist criticism, linked to critical support of Mao against Khrushchev.

In Yugoslavia it saw an advanced process of 'de-Stalinisation' already under way:

"the new constitution which is to be adopted shows that on the level of problems relating to the structure of a workers' state in the phase of transition, the Yugoslav Communists have made a very positive contribution and are ahead of the other leaderships of the workers' states, even those most favourable to de-Stalinisation".

And it calls, not for political revolution, but for the 'real and complete democratisation of the economic and political life'.

With oppositionists and their defence lawyers in Yugoslavia being jailed in 1976 even for remarking on the obvious fact of the country's economic backwardness, the positions of the 1963 reunification on the political revolution can be seen for the 'diplomatic' compromise they were.

CLEAR

We have concentrated on the case of Yugoslav Stalinism because it shows us so clearly the political character of the Pabloite tendency and the dangers reflected in it.

James Cannon was quite right to insist that the question of leadership in the class, of a clear and principled political hostility to the international bureaucracy, 'left' and right, were at the very basis of the struggle for the international revolutionary party of the working class.

No party truly independent of the bureaucracy and the ruling class can be built without a leadership clear on these basic questions, consciously struggling to train and temper its cadre against such vacillations.

We of the Workers Socialist League consider that a principled reconstruction of the Fourth International is not possible without basic political unity on the fundamental questions which have split - and continue to divide the world movement, including the USFI itself.

DESTROY

First and foremost among these is the nature of Stalinism and the

articles of *Red Weekly* there is scarcely a word on these questions, and what there is, is wrong! They deny categorically that the IS majority in 1953 had a wrong position on the East German uprising. They insist that they did call for political revolution.

This is an important question, since the International Secretariat's analysis of this event was a major factor in the decision of the grouping around the SWP that a split must take place.

Red Weekly however prudently refrains from examining any documents on the question.

Pablo's analysis quite clearly directed most attention *not* at the building of Trotskyist leadership for the East German working class in their struggle to politically overthrow the bureaucracy, but at looking for a leftwards split in the bureaucracy itself.

GUNNED DOWN

So as workers were gunned down by Stalinist troops, the I.S. majority could write:

"These events have not demonstrated above all the reactionary and repressive role of the bureaucracy (which we well know), but its weakness in relation to the masses and its dislocation under the pressure and influence of the masses. In East Germany the native and Soviet Stalinists have not above all replied to the revolt of the workers by a large-scale repression, shootings and so on, but *much more* by a series of concessions.... It is in a *second phase* that in East Germany the bureaucracy, in order to survive and maintain itself is combining reform and repression.

On the other hand, the events in East Germany have provoked an extremely significant and valuable phenomenon for understanding the real, and not the bookish, course of the political revolution in these countries: namely a split from top to bottom in the Stalinist party, with an entire wing of the bureaucracy capitulating before the workers and siding with them at the moment of the workers' uprising". (Letter from the I.S. to the SWP N.C. majority, 3rd September 1953).

This is clearly *not* a Trotskyist but a centrist position, taking the phrase 'political revolution' while avoiding completely the fight for the political independence of the working class. *Red Weekly* pulls back from tackling such political questions. Instead there is a purely organisational proposal for unity:

"The 1953 split in the Fourth International was a split not into two world parties, but into two public factions. Because no historic betrayal of the interests of the working class had taken place, it was possible for a principled reunification of these two factions to take place, in 1963". (*Red Weekly*, March 18th).

This proposal is embellished by an utterly spurious parallel with the supposedly principled 'unity' between Bolshevism and Menshevism before 1912!

What can one say of 'unity' proposals which avoid the basic political issues? It is as though, when your proposal of marriage is queried, you were to argue - But I am not cruel to you, I do not commit adultery, etc...in sum if we were married, you probably would have no immediate grounds for divorce. So how can you possibly resist 'unity'?

FORMAL

This position is purely formal. These may be the 'organisational principles' that apply to a jigsaw, but not to a revolutionary party.

The world Trotskyist movement has had enough of such 'unity'. The USFI has been internally divided on Stalinism since it was formed in 1963, and its present crisis flows from this. The International Committee, similarly, existed as a coalition without any effective international centre from at least 1966 up to its split (between the SLL and the OCI in France) in 1971.

The divisions have turned not on secondary questions, but on the key political issues facing the masses in revolutionary struggle. The cadre of the WSL have been compelled, starting from the struggle in the WRP, to draw the lessons of these divisions.

We are in no sense factionalists or sectarians who wish to maintain

door to the unification of the world Trotskyist movement.

But it would be a complete dereliction of our duties to the international working class to agree that 'unity' could take place on the basis of some diplomatic compromise on fundamental political questions.

This is why, while we welcome the public discussion opened by the *Red Weekly*, we insist that the IMG and the USFI must come to these questions *politically*.

NOT 'HISTORICAL'

For these are not 'historical' matters, they directly concern the day-to-day struggle for revolutionary leadership: As we showed in the first article of this series the Pabloite origins of the majority in the IMG leadership lead to continual vacillations, hops and jumps towards Stalinism and 'left' reformism, in the IMG's trade union and other work.

And to take up the issue which above all cemented the reunification of 1963 - Cuba - we find in the very latest issue of *Intercontinental Press* an article by Livio Maitan which in its essentials repeats the arguments of Mandel and Pablo on Yugoslavia in the 1950's.

Maitan argues that Cuba is a workers' state in which the leadership has *not* crystallised as a bureaucracy, and has shown evidence of its willingness to resist bureaucratism.

Consequently, Maitan explicitly reaffirms the position that it would



IMG Secretary Grogan

be incorrect to call for the building of a Trotskyist section in Cuba!

The fact that the Castro leadership has been increasingly assimilated into the international political bloc led by Moscow Stalinism and that - as a direct result of this - he supported the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, is thrust altogether into the background.

PRESSURE

History repeats itself, but for Pabloism the centrist hope that the bureaucracy can improve itself springs ever new - precisely because it represents the pressure of these forces within the ranks of the revolutionary movement.

The WSL is a national organisation. But it fights as an international political tendency. Our document 'Fourth International: Problems and Tasks' opens a discussion in the world movement as a whole.

We in no way hold that we have nothing to learn - one of the main tasks of the WSL and of the WRP opposition has been to trace back the roots of the degeneration of the Healy leadership in the WRP. Specifically we do not hold that because the reunification of 1963 did not take place on a principled basis, the opposition to it by Healy, Lambert and Wohlforth stood on adequate political foundations.

Nor do we seek 'confessions of error' from those whom we politically oppose; still less do we wish to make an issue of every incidental error of assessment in the past.

But we do insist that the Fourth International was created *above all else* because Stalinism passed to the side of counter-revolution, and that it can only be reconstructed and complete its historic task when the political principles of unremitting struggle against, and political independence of, the bureaucracy are once more built into



Castro's regime

IRELAND: MARXISM OR TERRORISM?



British troops in Northern Ireland: Instruments of class rule.

"Is individual terror for example permissible or impermissible from the point of view of pure morals? In this abstract form the question does not exist at all for us. Conservative Swiss bourgeois even now render official praise to the terrorist William Tell. Our sympathies are fully on the side of the Irish, Russian, Polish or Hindu terrorists in their struggle against national and political oppression. The assassination of Kirov, a rude satrap does not call forth any sympathy. Our relation to the assassin remains neutral only because we do not know what motive guided him. If it became known that Nikoloyev acted as a conscious avenger for workers' rights trampled on by Kirov our sympathies would be fully on the side of the assassin. However not the question of subjective motives but that of objective expediency has for us the decisive significance. Are the given means really capable of leading to the goal. In relation to individual terror both theory and experience bear witness that such is not the case. To the terrorist we say: it is impossible to replace the masses; only in the mass movement can you find expedient expression for your heroism. However under conditions of civil war the assassination of individual oppressors ceases to be an act of individual terror. If a revolutionist bombed General Franco and his Staff into the air it would hardly evoke moral indignation even from the democratic eunuchs. Under the conditions of civil war a similar act would be politically completely expedient. Thus even in the sharpest question - murder of man by man - moral absolutes prove futile. Moral evaluation together with those political flow from the inner needs of struggle".

Their Morals And Ours, L. Trotsky, 1938.

At a Provisional IRA meeting a few weeks ago, Kevin Stagg warned that if Frank Stagg was allowed to die, retaliation would be sought in England. In the event, Home Secretary Roy Jenkins backed up by the British government without protest from a single 'left' MP remained firm in his determination to murder Frank Stagg.

Demanding the right to serve his prison sentence in Ireland, a right that had already been conceded to any 'loyalist' prisoners, Stagg undertook a hunger strike that led to his death.

In a solitary cell in Wakefield Jail, his body wasted to a mere skin and bone, Frank Stagg finally died his name to those Irishmen who had sacrificed their lives so that Ireland might be free.

Whether or not the bombs that have since exploded on the London Underground and at the Ideal Home Exhibition were a direct consequence of Stagg's death it is not possible to say.

RESPONSIBLE

What is possible and what we have no hesitation in doing is directing the attention of the working class in England to those responsible for the killings and bombings that have taken place on both sides of the Irish Sea.

It is British capitalism's attempts over many years to impose its various solutions on the Irish people that has produced from the oppressed Irish the inevitable resistance.

It was Britain's capitulation to the Belfast bourgeoisie abetted by the military section of the English ruling class that led to a partitioned Ireland and thus an unfinished national revolution that is at the heart of today's struggles.

And it was behind the shield of the British Army that Loyalist forces formed to unleash the sectarian assassination campaign from 1972 onwards.

From this understanding flows the demand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, our support for Irish self-determination, resistance to conscription, the war effort against the Irish people and the release of political prisoners.

Our attitude to the bombing

nothing in common with pacifistic indignation of the IS "Stop the Bombing" approach. Nor do we limit ourselves like *Workers Action* to "moral condemnations" that speak of "indefensible actions" that harm the good name of "Irish Republicanism". Platonic solidarity that neither criticises the politics of Republicanism nor points beyond the defence of its good name is an abdication of proletarian internationalism.

Nor do we lend support as *Red Weekly* has done, to the delusions of the Provisionals' petty bourgeois leadership that they are undermining the economy of the six counties by their bombs.

MOBILISATION

For us the inner needs of struggle to prise loose the grip of British imperialism demands a massive mobilisation under working class leadership, while the programme of Provisional terror demands no more of the nationalist population than that they provide a refuge from the British army.

As a programme of action nothing has contributed so much to the present demobilisation and demoralisation of the nationalist population as the bombing campaign of the Provisionals.

To say this is not to say that the working class could finally triumph against capitalism without recourse to arms.

Anyone who could claim otherwise after the slaughter in Chile is either a fool or a conscious counter-revolutionary.

It is to say that the arms that the working class must wield must be under political control, whereas the Irish Republican or Catholic nationalist organisations - from the Officials to the left-wing split from the IRSP - are not political parties but military conspiracies.

SUPPORT

Their struggle against British imperialism, which we support quite irrespective of the methods they choose to wage that struggle, is composed of a series of heroic acts undertaken "on behalf of the" people but is very rarely, and not at all in the last few years, an expression of the conscious development of that mass movement.

One exception that took place

the attempted assassination of John Taylor, the Unionist champion of the "B specials". He perfectly symbolised all that the mass movement was fighting against and his escape was not welcomed by the nationalist population.

On the other hand the kidnapping of the Dutch industrialist Herrema by two Provos had no relation to such a movement and was entirely disastrous in its consequences. A strike in progress when the kidnapping took place was called off and workers marched through Limerick in a demonstration against the IRA and for the return of their boss.

PLEA

After his release Herrema successfully dealt with a wage payment that was due by circulating a personal plea to all the workers in the present economic climate to defer their claim.

We criticise the petty bourgeois programme of the Republicans on grounds very similar to our criticism of the bureaucracies that dominate the English labour movement. Both are profoundly contemptuous of the masses on which they rest.

To both, the masses are a stage army to be manipulated in negotiation with the capitalist boss or the imperialist war lord. For one the negotiating card is the threat of strike, for the other the bomb.

Both belittle the role of the masses in their own consciousness. For the labour bureaucrat the masses "owe" him a soft living that might culminate in the House of Lords. For the Provo the masses owe him shelter against British army patrols.

BUREAUCRAT

But having noted the similarity let us note also where it ends. The labour bureaucrat is the last defence of the capitalist state. At every turn he tries to tie the fortunes of the working class to the nation state.

He fuels anti-Irish chauvinism and foments hostility to all those who resist the oppressive actions of his "nation". The Provisionals, however, fight British imperialism, and, however inadequately they do it, to the extent that they remain undefeated they weaken the capacity of British imperialism to manage their own working class.

Having only a military perspective for defeating British imperialism it is hardly surprising that the entire spectrum of Republicanism is blind to the divisions within the Loyalist camp. Instead it can only see civil war.

The so-called revolutionary left in Ireland - the jesters at the Provisionals' court - can add nothing to this. No doubt the conditions exist for civil war.

Barring one small matter. There

Loyalists are as divided and as demoralised as the nationalists. The recent massive redundancies in heavy engineering in Belfast touch the very heart of Protestant working class ascendancy.

JOBS

The thunder bolts that capitalist profit seeking has delivered to Rolls Royce, Standard Telephones and Sydenhams have destroyed jobs with a suddenness that makes the explosions of the Provisionals puny and primitive by comparison.

And it goes without saying that those bought and paid for moralists who wax so indignantly over Provisional terror remain silent at this havoc being wrought amongst the Protestant working class.

In the fight to build an Irish section of the Trotskyist Fourth International, revolutionaries then start with a situation of recession North and South which can provide a starting point. The growth of such a section to lead the national liberation and social revolution in Ireland can only take place through a break from the bankrupt heritage of militant catholic nationalism.

BUCKTON SITS AND WAITS

At the National Assembly on Unemployment on March 27th, the overwhelming majority of the TUC General Council were conspicuously absent. One notable exception however, was Ray Buckton, General Secretary of ASLEF.

Like the other eminent bureaucrats at the conference he restricted his contribution to routine attacks on Labour's right-wing, reactionary calls for import controls and vague exhortations to the delegates to organise "action" in support of the campaign against unemployment - without at any point committing himself to any action whatsoever.

Buckton's recent past has shown him to be a man who prefers inaction. Four days before the National Assembly, at a public meeting in Oxford called by the three railway unions in opposition to the rail cuts, Buckton was asked why, if he so vehemently opposed the cuts, he had instructed his striking members on the Eastern Region to return to work and abandon their fight to defend working conditions threatened by those cuts.

"I sat in my office and waited," he replied, "to see what would happen".

Since, during the course of this vigil he received none of the usual calls from the Secretary of State and the Chairman of British Rail begging him to send the men back to work he became convinced that those forces seeking to implement rail cuts were happy to see a section of railway workers isolated, fighting a losing battle and turning 'public sympathy' against the railways.

It was in order to prevent their "further isolation" that

work, he told the audience.

If it was not their militancy but their isolation that he genuinely feared, he could have taken positive steps to end that isolation.

It was his duty to make their action official, call out all the other Regions and insist that the NUR Executive bring out their members (whose jobs are equally at risk) in full support.

From this base a real struggle could have been waged not only against rail cuts (the first round of which Buckton accepted last year) and the unemployment which they will inevitably create, but also to force the government to inject capital into the railways, and guarantee a sliding scale of state spending to prevent the rundown of public transport.

That is what might have been. As it happened, the only fight that Buckton fought was against his own members, to ensure that they returned to work both isolated and defeated.

His past actions therefore, in the battle against unemployment, have not been those of the shining champion of the working class who presented himself to the National Assembly. But we have yet to see if he has a future in this role.

The Assembly voted to make May 26th a day of national action against unemployment. Branches of ASLEF must table motions insisting that Buckton use his position on the National Executive and on the TUC General Council to fight for official strike action by all unions on that day.

This time he cannot be allowed to watch railmen stick their necks out in unofficial action while he sits and waits for the employers' axe to

ASSEMBLY ON UNEMPLOYMENT

Despite a turn out of 3,000 delegates from all over the country, the Labour Movement Assembly on Unemployment was staged managed by the organisers from start to finish. They did this to ensure that any decisions taken were kept within their planned limits of protest action, turning away from the TUC-government measures to boost unemployment and slash wages through state pay laws.

A day-long parade of Stalinists interspersed by 'left' bureaucrats and MPs made up the list of speakers, with the isolated exception of one WRP speaker (who clearly slipped through the Stalinist vetting system) and John Deakin, leader of the IS "Right to Work" march.

IMPORT CONTROLS

With few exceptions the speakers vied with each other to give the most demagogic "left" sounding version of the reactionary Communist Party/Tribune Group policies of import controls and a reflation of the (capitalist) economy.

The Assembly, called by the London Co-op Political Committee and the Greater London Confed., was deliberately designed by the Stalinists and left bureaucrats as a safety valve to let off some of the pressure of hostility within the workers' movement towards the pro-capitalist policies being carried out jointly by the Labour government and the TUC.

The main resolution, which

emerged unamended only through gross Stalinist manipulation, called, therefore, only for a programme of protest action designed to seem very active while avoiding every sharp political question.

A "Day of Action" has been called for May 26th to protest against unemployment, and there was talk of campaigns for a recalled Labour Party Conference and TUC.

RESTRICT

The clear intention of the 'lefts' and the Stalinists is to restrict the fight against unemployment within these channels to avoid the necessity for occupations and political struggle against redundancies in every factory.

We support the call for a Day of Action, but this must not become a single issue divorced from the fight for a programme against unemployment throughout the labour movement, and the fight to expose and remove the union bureaucrats and Labour leaders who have conspired with the employers to create the present 1½ million unemployed.

There must be a fight for strike action in every sector of industry on May 26th. Bus and train loads of trade unionists and unemployed must be brought to the mass demonstration in London on that day. The fullest mobilisation must take place.

FULL RIGHTS

But at the same time the fight for full union rights and recruitment of the unemployed into the trade unions, for complete opposition to all closures and redundancies with occupations to force through

demands for work sharing on full pay must press ahead.

Where employers claim they cannot afford to meet workers' just demands for the right to work, the demand must be that they open their books to elected trade union committees.

If this proves they cannot pay, it also proves the firm must be nationalised without compensation, and managed by the committee.

In fighting for these demands in the daily struggle against the employer, workers will confront again and again an unholy alliance of the management with not only the right-wing but also the 'left' demagogues and the Stalinists who waxed so eloquent at the Assembly.

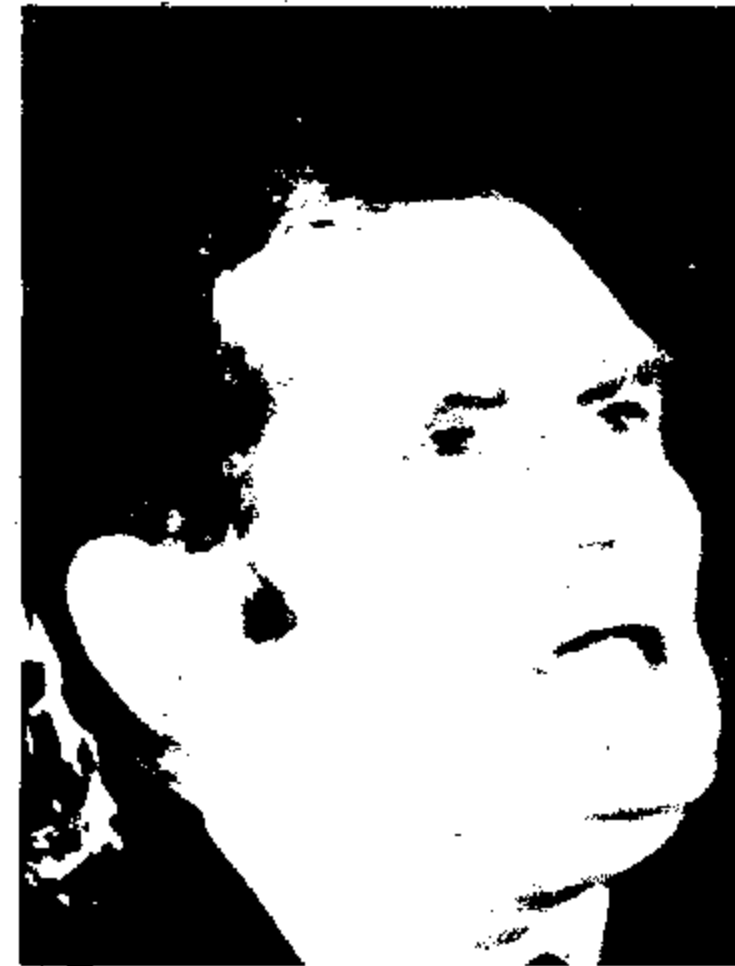
REFUSAL

A measure of the Stalinists' determination to restrict the Assembly to talk was their refusal to change the date of the proposed 'Day of Action' to coincide with the May 21st court hearing of charges against the 44 Right to Work marchers arrested after the police attack on the March.

There was no argument for calling the Day of Action on 26th May rather than May 21st - and the Stalinists only achieved this by the most blatant manoeuvre to avoid discussion on the question, then turning round to blame the outraged IS delegates for "disrupting" the Assembly!

In this way, then, the mass gathering of delegates was turned away from a real fight for new leadership in the working class and into a 'left' cover for the TUC-Labour bureaucracy.

But the mass hostility within the



Bidwell

working class movement to the antics of their leaders remains a solid force to build upon.

The need is therefore to step up the fight at every point to defeat Stalinism and reformism and defend all jobs against the attacks of capitalism.

*Full union rights for the unemployed.

*Trades Council sub-committees to organise and defend unemployed



Buckton

workers!

*No redundancies! No closures! Occupy and demand work sharing on full pay!

*All out on May 26th!

*Full support to the 44 Right to Work Marchers!

*Recall the TUC and Labour Party Conference!

*Reject all state pay laws! For a sliding scale of wages!

ORGANISE UNEMPLOYED

An essential part of the fight against unemployment is the struggle for the organisation of unemployed worker, women and youth into the trade unions.

In this way employed and unemployed can unite in the common fight against the trade union bureaucracy and their reactionary policies.

Workers Socialist League members are leading the fight for this policy in trade union branches and Trades Councils.

The following resolution was passed on April 1st at the Skelmersdale UCATT Branch for submission to Skelmersdale Trades Council

"Unemployment and rising prices are now at the very centre of all trade union struggles - ie the defence of jobs and wages - a situation where the trade union movement has to assume responsibility for all the unemployed and not only those organised within the trade union movement.

Unemployment is a product of human economic relations, and not something mystical or necessary, that has "acceptable" levels.

The cuts in public expenditure are in order to release cash for the subsidizing of private industry, through the National Enterprise Board.

The proposals of the Manpower Services Commission, to categorise the unemployed (a "humanised" redress of the attempt recently opposed by the TUC and the CPSA) are proposals that fully accord with those of Sir Keith Josephs and the Tory Centre for Political Studies.

The conclusions recently published by the Cambridge Economic Policy Group "unemployment soon to exceed two million" is based in our opinion on a false optimism and a misplaced faith in import controls and British capitalism's ability to wage a trade war.

The following resolution was passed on Thursday April 1st at a well attended meeting of the 5/166 T&GWU (Nuneaton) Branch:

"This 5/166 T&GWU Branch calls upon the Transport and General Workers Union to immediately initiate a campaign both locally and nationally to recruit unemployed workers and youth into the union. Also, that we call upon the Nuneaton Trades Council to set up a sub-committee to organise and recruit unemployed workers and youth"

dangers for the whole working class, central to which is the attack upon living standards, through wage cutting and unemployment.

The Right to Work is the only serious right left to workers. This right can only be fought for and defended within the organizations of the working class and its trade union movement, around the demands for public works, a sliding scale of hours, a sliding scale of wages and the occupation of plants threatened with closure, around these demands.

This trade union branch therefore calls upon the Skelmersdale and District Trades Council to set up an unemployed workers committee as a sub-committee of the Trades Council, in order to organise these workers within the official Labour and trade union movement. That they may be represented on the council's action committee, and that the council may facilitate their recruitment into the trade union branches.

Such a committee is, in the opinion of this branch, the only way that unity between employed and unemployed can be achieved. This is surely the lesson of the Council's recent struggle at Thorns.

The only alternatives to such organisation for the unemployed are to become involved in such futile activities as the opportunist IS-organised Right to Work March.

Or to become fodder for recruitment to the National Front



November 26th demonstration against unemployment

NALGO JOBS FIGHT

After a fortnight's strike by manual workers in the Direct Works Dept., Knowsley Council have been forced to retreat and temporarily withdraw some 180 redundancy notices. As a consequence, 17 NALGO posts due to be chopped in the same depot have also been relieved.

This was no thanks to the NALGO leadership who ensured a strike motion at a 500-strong General Meeting was rejected. The motion had called for action until the Council had withdrawn the redundancy threat.

Executive members at the General Meeting conspired to mislead the membership. On the one hand the chair was used to prevent an amendment being put to the

This would have added the demand of increased government expenditure to maintain all jobs and services as well as opening the books of the Council to an elected committee of the trade unions with members working for Knowsley.

This last demand was particularly relevant as the Council and the local press had been waging a campaign against the Direct Works as a prelude to turning it over to private contractors.

Some executive members on the other hand deliberately lied about the redundancy threat and persuaded members that strike action was premature.

Having succeeded in sabotaging a fight for jobs, NALGO members were then told that they could cross the picket lines of the manual workers! Some refused and were thereby left open to victimisation.

To the extent that the manual workers in NUPE and UCATT fought successfully they would save not only their own jobs but the NALGO jobs that went with them. But while the manual workers struck, the NALGO leaders were closetted with the council planning the destruction of the 17 NALGO posts and the redeployment of the members elsewhere.

At the Executive meeting on March 29th, Frank Ward, an IS member on the Executive, proposed that the breathing space gained by the manual workers' strike should be used to bring the unions together for a joint defence of jobs.

This was defeated 9-13. Branch Secretary and Conservative Party member Frank Newall in opposing the motion said: "These people have

