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UNION LEADERS FLOUT MEMBERS TO BACK SPECULATORS

ALL OUT MAY 26th

Assemble: Tower Hill, 1pm.
March to lobby Parliament: 2pm.
Fight for strike action on May 26th
in every area.

Another round of massive wage cuts is almost certain to be agreed at a special General Council meeting of the TUC today. The final formula is likely to provide a pathetically small cash increase and lean on Chancellor Healey's worthless and fraudulent "tax cuts" plan announced in the Budget. This latest step follows a busy fortnight's work by Jack Jones, Hugh Scanlon, other union chiefs and TUC Secretary Len Murray.

These men have been energetically defending incomes - not those of their members whom they claim to represent, but the fat dividends and profits of the capitalists and speculators who hold their wealth in sterling.

These speculators who (with a little help from the Bank of England and the government) caused the recent fall in the value of the pound, have been treated by the union bureaucrats as angry and all-powerful gods who must be immediately placated by sacrifices taken from workers' pay packets.

From the day of the Budget, the six-man TUC negotiating committee have been falling over themselves in their haste to assure the world's bankers that the "tough bargaining" with Healey was nothing but shadow boxing to deceive their members.

There would certainly, they chorused, be an agreement close to Healey's 3% demand. Murray even altered a prepared speech to the European Trade Union Confederation to give such an

assurance.

This continuing erosion of the value of wages rams home the importance of the fight to defend living standards. This can not be done by reactionary wage limitation, but only through a sliding scale of wages guaranteeing point for point increases in line with the rising cost of living as assessed by trade union committees.

But even while their talks were going on, the further slide in the value of the pound consumed the whole of the 3% increase - since every such fall hits workers through rising food and other prices.

In making their squalid agreement this week the trade union leaders represent nobody but themselves. The secret "bargaining" with the government is over a compromise between Healey's original offer, which according to the *Economist* would cut take home pay by 7%, and the TUC's counter demand, which would cut incomes by 6½% over the next year.

The union leaders know very

well that such a "deal" is utterly unacceptable to all workers. They are consciously betraying the interests of their own members to prop up the profits of the capitalist class.

The employers appreciate the importance of this. The *Financial Times* this week reports that for the first time in three years a majority of employers anticipate a rise in profit margins.

With wage cuts, speed-up and price rises the policy of Labour and TUC leaders it is easy to understand this confidence.

Indeed the CBI has not felt it necessary to go further than token participation in the wage-cut negotiations: the employers consider their positions have been adequately put by the TUC committee.

But the union leaders know too, that they cannot hope to impose these conditions on workers without the most gross and blatant violations of union democracy.

Continued on back page, column 1

MASS ARRESTS IN SPAIN

The sharpening repression by the Arias regime completely failed to stop massive mobilisations of the working class against Francoism on May 1st. The regime had banned all demonstrations and arrested hundreds of potential leaders in their attempt to prevent them.

In Madrid two demonstrations were organised; one was a march through the streets led by the ORT and other groups to the left of the Communist Party; the other was a 'peaceful' meeting in a park on the outskirts of Madrid led by the CP dominated Workers' Commissions, the Socialist UGT and the third union federation, the USO.

There was some danger that the CP and Socialist party leaders would be intimidated by the regime's determination to stop the demonstrations, as they had been two weeks earlier when they withdrew support at the last moment from the demonstrations in Pamplona to celebrate the Basque national day, Aberri Eguna. But this time they realised that tens of thousands of workers would not be stopped from showing their anger against the brutality and hypocrisy of the regime.

FEROCITY

In the event the regime made no distinction between street marches and 'peaceful' demonstrations in parks. It attacked them both with equal ferocity, using baton charges by mounted police, rubber bullets and tear gas. In Madrid and Barcelona where the demonstrations were largest they arrested hundreds of demonstrators.

These events follow a month during which the regimes only policy has been the arrest of political and trade union leaders throughout Spain. Among those reported arrested are about 200 alleged members of the Euskadi nationalist organisation ETA V; Marcelino Camacho of the Communist Party and Workers' Commissions who, along with leaders of the Labour Party (PTE) and the Communist Movement (MCE).

faces charges liable to 30 year prison sentences; prominent CP member Ramon Tamames who with other alleged organisers of a demonstration on April 4th was fined and then imprisoned for non-payment.

During those demonstrations the regime indulged in mass arrests of demonstrators, as on May 1st, and in the Aberri Eguna demonstrations, where one militant on the way to Pamplona was shot dead at a police roadblock.

Even the reported arrests in the last month amount to more than 1,000.

The regime has now more or less abandoned all pretence at the long-promised 'reforms'. A speech by Arias on April 29th promised a referendum in October to approve the monarchy and to vote on a new 'parliament' of two houses.

One would be appointed by the regime as a watchdog to maintain the line of Franco's national movement.

The other would be elected by 'universal suffrage' which Arias did not define but probably means giving the vote to 'heads of families'.

Even then the government would still be appointed by the head of state and not depend on parliamentary majorities. The speech was welcomed by ultra-right leader General Inestia, the former head of the Civil Guard.

In addition, 'reformist' Interior Minister Fraga, directly responsible for most of the growing wave of repression, has been publicly supported by the right-wing terrorist group, the Guerrillas of Christ the King.

The wholesale repression has extended even to the Socialist Party (POSE) and its trade union organisation the UGT, four of whose leaders have been sent

Continued on back page, column 4



TIM

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

PORTUGAL

LEFT SWING
IN ELECTIONS



Building workers besiege Government building in Lisbon in November 1975.

The results of the Portuguese general election of 5th April have shown very clearly indeed the strength and impetus which remains in the march of the Portuguese working class.

This was despite all the pressure from the capitalist class and its spokesmen, the handing back of the media to the parties of the right, and the bombing attacks on the workers' organisations.

The Socialist Party obtained 8.7 million votes, 35%, and 106 seats in the Assembly. The Communist Party, with 780,000 received just short of 15% with 40 seats.

The capitalist CDS and PPD parties got 16% and 20% respectively, with 41 and 71 seats.

MAJORITY

This means that the mass parties of the working class have overcome the effects of a protracted witch-hunt in the capitalist press to win a easy majority.

This is a considerable blow against the right wing and the employers, though the election itself now reopens all the questions of political leadership in the working class.

It means that all the repressions since the alleged 'coup' attempt of

25th November have failed to break the unity and strength of the working class.

MAOISTS

The votes of the parties to the left of the main workers' parties also increased. Overall it has 144,320 or 2.72%. The Maoists of the UDP increased their vote from 44,000 to 90,507 (1.7%) and again elected a deputy.

Two other Maoist groups, the MRPP and the AOC, who did not stand last time, got 35,751 and 15,506 (.67% and .29%), though is it difficult to know what significance to draw from this, since the Maoist groups, especially the latter two, campaigned exclusively on an anti-communist basis.

The centrists of the MES and FSP groups had reduced votes of 30 and 40,000. The two groups claiming to be Trotskyist, the LCI and PRT received 16,093 and 5,144, 3% and 1% of the vote.

This was an increase from the 10,732 received by the LCI last time, when the PRT did not stand.

SLOGANS

In sharp contrast to last time, the LCI was putting forward slogans calling for a workers' government of the CP and SP. The PRT fought on a similar basis.

The votes show not only the strength and determination of the

working class, they also place the leaders of the Socialist Party and Communist Party on the spot.

CP chief Cunhal has been calling for a government including representatives of his party. He is certainly not opposed to alliance with the capitalist parties, though he is against any socialist policies for such a government.

The greatest pressure, however, is on Socialist Party leader Mario Soares. For him, the majority for the workers' parties means that he cannot any longer look directly to bourgeois PPD and CDS parties to hold on to the 'democratic', i.e. capitalist order.

SOARES

This is the meaning of his current aim to set up a minority government based on the SP alone.

In an interview published in *The Times* on 1st May, Soares showed clearly that he will rely on the support of the military to maintain his minority government.

He told the *Times* reporter that the existence of such an administration:

'involves the authority of the President backed by the armed forces, and the President would have the support of the governing party in order to maintain order.'

The President, who will be elected in two months time is expected to be from the military, probably with the support of the Socialist Party, possibly Azevedo, the current Prime Minister.

The reformist leaders of the working class, despite all the forces massed behind them, have been determined to avoid that break with the capitalist order involved in repudiating military support.

MILITARY

The weakness of the main political parties of the bourgeoisie has made it necessary for the capitalist class to look more than ever before to the military for support.

A powerful President from the military will aim to hold the fort for the capitalist order against the mass movement expressed through the workers' organisations.

The necessity for the working class parties to break from the AFM will be even greater than before.

They will have to build their own independent organisations in order to do this; redevelop the workers' committees and all their own special forms of struggle.

order' is to be defended.

Italy is to remain within an unchanged NATO and, of course, within the Common Market. The CP will not seek the 'sensitive' Ministries of Defence or Foreign Affairs.

They have no block with the Socialist Party despite the fact that a united platform could almost certainly give a Parliamentary majority to the workers' parties.

In fact the Stalinists are pledged in advance to enter no government without the Christian Democrats.

It is rather as if the British Communist Party, given their long awaited majority of Labour and Communist seats in the Commons, were to insist on a coalition with the Tories to avoid "national divisions"!

Among the activists of the Communist Party's 1.7 million members the political crisis has brought a veiled but unmistakable shift to the left. While official Stalinist posters speak of "democracy" and "unity", in Italy, CP militants across the country express their feelings by painting "Spagna Rossa!" (Red Spain!) on the walls of their towns.

Mass forces exist with the Stalinist movement for a fight against the bureaucrats' 'historic compromise' and for "Italia Rossa". Not since the war has the

STALINIST CRISIS

RUMANIA

The split between the Stalinist leaderships of the Soviet Union and Rumania hardened significantly with the publication last week of a Rumanian book which lays semi-official claim to a large area of territory which is presently part of the Soviet Union.

The book - *Political Life in Rumania from 1918 to 1921* - has been widely publicised by the official Rumanian news services. Its key claim (established with 'perfect scientific rigour' according to the news agencies) is that the whole of Bessarabia is properly part of the Rumanian state.

Bessarabia is an area almost a fifth the size of present-day Rumania, with an estimated population of four million. It lies within more than 300 miles of the present Soviet-Rumanian border, stretching inland from the Black Sea. It was incorporated into the USSR (as the Moldavian People's Republic and as part of an enlarged Ukraine) at the end of the Second World War.

It is therefore of considerable importance that the Ceausescu leadership of the Rumanian Communist Party have now decided (even if on an 'unofficial' basis for the time being) to stake their claim in a major border dispute.

It represents a new stage in the growing 'independence' of Rumanian Stalinism - a process which started with opposition to Soviet policies for Comecon (the economic 'union' of the USSR and Eastern Europe) in the 1960's. This led to a separate diplomatic and trade policy towards the US and Western Europe, the refusal of the Rumanian leadership to send troops into Czechoslovakia in 1968, and a policy of diplomatic 'balance' between Soviet and Chinese Stalinism.

At the Moscow Congress of the Soviet CP in March, Ceausescu - without explicitly criticising the Soviet leadership - insisted on the right to 'independence' of individual Communist Parties and 'socialist states', then abruptly left for home well before the end of the Congress ceremonial.

The Bessarabian question has been touched on in various

Rumanian publications in recent months. But this is the first time that state organs have given a clear endorsement to such claims.

The quarrel - from both sides - highlights the reactionary and nationalist character of the Stalinist bureaucracies. Bessarabia has been an area in dispute at least since 1812, when the Turkish Empire handed it over to the Russian Tsar.

It changed hands several times in the 19th century, and was seized



Stalin toasts Churchill, 1944.

by Rumania in 1918, following the military prostration of Russia and the Bolshevik revolution - a seizure dignified by the authors of the latest Rumanian book as "integration into the Rumanian state by the will of the masses"!

When Stalin's armies entered Rumania at the end of the war, they restored, with the agreement of the imperialist powers, the borders of Tsarist Russia; though in Rumania they left the extreme rightist King Michael on the throne until 1947!

And now the Rumanian Stalinists, in support of their claims for territorial enlargement, are reviving the 'traditions' of the Dacian people who inhabited the country at the time of the Roman Empire. Thus the city of Cluj, in central Rumania, has for the last two years been renamed Cluj-Napoca, its ancient Dacian name!

Thus, for all the talk of "internationalism" on Moscow platforms, the Stalinist bureaucracies reveal themselves as nationalist castes of the most reactionary stripe, whipping up national and cultural hatreds and keeping Eastern Europe as much divided as did the former imperialist powers and their monarchical puppets.

ITALY

DOWN THE PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

Events are dragging the reluctant leadership of the Italian Communist Party down their so-called "Parliamentary road to Socialism".

If it had been left to Party Secretary Enrico Berlinguer and his fellow Stalinist chiefs there would have been no nation elections on June 20th, the Christian Democratic Moro government would not

have fallen, nor would the exact identity of 'Antelope Cobbler' the leading Christian Democrat who in the late 1960s pocketed over a million dollars in Lockheed bribes have become the central and explosive mystery of Italian politics.

The Lockheed scandal was the last straw for the Moro government. A US Congressional enquiry showed that one of three men was paid off by Lockheeds to guarantee the purchase of 'Hercules' aircraft - Prime Minister Moro, his Foreign Minister Rumor, or the President Leone. (Each indignantly denied he was guilty and expressed total confidence in his colleagues!)

Yet despite accelerating inflation, unemployment and shortages, daily right-wing political violence and a whole galaxy of lesser political scandals, at no point did the Communist Party leadership call for elections. The Christian Democrats fall of their own weight at the point where the tacit support of the CP leadership could no longer protect them.

The Communist Party entered the election campaign on the most reactionary platform imaginable.

They favour that cuts in both wages and public spending will

ENQUIRY COMMISSION

Owing to an error, our report in the last issue failed to make clear that Michel Varga was a leading member of an organisation known by the initials LIRQI, which now calls itself the Ligue Ouvriere Revolutionnaire.

The address of the Enquiry Commission is c/o Lutte Ouvriere, BP 233, 75865 Paris Cedex 18, France.

We would appeal to other groups who consider themselves to belong to the revolutionary workers' movement to support the efforts of the commission. In Britain they can be contacted at the Workers'

POLAND

The Stalinist leadership in Poland faces growing opposition to its policies and its political control within the Union of Polish Students.

A Congress opened in Warsaw on April 28th which had been designed to merge the country's various Stalinist-controlled youth organisations into a single 'Union of Young Socialists', incorporating the former 'Young Socialists' (over a million members), the 'Young Peasants' (also over a million) and the 'Young Soldiers' (over two million members).

But the student movement (about 300,000 members) refused to join in the fusion, which was clearly a move designed to reinforce and centralise the control of the bureaucracy over the various youth movements in Poland.

In Poland the student bodies and clubs have a long history of generating opposition to Stalinism - even if often in a nationalist and partial form.

In 1956 it was the students of Warsaw and Cracow who stood - along with the workers in some of the biggest industrial plants - in the front line of the grass-roots resistance which was being prepared against the threat of a Soviet

In March 1968 they formed the spearhead of the mass demonstrations that broke out in Warsaw against police censorship and in support of the Czechoslovak 'spring', demonstrations to which the Gomulka government responded by a brutal crackdown and the launching of a despicable anti-semitic campaign in the name of 'anti-Zionism'.

The recent opposition moves among Polish students follow widespread and public protests against the new 'constitution' adopted by the Gierek regime in February. This contained a clause specifying an 'unbreakable fraternal alliance' with the Soviet Union which could easily become the 'legal' pretext for the use of the Soviet Army in Poland.

Faced with a mass campaign of petitions against the draft the Stalinist leadership retreated slightly, 'diluting' the clause so that it specified only 'friendship and co-operation with the USSR and the other socialist states'.

At the same time Gierek's security forces were busily engaged in compiling 'black lists' of those publically opposing the draft constitution - lists which certainly contained a large number of

IRANIAN STUDENTS UNDER THREAT

Two Iranian students in this country, Mahmoud Tourneh and Mahammad-Reza Poorian are currently under threat of deportation to the jails and torture chambers of their own country.

They were both arrested by the police during a demonstration against executions in Spain.

Mahammad-Reza Poorian has been imprisoned for six months, allegedly for assaulting a policeman.

Much worse, however, both students were threatened with deportation.

When the case for deportation of Mahmoud Tourneh came up on April 22nd, even the judge felt he could not recommend such an extreme step and left it to the Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins.

The Labour movement must immediately demand that these students should be allowed to stay in Britain.

They will certainly face many years of torture and imprisonment if they are compelled to return to Iran, as do all politically active Iranians discovered by the regime and SAVAK, its notorious secret police force.

Efforts on behalf of these students should be linked with the ending of all links with the barbarous regime of the Shah. It is bad enough to see the Queen Mother accompanying the Empress Farah around the World of Islam Festival in London, but all the visits by Peter Shore, Barbara Castle, Lord Briginshaw and other prominent Labour leaders to Iran are a disgrace to the working class movement.

ZIMBABWE

KISSINGER CHANGES HORSES

Henry Kissinger's visit to Southern Africa last week marks a fundamental change in the policy of US imperialism in Africa.

In 1970 it was Kissinger himself who authored the notorious "Tar Baby" policy. In it the US government recognised that:

"...racial problems of Southern Africa will become more acute perhaps leading to major violence and the greater involvement of the Communist power".

But it went on to say: "...whites are here to stay and the only way constructive change can come is through them. There is no hope for the blacks to gain the political rights they seek through violence which will only lead to chaos and increased opportunities for the communists".

SALE

The outcome of this cynical policy was the sale by the United States of millions of dollars worth of 'semi-military' equipment to Vorster's white racist regime in South Africa and the Byrd amendment in the US Congress which allows the US, in contravention of United Nations sanctions, to import chrome from Rhodesia.

Speaking, however, in Lusaka (Zambia) last week Kissinger announced the inauguration of a "new era in American policy" in which he bluntly warned White

Rhodesians that: "...Smith and his colleagues must hand over power to the majority. This is America's challenge now".

He promised "aid to a newly independent Zimbabwe". He concluded by appealing to South Africa to "heed the warning signal of the past two years".

WARNING

The warning signal that Kissinger himself has been contemplating is of course the forward movement of the masses in Southern Africa reflected in the MPLA victory in Angola, and the growing mass support for the war for the liberation of Zimbabwe. Support for this is spreading like wildfire into South Africa itself.

The imperialist powers are concerned at all costs to defuse this situation by forcing Smith out as quickly as possible, thereby averting a long war in which the consciousness of black workers and peasants would rise.

Some of Kissinger's proposals are clearly out of date: in offering the assistance of US diplomacy for a negotiated settlement in Zimbabwe, for example. Negotiated settlement is no longer an alternative to war.

LEADERS

Even those African leaders like Nkomo and Kaunda who over the last two years have fallen over



Kissinger

themselves to hold back the war in favour of 'negotiations' which simply allowed Smith to play for time, now realise this.

What the new American policy in Southern Africa therefore in practice amounts to is to strengthen the hands of the opportunists like Kaunda. The object is to ensure that even though guerilla war is necessary to force Smith out,

the Zimbabwean forces will remain firmly under the control of the right-wing led by Kaunda, (who claimed to be "emotionally charged" by Kissinger's Lusaka speech) and Nkomo.

DETENTE

Both these 'leaders' are in favour of continuing the policy of detente with white racism in South Africa. The US will undoubtedly act in accordance with such criteria in its channelling of any 'aid'.

From this perspective the continuing divisions within the Zimbabwean liberation movement assume crucial importance. Kaunda,

together with Presidents Nyere of Tanzania and Machel of Mozambique set up a few months ago an eighteen-man guerilla High Command in Mozambique under their own tripartite control, and not under the control of the political leadership of the liberation movement, the ANC.

It was put about that this arrangement was necessary purely because the Sithole faction and the right-wing Nkomo faction of the ANC could not resolve their differences and therefore both were being excluded from participation.

However, according to a report reaching the Guardian on April 18th, the three Presidents in their impartial wisdom flew Nkomo out to one of the main guerilla bases in Mozambique in early April.

"...where arrangements were made to present him [Nkomo] to some 16,000 guerillas as their natural leader. The guerillas were said to have refused such leadership".

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Part of the march last weekend

BRADFORD DEMONSTRATION SHOWS

BASE FOR WORKERS DEFENCE SQUADS

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.

The mass response to the anti-fascist demonstration called by Bradford Trades Council represents a new level in the labour movement's struggle to defend black and immigrant workers against racist violence.

For the first time, the mobilisation of over 1500 Pakistani, Indian and West Indian workers, together with another 1500 militants drawn from the local labour movement fighting against a National Front march, showed that a sound material base of support now exists for setting up workers' defence squads in Bradford to drive the fascist thugs off the streets.

Significant on the march was the large proportion of young workers from the immigrant community, and the enthusiastic response as the march passed through the streets to

the city centre, its ranks swelling with workers and youth who joined the demonstration all along the route.

Significant also was the complete bankruptcy of political leadership from the Trades Council, which, having called the march into being, attempted in every way to prevent it driving out the fascists.

They held a meeting a mile away from the school where the National Front were holding their rally in the midst of an immigrant area.

When sections of demonstrators broke away to attempt to confront the National Front, they were attacked from the Trades Council platform and obstructed by squads of police.

Outside the school itself the police braved a storm of bottles, bricks, beer cans and eggs to protect the fascists, bringing in mounted police to charge at crowds of demonstrators.

Angry youth responded to this by attacking and turning over several vehicles.

But we should not that active also were other groups of people - not apparently connected with the demonstration - who set about smashing local shop windows.

There is no doubt, however, that had the full strength of the march been directed by the Trades Council leaders at the school the fascists could have been driven out of Bradford.

The demonstration thus reflects a growing resistance and militancy within the working class, and represents a qualitative turn in the fight against racism.

But at the same time the crisis of leadership within the workers movement meant that an opportunity to inflict a crushing defeat on the National Front was missed.

CUTS CAMPAIGN AT THE CROSSROADS



A section of the WSL contingent on the NCC demonstration

There must be a reassessment of the work and the methods of the National Co-ordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS after the poor turn out to last Sunday's national demonstration.

The small attendance (less than 800) is not a reflection of the feeling in the working class on the question, but rather of the suspicion workers have developed of protest politics and sloganising which leads to no action.

HOLLOW

At the same time it shows how hollow is the paper support of a long list of NCC "sponsors" including the NALGO National Executive, South Wales NUM, various 'left' trade union leaders and MPs and the ubiquitous Ernie Roberts, Assistant Secretary of the AUEW.

For the most part these names on the list produced no forces whatever or a token show only on the demonstration. They create an illusion of a firm base of the workers' movement but represent in real terms a 'left' cover for bureaucrats who are in practice standing back while the cuts

proceed.

This is why the programme of the NCC is in need of change. Up to the demonstration it remained to a certain extent unproved whether simply taking a series of correct general demands into the mass movement of the working class could produce a broad response.

It seemed, perhaps, to some, after the success of last year's Conference of the Medical Committee Against Private Practice, (attended by 350 delegates from the labour movement) that all that needed to be done was spread the word in order to win a bigger and bigger response.

This has now been shown to be completely wrong.

For workers in the Health Service in struggle against the cuts, slogans are not enough, programmes are not enough. The struggle must be directed instead towards action initiated at first on a local level, to prevent the implementation of the cuts.

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Only in the fight for industrial action does the question of

programme and perspective take on a living significance.

And in the fight for strike action health workers' resistance to the cuts brings them into direct confrontation with their own bureaucratic leadership, which in every area is collaborating with management in slashing manning levels, conditions and services.

Now is the time to make a turn in the policy of the NCC if it is not to collapse into a moralising phrasemongering nest for conscience-ridden sections of the 'left' bureaucracy.

PLATFORM

The NCC must make its platform the fight to mobilise class action to defend against all cuts.

It must offer the full backing of all affiliates and sponsoring bodies to any local section of workers which strikes against the cuts or which takes action around the linked demands of the NCC programme.

And it must force the 'lefts' and others that decorate its list of 'supporters' to take a clear position on this.

But also required to take a stand on principle are the delegates to the NCC from the International Marxist Group.

Janet McGuire, NCC National Organiser, alone spoke correctly in favour of strike action against the cuts from the platform on Sunday's demonstration.

STAND

Will the IMG now take a stand and demand the NCC pledge itself to act in defence of the Health Service - even if necessary at the expense of a split with the NALGO Executive (Which has led not a single action against the cuts anywhere in the country)?

Or will they follow their example at the Working Women's Charter Conference - (where, to retain an opportunist relationship with the Executive of the Civil Servants union CPSA, the IMG refused to support the WSL demand that the CPSA take a lead in calling strike action against the impact of spending cuts on women workers) and cave in to the bureaucracy?

Last Sunday's demonstration can only prove a gain to the workers' movement if the lessons are learned and the necessary turn now made.

*A realistic assessment of the NCC demonstration by the IMG will not be helped by the gross overestimation of the number of demonstrators in the report of the march in this Week's Red Weekly. There were less than 1000 marchers and not the 2,500 claimed by the IMG.

OXFORD A MARCH WITH NO PROGRAMME

No less than four national officers of Health Service trade unions are to make up the panel of speakers at an Oxford demonstration "Against Unemployment and Cuts in Public Investment".

The march, called for Saturday 15th May, is the brainchild of the Stalinist/right-wing dominated Health Service Joint Trade Union Committee.

FOOD

It offers no demands, no programme, no perspective to workers. But the official leaflet, issued by Pat Ward, extreme right-wing chairman of the local NUPE Hospitals Branch, does attempt to attract hungry trade unionists with a promise of food! He writes:

"If your members would like a light meal or refreshments, could you let me know the numbers". Small wonder such local bureau-

crats are attempting any trick in the book to drag along extra people.

BLOCK

The march was originally called as an attempt to block the successful Trades Council demonstration against the cuts, which mobilised 200 trade unionists and which put forward a full programme of action in defence of the Health Service.

Not only did none of the right-wingers and Stalinists organising the May 15th march attend the Trades Council demonstration - but they did everything they could to sabotage it and keep hospital workers from attending.

Unsuccessful attempted sabotage of that demonstration was to be only the prelude to the complete inaction by the NUPE leadership as consultants throughout the Oxford hospitals struck for two days in defence of private practice.

BLATANT

In doing nothing to combat this blatant provocation, the NUPE leaders, who control the majority of ancillary grade workers in the Oxford Area Health Authority, showed their complete willingness to accept any attacks or cuts planned by local management.

Despite the bankruptcy of its leadership, we call on all members and supporters in Oxford to support the demonstration on May 15th and to fight on it for our clear demands:

- *No to all cuts - for a sliding scale of NHS spending!
- *Open the books of the AHA to elected union committees!
- *Ban all private practice - nationalise private clinics, integrate them into the NHS.
- *Strike action to prevent the cuts!

DRIVE OUT

To win any of these demands the first step must be to drive out the allied forces of right-wing and Communist Party that are consistently betraying the fight.

Where Were They?

The size of the NCC march stands in stark contrast to that of the recent massive National Abortion Campaign march in support of free abortion on demand from the NHS.

How do the members and supporters of the NAC imagine that this demand can be won unless the NHS is defended from the Labour government's slashing cuts? Why weren't they on the demonstration?

Where also were the Working Women's Charter contingents - whose recent conference discussed the cuts in the social services and decided to include the fight against them in their list of demands?

Again the role of the IMG in the leadership of these groups is thrown into the spotlight. Their refusal to risk treading on the toes of the bureaucrats - reformist and Stalinist - with whom they coexist, by fighting for programme and principle, results in no way forward being given to the layers attracted by these protest campaigns.

TRIBUNALS BLOCK WOMEN'S CLAIM

One of the first cases to be taken to the Industrial Tribunals set up under the Sex Discrimination Act more than vindicates the WSL's call to boycott these diversionary bodies.

Five women workers lured into the tribunal were claiming an extra £12 per week to give them equal pay to men doing the same job.

Management argued as one of their reasons for not paying equal rates that the women were unwilling to work wearing skirts on a catwalk above the men.

The upshot was that the women lost their case at the tribunal, although the chairman admitted that one of the women had greater skill and responsibility than a man. Since hers was not "like work", he argued, the provisions of the Equal Pay Act and Sex Discrimination Act did not apply. A similar fate awaited a woman

social worker who actually interviewed and arranged to employ a male assistant - only to find he was to be paid £400 more than her, and that since her job carried increased responsibility her pay could not be affected by the new Acts!

FRAUD

The tribunals are thus already exposed as a fraud from start to finish. There is such a wealth of loopholes and interpretations of the law that it offers only nominal rights to women workers.

The real fight must centre on the struggle in the trade unions for industrial action to win equal pay and against discrimination.

If necessary this will involve fighting the decisions of the tribunals which, as an arm of the state, are designed, like other industrial tribunals, to maintain inequality and not to advance rights.

Manchester Cuts March



More than 700 trade unionists from branches and Trades Councils throughout the North West demonstrated through Manchester on April 24th against unemployment and government spending cuts. The protest, called by the NW Region TUC, offered no credible solution or alternative to the cuts, but the considerable support for it indicates a real strength of feeling on the issue in the workers' movement.

NW JOBLESS

UNEMPLOYED WORKERS COMMITTEE SET UP

Another Trades Council has set up an unemployed workers' committee as a special sub-committee to unite employed and unemployed in the struggle against unemployment.

The line of policy of the committee is a complete programme to fight redundancy and wage cutting. It advocates a fight for:

- *An end to state wage controls
- *A return to free collective bargaining.
- *A sliding scale of wages to compensate against inflation
- *A sliding scale of working hours (work-sharing on full pay)
- *A ban on all overtime
- *The occupation of all plants threatened with closure
- *A scheme of public works with guaranteed government contracts.

In taking such a programme into the struggles of the local labour movement, the committee can play a crucial role. At a time when every bureaucrat is desperately seeking to knife the slightest struggle against the policies of the Labour government, the fight for a programme of action is essential.

The WSL is continuing its campaign in every area for Trades Councils to set up such committees and to lead a drive to recruit the unemployed into the trade unions to prevent their isolation from the organised labour movement.

ASTMS: KELLY EXPELLED

A battle is developing in ASTMS over Tony Kelly's membership of that union.

Kelly, now Secretary of the Newham North East Constituency Labour Party, has given crucial leadership in that constituency's campaign to oust right-winger Reg. Prentice as their candidate.

Consequently, Prentice is out to discredit Kelly by any means possible and to strip him of his union credentials.

ASTMS, which has a reputation as a "left" trade union, should have come out squarely in support of Kelly, who has been an active member of the Charing Cross Branch since last November. But ASTMS General Secretary, Clive Jenkins, no doubt responding to pressure from high places, first questioned Kelly's membership on the grounds that one of the spaces in the application form had been left blank by the Branch Secretary.

FAKE

The Branch cleared up this charge easily enough, so Jenkins thought up another fake charge - that Kelly was not employed at the time he applied for membership.

The Charing Cross Branch has documents to prove this charge to be false, but Jenkins has none the less manoeuvred to push through a decision on the NEC against Kelly's membership.

The Charing Cross Branch rejects the NEC's decision on the grounds that it has been arrived at on the basis of false and contradictory evidence, and the Branch has sent an emergency resolution to the ASTMS delegate conference, to be held this weekend, censuring Jenkins for his manoeuvres and calling on conference to conserve the validity of Kelly's membership.

It is vital for ASTMS to come out strongly on this issue. The Labour movement must protect the democratic rights of trade unionists and Labour Party members to oppose right-wing Labour MPs and Labour Party policies which are against working class interests.



A march through the town. (photo: Quotidiano die Lavoratori)

INSIDE THE INNOCENTI OCCUPATION

This interview took place a few days after the end of five months of occupation of British Leyland's bankrupt subsidiary, Leyland Innocenti in Milan.

The replies to the questions have been composed from the remarks of about ten workers, including two members of the factory council, interviewed together by a 'Socialist Press' reporter.

Socialist Press: How was the factory organised before the occupation?

Innocenti workers: It was more or less an assembly operation producing the Mini and later also the Regent.

Very few parts were actually produced in Milan and so the factory had no productive or technical autonomy.

There were about 4500 workers who during the occupation have been reduced to about 4000.

Socialist Press: What is the union organisation in the factory?

IW: As throughout Italy, the main organisation is the Factory Council (Consiglio di Fabbrica). This has about 55 members who are directly elected by the workers and are in close and continual contact with them.

Then there is the higher structure of the trade union federation at various levels - the zone, province and national levels.

The factory councils vote for some delegates at these levels but the candidates are nominated from above as a result of deals between the political parties to have an agreed share of posts at all levels.

The Metalworkers Federation to which we all belong is an amalgam-

ation of the three previously separate metalworkers unions (those of the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the Christian union).

The higher bodies of the union are not representative like the factory council and so the two were in frequent conflict.

Socialist Press: What is the political balance on the factory council?

IW: As in most of Italy, the Communist Party had the numerical majority and had hegemony of the council. There were four or five socialists, no Christian Democrats, quite a number of people to the left of the Communist Party, supporters of Proletarian Democracy (an electoral alliance of Avanguardia Operaia, the PDUP and other small groups on the left) though not members of any party, and a small number of members of revolutionary groups.

Socialist Press: How exactly did the occupation begin?

IW: It started on November 26th, the day after Leyland announced the liquidation of the company.

The management did everything it could to block the activities of the union.

But the factory council met,

unanimously voted for an occupation, and this recommendation was unanimously supported by a mass meeting of all the workers.

Socialist Press: What were the demands of the occupation?

IW: There was continual conflict between the Communist Party and the left about both the demands of the occupation and its methods.

The left put forward a demand for nationalisation without compensation under workers' control and the conversion of the plant to produce public consumption goods such as buses.

The CP opposed all of this: their solution was a takeover by a joint state and private capitalist enterprise.

As to the organisation, the CP tried to keep the organisation in the hands of a small group of the factory council while the left argued for the greatest participation not only of workers in the factory but also outside.

The CP tried to put a brake on every initiative but in spite of this several demonstrations of solidarity were organised outside, such as the blocking of a major railway station, of a motorway and two vast demonstrations of support (one of 100,000 workers in the streets of Milan).

The CP opposed all these initiatives, and the leaders of the Metalworkers Federation gave a press conference condemning this kind of action.

Socialist Press: What were the reactions to the demands which were made?

IW: First, Leyland refused to pay the redundancy pay which it was legally obliged to and launched a lawsuit against the occupiers for the recovery of machinery which it wanted to ship out.

Second, the government and the Italian capitalists arranged a series of rumoured 'possible' solutions which were all welcomed by the Communist Party and which had the effect of disorienting the occupying workers.

One of these was a widely publicised plan for Fiat to take over the company to make small cars - for which it already had a huge overcapacity.

Socialist Press: What is the agreement which led to the end of the occupation?

IW: The occupation of the factory ended nominally because of the agreement reached with Leyland for the payment of redundancy pay and the release of the machinery.

Half of this has been paid and the rest is due next week. But the

Leyland agreement was only possible because of the intervention of the GEPI (an agency of the Italian government rather like the National Enterprise Board, along with De Tomase, the head of the motor cycle firm Moto Guzzi).

Through a joint enterprise they plan to make Japanese cars under licence. The agreement guaranteed the pay of 2500 workers for four months, 1000 for 16-18 months and 400 for three years. For these periods the wage is guaranteed by the state redundancy fund.

This plan for a joint venture is very like the CP's plan and the CP has welcomed it. When it was first put to a vote in the factory council the voting was 35 to 7 in favour.

But in fact the new company has not yet been formed and because of the political crisis the government still hasn't given its assent to the agreement. The factory is still closed and no one is working.

Socialist Press: Was this agreement put to a mass meeting?

IW: Yes it was accepted and the occupation ended on March 7th. This was almost inevitable because of the propaganda of the Communist Party in favour of the settlement and the materially desperate position of most of the workers.

During the four months of the occupation workers had received only 80,000 lire a head (about £55) from the union federation. Under the settlement they will get about £300 per head from Leyland.

Since this interview was given, further mass meetings have confirmed the acceptance of the 'solution' to the occupation; and work at the factory has resumed under the new management.

The Communist Party has presented this outcome as a victory. And indeed it marks a clear 'victory' for their own policies of class collaboration.

It is no victory for workers whose jobs are 'protected' under the agreement for a few months only with no further guarantees.

The alternative positions put forward during the occupation by groups to the left of the CP were capable of attracting considerable support both from workers in the factory and from the rest of the workers' movement in Milan.

But they were not capable of the end of giving real conviction to these more militant positions by presenting them as part of a programme.

The defeat cannot be attributed merely to the material problems of the workers, which were real enough; it also has a political dimension.



Inside the Milan factory



Street fighting, July 1917

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Part 9: The July Days

by Rick Roberts

Petrograd in 1917 was the ears, the alert nervous system of the revolution, its workers and soldiers political vanguard of the country.

the capital especially, with the inability of the Provisional Government to solve the problems which had led the February Revolution felt ever more keenly by the masses of workers and soldiers.

On June 24th a demonstration led by the first All-Russian Congress of Soviets to support the majority (which defended coalition with capitalists in the Provisional Government) carried a banner after banner declaring Bolshevik policies: 'Down with the capitalist ministers!', 'Down with the offensive!', 'All power to the Soviets!'

CLOSED

There was plenty to cause this trouble. Factories that promised more than profits were closed down - metal production down 40%, textiles 20% - workers fought for control of production both in order to control prices which were rising apace, and to defend jobs.

Food supplies threatened famine. The offensive at the front, announced by Kerensky in June with great pomp and ceremony, was dying in convulsions. Soldiers did not want to fight. The government seemed to have lost its nerve and waverings as to its policy. The counter-revolution was mobilizing quite openly and the officers, protected by the army and funded by the capitalists and the Embassies of the

had expected of the February Revolution.

Sections of workers, condemned to fruitless waiting, gave in to despair and tried to solve themselves those problems which the power created by them refused even to deal with.

DISBANDED

While whole divisions at the front were disbanded for disobedience, on June 21st a strike of skilled workers broke out in the giant Putilov works in Petrograd, where 36,000 men worked. They demanded wage rises and the control of production, seen as vital in the face of the ever-rising cost of living.

The Bolsheviks, recognising that the solution to these problems was national and political, that is, the taking of power by the Soviets, appealed to the Putilov workers through a meeting of factory representatives to 'restrain their legitimate indignation'.

A mass movement could easily mushroom in Petrograd but, lacking the support as yet of the rest of the country, might suffer drastic defeats, with sections being broken one by one.

UNCHECKED

But the mood could not be held in check. A report of the railways trade union to the Minister declared:

"For the last time we announce: patience has its limit; we simply cannot live in such conditions" and protested at the "endless exhorting of us to the duties of a citizen and to self-restraint in starvation".

Advice the TUC bureaucrats might need today as they debate the next stage of wage-baiting

the left. On the 22nd June a Soviet Executive Committee car drove through the Vyborg workers district with a placard pleading 'Forward for Kerensky!'

Men of the Moscow Regiment stopped them, tore up the placard and turned the car over to the Bolshevik-sympathising Machine Gun Regiment.

This regiment had stormed into the capital in March on its own initiative for "the defence of the revolution".

The Executive Committee immediately resolved to send them back with thanks but they refused: "Counter-revolution might attack the Soviet and restore the old regime".

The Bolsheviks undertook their case and secured provisions, beginning what was to be an indestructible friendship.

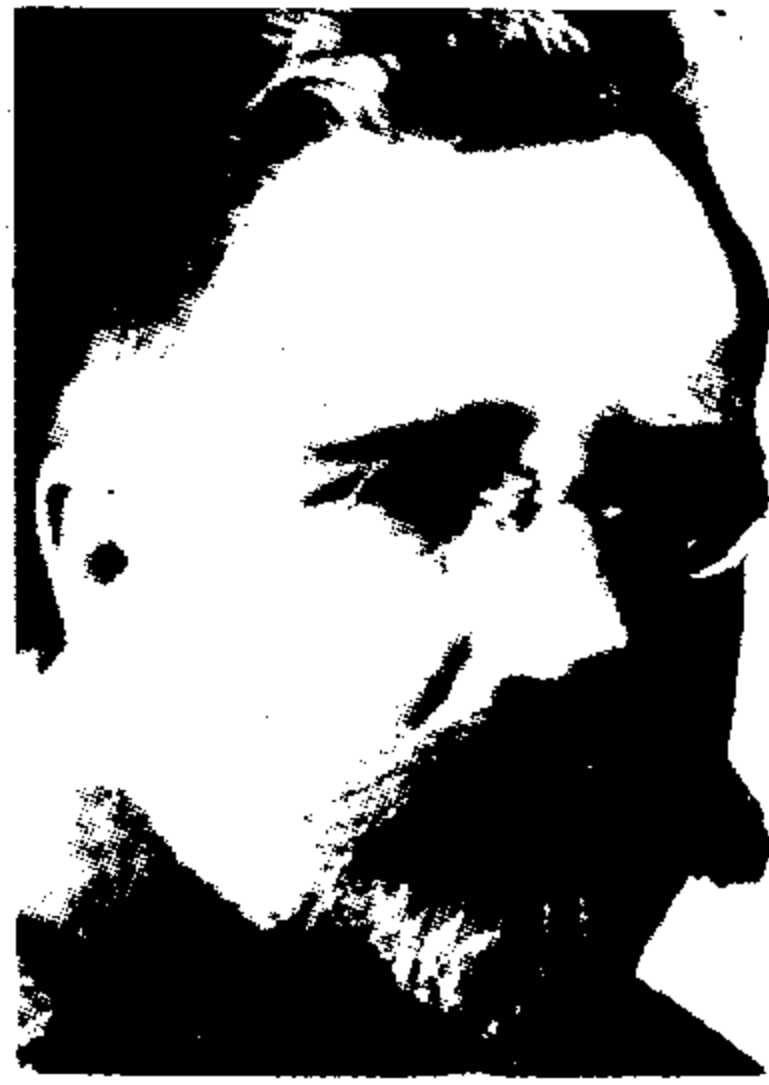
DISSOLVE

On 21st June they resolved they would 'in future only go to the front when the war has a revolutionary character'. If forced, the regiment stated it would not hesitate to "dissolve by armed force the Provisional Government and the organisations that support it".

On Sunday July 2nd four Kadet ministers exploded the coalition by withdrawing from the government because the 'socialist' ministers would not confront the workers.

The immediate response of the workers was for an end to this coalition farce, it was the final nudge pushing frustration past breaking point.

On Monday July 3rd a meeting of several thousand machine gunners demanded an armed demonstration calling on the Soviet to take power. The Bolshevik Military Organisation



Kamenev

movement, fearing it would be isolated and followed by repression.

But the soldiers were determined to put their shoulders under the Soviet compromisers and get them moving. After all, in March the eight-hour day had been won by action from below.

At 7 pm. they were still resolved to come out, delegates already making the rounds of factories and regiments for support.

Petrograd was straining at the leash, not even glancing round at the provinces or the front.

MACHINE GUNS

Motor trucks were demanded and got from the factories and fitted with machine guns. On the shop floors workers stopped instantly as if expecting the call.

In the Putilov works, 10,000 men assembled in the early afternoon and could be restrained no longer when told in the evening that the whole Vyborg side was already on its way to the Tauride

Even the district committee of the Bolsheviks was dragged in, deciding it could not leave the workers to their fate but would go along, if only to 'maintain order'.

At 3 pm. an all-city conference of the Bolsheviks were informed of the demonstration. Tomsy, for the Central Committee declared: "it is impossible to talk of a manifestation at this moment unless we want a new revolution".

The offensive at the front would inevitably fail, but had not done so yet, and time had to be gained for the compromisers to ruin themselves completely.

SCAPEGOATS

Premature action could provide the excuse to use the Bolsheviks as scapegoats for the failure of the offensive.

The conference appealed to the masses to hold back and to the Executive Committee of the Soviet to take power.

But the party call was not heeded. Factory after factory came out, lined up, and armed its detachment of the Red Guard. Trotsky describes it:

"Samsonevsky Prospect, the chief artery of the Vyborg side, was packed full of people. To the right and left of it stood solid columns of workers. In the middle of the Prospect marched the Machine Gun Regiment, the spinal column of the procession. At the head of each company went an automobile truck with its Maxims; over every detachment streamed a banner: 'All power to the Soviets!'"

A participant wrote: "The cockades of the officials, the shiny buttons of students, the hats of lady sympathisers were not to be seen. Today only the common slaves of capital were marching".

Faced with a great crowd outside the palace of Kshesinskaia, the Bolshevik headquarters, clamouring for instructions, for leadership, its demands backed with rifles and bayonets, the party had to abandon its fruitless restraint.

PEACEFUL

It resolved to call for a peaceful march to the Tauride Palace, to elect delegates and through them present their demands to the Executive Committee.

The demonstration moved out, heaving a sigh of relief at this sanction from the party, into the Nevsky, the artery of the bourgeoisie.

Clashes break out with the students, officials, bureaucrats, officers who parade there on home ground. Shots ring out. Rifles in the streets give a volley in return. The July days have begun.

At 10.30 pm. a meeting on the square in front of the Tauride elected its deputation to the Executive Committee which was then in session.

Its demands: removal of the ten bourgeois ministers; all power to the Soviets; a halt to the offensive; confiscation of the bourgeois press and printing plants; the land to be state property and state control of production.

RHETORIC

But inside the Tauride they had their own ideas of the revolution. Ideas which reflected little outside its walls except perhaps the rhetoric of the Government.

That day both Executive Committees, the workers and soldiers, and the peasants had been debating the proposals of the Minister Tseretelli on how to save coalition politics without the other half of the coalition.

When news of the proposals of the masses on how to solve this difficult question reached them, they proclaimed any demonstration an act of treachery to the revolution. The question of the cabinet could be left to another meeting, only the struggle against the masses was urgent.

The Menshevik Voitinsky relates: "we sent out commissars to all the regiments with a request to give us soldiers to form a patrol. But each regiment looked to the next to see what it was going to do".

No wonder the soldiers looked about them. The Committee was asking for defence against a colossal demonstration asking it to take power as the democracy.

The workers' section of the Soviet was meeting at the same

by Trotsky, the election of 25 delegates to lead the movement outside.

The Bolsheviks had been steadily increasing their number of delegates in the last two months, and during the discussion, the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, convinced they only had one third of the assembly, left the hall.

As soon as they were thrust by events into a minority, they were beginning to boycott meetings. We can only comment from our experience in the trade unions today that the undemocratic practices of the right-wing have changed very little in the last sixty years.

The workers' soviet passed a resolution calling on the Executive Committee to take the power and elected 15 for leadership of the movement. This showed the masses outside that the workers section was a fighting ally, a Bolshevik base.

meeting adjourned.

A night session of the Bolsheviks and Mezhrayontsi (inter-district organisations close to the Bolsheviks of which Trotsky was a member) was also thinking of the next day. The masses had posed the question of power, and tomorrow would go for the decision, and no force could stop them.

They received news that the sailors from the Kronstadt fortress just down the river from Petrograd would also march in the morning, and decided to issue a leaflet calling on the masses:

"by way of a peaceful and organised demonstration to bring their will to the attention of the Executive Committees now in session".

The party and its Military Organisation had assumed direct leadership of the movement. Before continuing it is worth saying a little about Kronstadt, as this illustrates the political base the masses had,

of the Kronstadt Political Soviet".

Small wonder that the sailors and workers there failed to understand why the Executive Committee refused to take the power, and that these men were in the vanguard on July 4th.

STRIKE

The demonstrators assembled at 11 am on Tuesday 4th July. All the factories struck and held meetings where delegates were elected to present their demands to the Executive Committee.

Hundreds of thousands marched to the Tauride, many stopping at the palace of Kshesinskaia on the way for guidance, for inspiration. The movement was more organised, more determined, and the government more forlorn in its powerlessness than the day before.

Loyal troops were called on, only to be found to be not only hostile, but marching on Petrograd to join the demonstration.

On Palace square, for the defence of headquarters, were to be found only war invalids and a few hundred Cossacks.

This after General Polovtsev, Commander of all Petrograd troops had announced he would 'cleanse the capital' of armed hordes.

AUTHORISATION

The government was living only by authorisation of the Executive Committee, and this power came from the masses who hoped it would at last come to its senses and take power itself.

The Kronstadt garrison, to be on the safe side, took 2½ tons of arms and ammunition from the stores and 10,000 of them crowded into tugs and steamers, arriving in Petrograd at noon.

Crowds round the palace of Kshesinskaia shouted for Lenin, just arrived from Finland, who expressed confidence in the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets' and appealed for restraint.

Marching to the Tauride, the rear of the demonstration was again fired upon, and disorderly firing began in return, leaving several killed and wounded. There was undoubtedly provocation, as government troops tried to panic the marchers, powerless to suppress them.

All the excesses were later of course to be blamed on the Bolsheviks.

MOOD

In front of the Tauride, Chernov, the Social Revolutionary Minister of Agriculture, was brought out to the demonstrators. Sensing the mood, he cried out good riddance to the Kadets who had resigned. Miliukov relates how:

"a husky worker, shaking his fist in the face of the Minister, shouted furiously, 'Take the power, you son of a bitch, when they give it to you!'"

Chernov was forced into a car by, according to Trotsky, "a suspicious-looking group of men who had kept aloof from the crowd" and was only saved by Trotsky's personal intervention.

This provocation, together with

a rumour of the attempted arrest of Kerensky were made out afterwards by the hostile press to be proof of an armed insurrection organised by the Bolsheviks.

Delegation after delegation went to the Executive Committee. Trotsky reports one as saying:

"You see what is written on our standards. Such are the decision adopted by the workers.....We demand the resignation of the ten minister-capitalists. We have confidence in the Soviet, but not in those in whom the Soviet has confidence".

Trotsky continues:

"But the compromisers were still bound with too heavy chains to the chariot of the possessing classes. Power to the Soviets? But that means first of all a bold policy of peace, a break with the Allies, a break with our own bourgeoisie... 'The present circumstances' said Tseretelli, 'make it impossible in the Petrograd atmosphere to carry out any new decisions whatever'".

DISAPPEARED

Cossack squadrons supposed to defend the Tauride had 'disappeared'. The 176th Regiment from Krasnoe Selo summoned by the Compromisers arrived, but in response to the call from the Bolsheviks!

The repressive forces brushed aside, workers thought the way was clear, but the biggest obstacle was sitting in the Palace.

According to the French Ambassador, the government had even sent in its resignation during the afternoon but the Executive had refused and given it a vote of confidence.

Towards seven in the evening, the Executive:

"issued a proclamation to the comrade soldiers asking them to postpone their demands and help the government keep order in the town, while their brothers are doing their duty at the front. But the motorcars carrying these proclamations were stopped by the demonstrators and the proclamations destroyed.

When I returned to the Embassy under a very black and stormy sky, the river Neva was covered with thousands of sheets of white paper....."

(From the diary of Comte Louis de Robien).

Eventually the Bolshevik Central Committee sent a resolution to the workers to end the demonstration. With little opposition from the ranks, the masses ebbed back to the suburbs, feeling that the problem of 'All Power to the Soviets' was considerably more complicated than it appeared.

But the Executive meeting continued, waiting. At 4 am on the 5th July, reliable troops arrived at last, hand picked from the most backward guard battalions.

They had been neutral until shown documents supposedly 'proving' that Lenin was a German spy. This accusation was to be the basis for the protracted witch-hunt that the Bolsheviks had feared.

The soldiers were received with glee by the compromisers, and immediately arrested the few workers left in the palace. With the masses gone, the government



Tseretelli

arrested workers' representatives, seized weapons and isolated the districts of the suburbs.

At 6 am. a group of junkers and soldiers smashed the Pravda offices and arrested all the occupants. A still more violent attack was made on the Bolshevik printing plant for which the workers had been collecting money for the last three months.

ARRESTS

In the morning Cossacks and officers arrested anyone on the streets who defended the Bolsheviks. Everyone was talking about German money which the Bolsheviks were supposed to have received.

Headed by Lieber, the Executive Committee came to Kshesinskaia in the afternoon to persuade the Bolsheviks to make the Kronstadt demonstrators return and to withdraw the machine-guns from the Peter-Paul fortress, in return for the promise of no pogroms and the liberation of all arrested persons.

But the German money rumours spread, loyal troops were discovered or arrived from the front, Cossack divisions being greeted with machine-gun fire from provocateurs eager to give their aggressive mood an anti-Bolshevik bite.

Lieber declared "the correlation of forces has now changed" and the Bolsheviks had to advise the Kronstadt demonstrators to go home.

SAILORS

Sailors from the Baltic Fleet who had sailed to Petrograd to arrest the Assistant Minister of the Navy for ordering them to prevent ships going to Petrograd were themselves arrested.

On the morning of the 6th the workers went back to work and a crowd of loyal troops obtained the surrender of Kshesinskaia, thus concluding the July movement.

Lenin was in hiding. On the fifth he had told Trotsky "Now they will shoot us down one by one. This is the right time for them". They could not in fact go so far, but on the 10th Trotsky too was arrested. The next few weeks was to see a period of mobilization of the counter-revolution.



July 1917 - Premature turn to arms by the working class

This was a vast step forward from April, when their representation was tiny. It signified that now among the masses their influence was decisive.

By now the streets and square in front of the Tauride Palace were thronged. Going to talk to the demonstrators Chkeidze the Soviet president, and Voitinsky were met with an unfriendly silence but Trotsky received loud applause, reporting the workers section decision but saying it was not yet time to seize the power.

The joint session of the Executives met again. Delegates from the demonstration demanded admission, but, says Trotsky,

"Their fervent appeals, in which hope still mingled with indignation, dropped impotent and inappropriate into the stagnant atmosphere of that parliament of compromise. The leaders had but one thought: how quickest to get rid of their uninvited guests. In the gallery, machine-gun men were listening with amazement to the evolving debate, which had only one goal - to gain time. The compromisers were waiting for reliable regiments".

The speeches became ever more incomprehensible to their audience. Tseretelli told confused listeners "to go out into the streets with the demand 'All Power to the Soviets' - is that to support the soviets? If the soviets so desired, the power could pass to them. There is no obstacle anywhere to the will of the soviets.....Such a manifestation is not along the road of revolution, but of counter-revolution".

80,000

At 3 am the Putilov factory approached the Tauride, a mass of eighty thousand workers with wives and children. A delegation was admitted to the Executives and the tired throng of workers lay down in the street and the garden, waiting for an answer.

But the leaders were waiting for troops from the front, and no answer came before 5 am when the

and their need to defend their gains through their own, soviet government.

Throughout Russia, isolated soviets had refused to recognise the authority of the Provisional Government and Kronstadt had done so on May 17th.

The *Guardian* correspondent, Philips Price, relates how the President of the Soviet told him in June:

"We are simply putting this place in order after the tyranny and chaos of the late Tsarist regime. That is why we have declared the Kronstadt soviet the supreme authority on the island. We recognise the fact that the coalition government exists in Petrograd, just as I recognise the fact that you are sitting in that chair; but that does not mean that we recognise its authority over us".

FACTORY COMMITTEES

Price goes on: "I found that the first results of the revolution had been to call into being the factory committees.....Those were the elementary industrial units upon which the Soviet idea was based. They were formed by men of all grades, skilled and unskilled, who met for half an hour after the day's work. Delegates went forth to the Soviet, from which also went forth delegates, who were in direct control of industrial affairs. They claimed and exercised the right to inspect the accounts and books of the management, saw to it that no materials left the premises without good reason, and in general ways looked after the welfare of the industry and its members. The work of the State officials was subject to rigid scrutiny for the men were fully alive to the fact that in a capitalist state the bureaucracy is only the agent of big business".

The chief private concern, the cable factory, "was already under the control of the factory committee. The owner, who had tried to close down the works and sell some of the machinery to a foreign bank was arrested and the whole business requisitioned in the name



Kerensky, second from right, with friends

DAILY NEWS LINE

REVIEW OF 1ST EDITION by John Lister.



- G. Healy, former WRP General Secretary and current Secretary M. Banda



A clear retreat from principled politics in order to create the illusion of a mass-based organisation. This is the only way to describe the new daily paper of the Workers Revolutionary Party, 'The News Line'.

In dropping all evidence of socialist politics from title and masthead, and putting on a mask of popular journalism, the diehard sectarians in the leadership of the WRP seek to conceal the continued political liquidation of their movement.

They turn their backs on the principled fight waged in the mid-1960s by the Socialist Labour League (forerunner of the WRP) against the Stalinists' renaming of the *Daily Worker* as the *Morning Star*. At that time they correctly labelled the change of name as a turn to the middle class. What judgement then are workers to make today of the neutral-titled *NewsLine*?

"RED ARMY"

Sporting a large front-page photograph of "Doc's Red Army" of Manchester football supporters and dressed up like a cross between *Leyland Mirror* and *Socialist Worker* the first edition appeared on May Day.

Despite WRP claims that it follows its "impeccable tradition", the *NewsLine* is in no way a return to the days of *Workers Press*, the daily paper which they wound up in February of this year.

Workers Press was built in five years of struggle by the youth and working class cadre of the Socialist Labour League. It was launched as the world's first Trotskyist daily paper in 1969.

It was integrally linked with the SLL's struggles in the trade unions and was founded on a solid base of support within advanced layers of the working class.

INABILITY

It was the Healy leadership's growing inability to train and develop this basic layer of supporters or expand and renew the national leadership of the SLL/WRP itself which led the party increasingly towards propagandism and sectarianism.

And after the election of the minority Labour government in February 1974 this degeneration turned into a rout of sterile mass "recruitment" campaigns which liquidated the experienced cadre of the party, and at the same time exposed a bankruptcy of programme and perspective which led to the political crisis in the autumn of that year.

The Healy leadership, unable to tolerate the emergence of a political opposition or the possibility of discussion within the WRP, moved in December 1974 to bureaucratically expel over 200 members including the entire proletarian cadre in the Cowley car factories and the working class base in the Western area.

After these expulsions the rake's progress continued to lay waste the ranks of the WRP, leaving only the middle class layers of journalists, actors, intellectuals and professional workers to carry on the direction of the work of the movement on the sidelines of the working class. This led to the collapse of *Workers Press*.

COMMENTATORS

From its role in the 1960s and early 1970s as the sole organised challenge to the leadership of the Stalinists and right-wing, the WRP has degenerated into a sect of commentators on the class struggle, sheltering behind a maximum programme of ultimatum demands.

The "popular" format of their new daily paper tends to exclude those demands from the news articles, which thus take on the character of left-radical journalism.

But a look at the WRP May Day Manifesto in its centre pages shows clearly the political depths the WRP has reached. It begins with a demand not on the leadership of the working class - but on the working class itself!

"On this historic May Day...the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party...calls on the British working class to defend its basic democratic rights and demonstrate its solidarity with the world wide struggle against imperialism, social democracy and Stalinism by forcing the Labour government to resign".

NO AVENUE

Of course it offers no avenue for the working class reader to carry out such a command - and no perspective for what should follow the forced resignation of the government. This is quite consistent for the WRP leaders who put such demands for show, not for action.

The question of whether revolutionaries should launch a popular daily press is not one of principle but one of tactics. We are not opposed to such a step as such.

But today's attempts by the WRP to substitute a low-profile "mass" approach for the necessary qualitative building of a revolutionary cadre, shows that today's continuator of the best traditions of *Workers Press* is not *The NewsLine* but the WSL's paper, *Socialist Press*.

*A fuller account of the degeneration of the WRP and the political opposition to that degeneration can be read in *The Battle for Trotskyism* advertised elsewhere in this paper.

LETTERS

We welcome letters from readers. Letters for publication should be kept as brief as possible. Send to the editor, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

Bribes... Bribes... Bribes THE LOCKHEED WAY

Since the end of the Second Imperialist War Lockheed Aircraft Corporation has paid out at least £13m in bribes, kickbacks and other amenities to agents and officials in countries throughout the world.

That was the picture which emerged from an investigation by the US Senate Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations into the company's financial records.

The most spectacular of Lockheed's exploits included:

*7m dollars funnelled to various Japanese officials through ultrarightist kingmaker Yoshio Kodama to push the F-104 Starfighter and later civilian planes;

*1.1m dollars to high government officials in the Netherlands, almost certainly involving Prince Bernhard, for help in selling the F-104 and the P-2B anti-submarine warfare plane;

*1.6m dollars lavished on Italians in connection with the sale of 14 C-130 Hercules cargo planes - two former defence ministers are among those already having been indicted.

Also mentioned as beneficiaries of the Lockheed slush fund are Mexico, Iran, Nigeria and Columbia and the list is anything but complete.

GRAFT

Whoever goes to jail in connection with this seemingly limitless case of graft, it is not likely to be the directors of Lockheed.

The US law cares very little about such things, and the Senate's interest is only to make sure that companies make proper reports of monies spent abroad and keep their tax evasion within plausible limits.

In fact the response of other companies to the Lockheed case has been to come running to the Senate with their tales of international corruption, just to be on the safe side of the law. Among the 85 or so corporations so far reporting are:

-Occidental Petroleum Corporation with 1.6 million dollars to several Venezuelans, including the country's governor on the Executive Board of OPEC, Alberto Flores;

-Northrop Corporation with 30 million dollars to foreign officials in Italy, Greece, Portugal, Somalia, Turkey and other countries;

-Boeing Aircraft, with foreign political contributions of 70m dollars during the last five years, which the company insists were "certainly legal" and anything but bribes;

-and Grumman International Inc., a subsidiary of Grumman Aerospace Corp., which is under heavy attack from the Iranians for having foolishly paid several million dollars in lubrication money to individual agents instead of the Iranian government itself.

The truly international character of this basic activity of capitalism is shown by the recent revelations that Shell and BP contributed respectively £2.5 million and £800,000 to the three political parties of the Italian coalition government between 1969 and 1973.

BP's involvement is particularly embarrassing for the British government, which owns 48% of the company's stock (the Bank of England holds a further 20%).

NO LINE

That no clear line can be drawn between big business and capitalist governments emerges particularly clearly from the Japanese side of the Lockheed saga.

Lockheed's man in Tokyo, Yoshio Kodama, made a name for himself during the Second Imperialist War by his operation of plunder and intelligence gathering in Japanese-occupied China.

After the war (he was imprisoned for a while but never tried for his war crimes) he returned to Japan with vast stores of cash, diamonds and platinum, some of



Lockheed TriStar



Prince Bernhard

Companies have long made "foreign policy", even in conspiring to bring down governments, without the US getting much bothered about it.

Remember the collusion between ITT and the CIA in 1970 in trying to keep Allende out of power!

SCANDAL

And now that Lockheed's story, and those of dozens of other companies have come before the public eye, the US government is doing all it can to contain scandal, passing on information to the other countries concerned only on condition that it be suppressed except where used in court cases. This is why US officials are so annoyed at the public revelations which have rocked the Italian government.

US government officials have grumbled about the dangers of Lockheed's establishing its own independent "foreign policy". But that is clearly a fraud, given the general unanimity of interests between American-based multinationals and the US government whose global strategy is calculated to support capitalist exploitation on an international scale.

DISCLOSURE

The Treasury Department even opposes the OECD's pious code of conduct for multinational corporations because it would require public disclosure of information on business operations, sales and profitability on a country-by-country basis.

As Sorbonne history professor Pierre Chauu remarked, "Corruption may be the price of liberty".

Liberty to wage global exploitation, liberty to make and break governments in the scramble for profits, liberty to hawk lethal weapons to fascists and adventurers in every corner of the world.

Those liberties are in irreconcilable conflict with the rights and interests of workers to resist exploitation and to fight against imperialist conquest on behalf of all peoples.

By the struggle to open the books of multinationals workers will strike a deadly blow to the lethal "liberties" of Lockheed.

ONE BILLION

And a Kodama-inspired deal with the Japanese Airforce for 100 Lockheed anti-submarine P-3C Orions was about to go through for 1 billion dollars (Kodama himself stood to pocket about 1m dollars!) when the scandal broke.

The calls by Japanese "honourable" rightists for Kodama to commit ritual suicide and the unsuccessful attack on his home by hapless porn star Mitsuyasu Maeno could suggest that Kodama was himself on the lunatic fringe, far from the graces of the "respectable" US government.

But nothing could be further from the truth.

The CIA had detailed reports of the Lockheed bribes as early as the late 1950s, but somehow 'forgot' to pass them on to the State Department.

It is not surprising that they knew, for Kodama had received US funds for secret political projects in the Far East several times since the end of the war.

In fact in the early 1950s he was paid 150,000 dollars to smuggle tungsten out of China on a Taiwanese warship and deliver it to American authorities in Tokyo.

On that occasion, it seems, the buyers got stung - Kodama claimed that the ship sank en route, but kept the commission.

BACK ISSUES

TROTSKYISM TODAY

Theoretical Supplement to Socialist Press

Back copies available including WSL International Perspectives: "Fourth International: Problems and Tasks"

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IRISH JOBS AXED — NORTH AND SOUTH

by Joe Quigley

Two days after ten thousand Provisional supporters defied the ban on commemorating the Easter Rising a few thousand Protestant workers demonstrated in Belfast and Larne against the redundancies that will follow proposed cuts in defence spending.

The coalition government in Dublin had neither expectation nor intention of stopping the Provisional's march. Its dramatic gesture in proscribing for the first time a Provisional Sinn Fein commemoration of the rising against the British in 1916 was for the consumption of its power sharing allies in the North.

COMMON

At a time of dramatically rising unemployment both North and South, the Dublin government were urgently stressing to the Belfast bourgeoisie their common interests and giving a lead in pursuing the authoritarian measures that will be necessary if both are to defend those interests.

The desperate need to stamp upon even the most peaceful expression of Republican sentiment stems from the fact that the Southern economy, entirely dependent upon and totally subservient to foreign investment, is not more than a feather in the face of the cold winds of the present world recession.

This is the context in which we should see the recent round up and subsequent torture of 15 members of the IRSP, the Bill of Minister of Justice Cooney to deny prisoners access to their own lawyers as well as a government spokesman's threat to the organisers, stewards, speakers and others directly involved in the organisation of the Easter commemoration that:

"...as well as being liable to a fine and three months imprisonment such people would forfeit any government or local authority job and would be disqualified from holding any pension paid for out of public funds".

In 1975 one in every ten work-

ers employed in manufacturing industry lost their job - some 27,300. Figures released at the end of March show 115,677 without jobs from a total work force of around one million.

While unemployment grows, inflation continues to rise. The consumer Price Index for the quarter November to February, registered the second biggest increase (at 7.3%) in three years.

Despite this the Confederation of Irish Employers demanded a nine month pay pause from the end of March when the present National Wage Agreement expired.

Into the vacuum created by the absence of a new national agreement stepped 55,000 building workers and 2,300 maintenance craftsmen with a demand for a £15 a week increase.

Such demands, claimed Minister of Finance Ryan "could not possibly be met without rocketing unemployment, the closure of many industries and the crucifixion of the whole national economy".

None the less, this militant return to independent union bargaining pushed the Irish employers and the bureaucrats of the Executive Council of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions towards a new compromise.

PAY PAUSE

They agreed a pay pause of two months instead of nine and in an agreement which is proposed to last for 13½ months there are to be two phased payments of £2 plus 3%. This decisive cut in the Irish working class' living standards is yet to be ratified.

The craft unions have rejected it and stand by their £15 demand. The government, whose Finance Minister Ryan reiterated at an EEC meeting in Strassbourg that any pay increases would be disastrous at the present time, might well also reject it.

Ryan's alarm is very much prompted by the recently released trade figures for March. These show a trading deficit on exports against imports of a staggering £78.1 million.

This is more than double the



Liam Cosgrave,
Southern Irish Premier

£327 deficit for March last year and up again on February's high figure of £50.3 million. This dismal export performance is despite the competitive advantage of a sharply depreciating currency.

The North-East are to have their own version of the Irish Development Agency, the body that has steered the Southern economy into the choppy waters of the world recession.

Outlining the purpose of the Northern Ireland Development Agency on All Fools Day in the House of Commons, Stanley Orme revealed government strategy for securing a reliable restored Stormont.

The powers of the NIDA have been modified he said,

"to bring it into line with the newly created Welsh and Scottish agencies and to include it in the overall structure of the National Enterprise Board. It will rescue existing companies in trouble in the North, though mainly it is concerned with general reconstruction...the transformation of an economy and that is what we are talking about cannot be achieved overnight".

Workers, mainly Protestant,



Merlyn Rees

demonstrated on April 27th against this "transformation" that is destroying their jobs. 800 workers at Rolls Royce, 350 at Standard Telephones and Cables, 120 at Regna International in Derry face the sack while 2,000 skilled Ministry of Defence workers are to be phased out by 1978.

Andy Barr, the Stalinist chairman of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, recently warned that unemployment could top 80,000 (16% of the work-force) by the end of the year.

That the normally docile Protestant workers are beginning to resist is a significant development. But their 'loyalty' to the British link remains a heavy burden. "Natural wastage" and voluntary redundancy were supported by the union leaders at Standard Telephone and Cables, believing 'it would at least secure 2,800 jobs from what had been a work force of 4,300.

Now works convenor Joe Bowers says that ITT, the owners of Standard Telephones, intend to reduce the total UK work force at STC from 9,400 to 3,000; a move

which he fears will wipe out all STC jobs in the North. "STC workers are now wondering", he said, "on the wisdom of basing the Northern Ireland economy on periphery branches of international conglomerates".

The wondering is yet to be directed at the politicians who led the Protestant working class into their present plight. William Craig and James Kilfedder in Belfast and Ian Paisley at Larne were allowed to address the demonstrators.

High Tory Kilfedder caught the mood and declared, "working people must band together and demand security of employment". But not surprisingly, no demands for work sharing, occupation and expropriation were advanced.

NO ATTEMPT

In fact no attempt was made to secure a stoppage outside the defence establishments directly hit, though shop stewards from many Belfast factories attended. Instead, they heard nothing more than a plea to Westminster for special treatment and a request that Jim Callaghan come and see for himself.

Stalinist leader Andy Barr had a little to offer Belfast as David Thronley had in Dublin, when he sat mute on the Provisional's Easter platform two days before.

From such labour leaders nothing is to be expected while from a working class that in the North no less than the South refuses to accept peripheral status in multi-national plans, there are new possibilities.

The defence of jobs, the resistance to flagrant authoritarian rule and colonial exploitation by world imperialism cannot be successful without encroaching upon the rights of private property.

In this sense the permanent character of the Irish revolution can only be realised by fighting around a programme that begins with defence of national and democratic rights and living standards, and ends with the recognition of the wisdom of basing a struggle for workers' control on the firm foundation of a rationally planned economy.

POLICE LURE FAILS

The police are very upset that their £25,000 publicity campaign, launched last October, to recruit more black people into the force has been a one hundred per cent failure - it has not attracted a single applicant!

There are only 39 West Indians in the Metropolitan Police in London out of a total force of 21,000.

Worse, for the police, according to Scotland Yard's "Community Relations" branch there is: "a growing tendency for young West Indians in London to combine against police officers when they are arresting a black person".

Black youth in London's ghetto areas like Brixton are under absolutely no illusions about the role of the police. Blacks have never experienced anything but outright hostility and a high level of harassment from 'the Pigs'.

The police in large American cities like Chicago long ago abandoned 'police methods' in favour of 'military methods' against black

people in the ghettos.

The basic assumption of 'police' work is that all citizens are law abiding unless proved otherwise, and are even potential assistants to the police in their task of 'law enforcement'.

A military occupation force makes the opposite assumption - all citizens are potential enemies. Therefore the military tactic is not just to track down individual offenders but to subdue the population at large through a generalised 'show of force'.

Such a strategy involves plenty of random raids, searches, and arrests to produce a general fear of the authorities on the part of everyone.

Arrests are made often not so much to catch law-breakers as to serve a warning to the rest of the population - therefore it is not so important whether or not the individual arrested actually committed an offence or not!

This strategy is used of course by the police and military in Northern Ireland. It is known in the trade by American police as 'intensive patrolling'.

This method is now being more and more adopted here by police in black areas like Brixton, and of course completely frustrates all the publicity efforts of the 'nice policemen' of the Community Relations Branch to persuade blacks that joining the police force is very like becoming a social worker.

No conscious black worker will join an organisation whose job he well knows is to terrorise the black community.

It would be a mistake to see tactics like dozens of police with vicious dogs bursting into black homes "in search of drugs" or the mass police beatings of black youth as in the recent Carib Club incident in West London, just as a product of racial prejudice on the part of police officers, though prejudice is undoubtedly widespread.

The police are, and were con-

sciously created as, a section of the armed force to the State. As such it is their task to defend the existing system of capitalist exploitation and private property.

In "normal times" the ruling class maintains its control of the working class through the right-wing leadership of the Labour movement. The police concentrate, meanwhile, in catching 'criminals'.

However when workers move beyond the reformist leadership in the fight for jobs and living standards the class nature of the law itself is exposed and the police turn to attacking picket lines and demonstrations in defence of jobs.

The black community, especially the youth is in a similar position. They are alienated from the organised Labour movement partly as a result of the racialism and hostility to immigrants of the right-wing labour and union bureaucracy and

partly as a result of the fact that they have often never been able to find work since leaving school, owing to the racial prejudice of employers and the massive decline in jobs in inner London during the present world capitalist crisis.

The black youth of the big cities is seething with anger against a capitalist system which denies them like thousands of fellow workers a decent job and a wage.

Thus government policy, Labour and Tory, over the last ten years has been to attempt to set up organisations, notably the Community Relations Councils, which while firmly under the control of the Home Office give the illusion of being channels of reform for black people, but which, most important, place power in the hands of a local conservative middle class black leadership.

Black youth have rejected these 'Uncle Toms' and their Community Relations Officer friends and turned to militant self-organisation. It is this that police terror tactics are designed to combat.

We defend all attempts at black self-defence even while recognising their limitations.

But we insist on the need for such defence to call on the organised Labour movement for support and on the class nature of this fight against repression.

A fight for a programme in defence of jobs, carried forward against the right-wing in the Labour movement is therefore the requirement for building the unity of all sections of the working class against capitalism.



Police in Bradford preparing to attack anti-fascists

NUT CONFERENCE

VOTES FOR DISCIPLINE

NOT ACTION



NUT Conference

NO action to defeat the government's spending cuts in education; but action to hold back and defeat militant teachers wanting to fight growing unemployment, dwindling resources and undersized classes.

That was the message loud and clear from the NUT Conference at Scarborough this Easter.

The main resolution on Labour Chancellor Healey's proposed £949,000,000 cutbacks merely called on the Executive to prepare a "campaign".

UNSPECIFIED

The demands of the campaign, the forms of action which would be taken, were all left unspecified.

Mr. Alf Wiltshire, in his presidential address, after a denunciation of cuts, involving stories of schools where cockroaches abound and fungi grows on the walls, merely assured people that the "union will fight".

Not a single concrete action was proposed.

On the question of unemployment, the only leadership proposal was that older teachers should retire early so that younger ones can have their jobs.

"SELECTION"

If not enough volunteered to be sacked, the Executive admitted "there will have to be some selection."

The Executive ridiculed attempts to get a discussion on the Budget and the proposed 3% pay limit, even though this was the first major conference since it was announced.

The NUT bureaucrats were absolutely clear on their plans to suspend (and even *expel*) any member or school group who take action to oppose cuts.

OFFICER

Any individual officer of the union can initiate proceedings against a member who would be immediately suspended. The Executive also intends to line up with management if they move to victimize him.

As the WSL made clear in its leaflet to conference, these attacks on the democratic rights of union members is only part of the strategy of the trade union leaders to hold back the developing struggle.

They are frightened people desperate to stifle the growing opposition to their treacherous collaboration with the Labour government.

NOT ENOUGH

To try and head off struggle, they proclaim their "opposition" to cuts. But words are not enough.

The Executive must call national strike action to demand an immediate massive injection of finance into the education sector and a sliding scale of expenditure. They must fight for the opening of the books of the local education authorities to reveal staffing figures and other information such as the money paid to the educational suppliers. This would be information to be further used in the struggle for the nationalisation of these firms.

Dick North, an International Socialist member on the NUT Executive, almost succeeded in

passing a totally utopian amendment on government social priority payments (which are at present paid to teachers in 'socially deprived' schools).

The essence of North's proposal was to call for this money instead to be spent on extra books and facilities in these schools - though he offered no way of checking on where the money went!

ASSISTING

While not actually asking for a wage cut for these teachers (the amendment did ask that existing allowance-holders should be safeguarded) this move would, as pointed out by the Executive, be assisting the LEAs in making further cuts in the education budget.

Socialists should not call for a redistribution of the limited and dwindling resources the capitalist state grudgingly pays out for education, but should demand more where it is needed.

The WSL does not accept that the bureaucracy has the right to deprive members fighting the cuts of their trade union rights.

We call on NUT members to put motions in their branches opposing the new disciplinary rule.

A fight on this will mean a struggle against the bureaucrats nationally and locally. Especially treacherous are the Stalinists of the CP, such as Max Morris, who are the hatchet men for the Executive.

RULE 14

We have received the following reply to the 'Letter to Socialist Worker from delegates to Camden Trades Council' which appeared in our last issue.

As members of IS and Camden Trades Council Executive Committee we deny the implication from Geoff Bell & co (Open Letter 21/4/76) that we have stopped fighting Rule 14.

Our tactics in Camden are geared to the peculiarities of Camden, yet they misleadingly fail to mention these peculiarities and indeed have shown little appreciation of their significance.

Geoff Bell for instance argued that Camden should continue defying the TUC as Clay Cross defied the government - an absurd analogy. We support the idea of Trades Councils holding out where possible and in situations where they will be able to continue operating in defiance of the TUC. Unfortunately Camden is not such a situation at present. No amount of windy rhetoric can hide the fact that whereas Clay Cross was solid our Trades Council is split down the middle and the secretary is doing the TUC's dirty work for it.

The secretary, Sid Gregory, a CP member, actively pushed the TUC to suspend Camden, making acceptance of Rule 14 the condition of entry to the May 11th delegate meeting. He did this to weaken the left; left delegates excluding themselves would restore the majority which the CP/right Labour bloc once enjoyed.

Accepting the entrance condition is not an issue of principle but a matter of tactics. Treating it as a moral issue would give Gregory the result he wants. And we need to be at full strength inside the May meeting to win resolutions already tabled to remove Gregory and to initiate a campaign from within the Trades Council against Rule 14.

Of course IS supports the May 7th meeting but we don't accept counterposing a London-wide campaign to the perhaps less glamorous local struggle. Support from Camden for a wider campaign means removing Gregory and changing the balance inside the Council. His removal would be a warning to other unpaid bureaucrats who collaborate with the TUC's anti-democratic manoeuvres.

Most branches with left delegates including signatories of the "Open Letter" have voted to accept Rule 14 under protest as the only way of now continuing the fight against it inside Camden Trades Council.

Hopefully we will have the voting strength on May 11th to insist that all delegates be allowed in; to remove Gregory; and pass the resolution for joint action with other Councils leading to a national campaign against Rule 14 within Trades Councils and Trades Unions.

Yours fraternally,
James Anderson
Alaister Hatchett
Nigel Siederer

Reply by Socialist Press.

We are very pleased that after almost a fortnight, and although two issues of *Socialist Worker* have not printed the letter, three IS members can be found to take up the issues to which it refers. Although we have received the letter too late for a full reply to the points raised, we feel sure that the original signatories will be able to do this in due course.

It seems to us however that what the authors of the reply precisely fail to understand is what they take as their own starting point - the peculiarities of Camden. So obsessed are they with the replacement of one Trades Council Secretary that they fail to see the importance of making a stand against the bureaucratic machinery that is massed behind him.

It is always possible for opportunists to find 'peculiar' reasons for 'tactical' retreats. However, the importance of the situation in Camden is that resistance has begun and this can provide a starting point for a more general battle.

The manoeuvres of the Stalinists and the right-wing in Camden are an indication not of their strength but their weakness.

We will not achieve anything in this battle if we accept the narrow terrain provided by our enemies. We will only succeed if we bring the whole issue of union democracy before all London trade union bodies, and indeed into the entire Labour movement.

* * *

The issue of collaboration between the union leaders and the Labour government to cut the living standards of their members and supporters is now at the centre of the questions facing the working class movement.

This is carried on without the consent of any section of the trade union membership. Rule 14 is a small part of the efforts to gag any fight back by the working class for decent living standards.

None of this is a matter of a particular Trades Council or a particular Secretary. Trade union democracy is a question of principle and we must be prepared to take a stand until actually compelled to do otherwise.

Unless we act in this way on smaller questions, we will not prepare ourselves for the bigger struggles that lie ahead.

Of course we support genuine attempts to remove Stalinist bureaucrats such as Gregory, but we do not believe that the opportunist "tactics" being proposed by the authors of the reply will serve to further this aim.

It is those "tactics" and not the principled stand of the signatories of the "Open Letter" which have provided a way out for those pulling back from the fight.

Reader's Letter

Dear Comrade,

There has not as yet been an assessment by *Socialist Press* of the second Gay Workers Conference held in Leeds in February. This was attended by 100 people from all over Britain.

Although the various workshops generated interesting discussions on the situation of gays in the workplace (the general fight against victimisation and discrimination, and particularly the specific problems of Lesbians) and on the activity of gay people in unions, there was not sufficient discussion of these issues in the general meetings which were mostly very unproductive.

The conference did little to consolidate previous achievements and developed no real perspectives for future action.

This basic failure was largely caused by the dominance of the substantial IMG caucus. Despite frequent interventions from a few individuals, this encountered no organised opposition and was scarcely hampered by the single-

housework".

If the movement is to make real gains, it will not be by a diversion into the policies proposed at Leeds. The call was for:

"a minimal basis of agreement that will unite people from all parts of the gay movement and the Trade Union movement in action".

This 'minimal basis' turned out to be the slogan 'No discrimination on ground of sexual orientation', which offers absolutely no clear political perspective, and went hand in hand with proposals for a 'Gay Workers Manual'.

OBVIOUS

It was obvious from the discussion that this will be accessible only to workers already actively engaged in political struggle and will do nothing to give firmer direction to present struggles or to draw in other workers.

It is more than a tactical error to ignore what remains the central problem of gay liberation - the fact

who actually come out as gay at work, so that the movement has as yet no mass base.

Clearly the major area of our political activity must be in the workplace and the labour movement, but the fight in trade unions to end discrimination and victimisation must be accompanied by a campaign in the commercial gay scene, which is the only sector where gays are already organised.

What gay workers need is not charters, slogans, or manuals, but a political programme of action to integrate their demands with those of all workers and to unite them in the struggle to achieve all these aims.

The Leeds conference did not satisfy this need. It remains an urgent priority for socialists to fulfil what Lenin stated as our 'obligation to be in advance of everybody in bringing up, sharpening and solving every general democratic problem'.

Yours fraternally,
D.W.

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COWLEY: MILITANCY RISES

Strike sold out

The outcome of a strike called in the Cowley Assembly Plant of British Leyland last week by the extreme right-wing convenor, Reg Parsons, was a setback in the struggle against speed-up.

Parsons called the strike, in defence of two workers sacked by management for trumped up clocking offences, as a result of pressures arising from the growing militancy in the industry.

Parsons saw it as a way to attempt to break out of the isolation into which he has been forced in the Cowley plant.

The response to the strike was overwhelming; the majority of workers welcomed the opportunity to hit back at a management which had been on the offensive for over two years.

Meeting after meeting backed the continuance of strike action until reinstatement was won.

The T&GWU officials were brought in and the right-wing moved quickly to head off the surge of militancy which had resulted.

A secret deal was cooked up on the Friday afternoon but not revealed to the mass meeting on Monday.

At the Monday meeting a return to work was obtained, the right-wing claiming a complete victory.

It was then, after the return to work had taken place, that they agreed to suspension and removal of the two men from their jobs.

In other words the company had achieved what they set out to do. They would have preferred to sack

the workers concerned - since one of them had challenged his workload on the Princess track - but they settled for moving them off their section.

For the management this establishes an important precedent and will be used to attack other workers who present them with any

obstacle to speed-up.

But the factory cannot return to where it was. Management have made a limited gain, but militancy has risen substantially.

Once again the readiness of the working class to defend its conditions was shown clearly in practice.

Narrow win

At the BLMC Cowley Body Plant the right-wing leadership of the T&GWU received a major blow at their "participation" activities when they narrowly won the vote to continue on any "participation" committees by 31 votes to 23 at a recent meeting of the T&GWU 5/60 Branch.

This followed a similar decision by a much larger majority of the T&GWU stewards, but this stewards meeting had been the first time that "participation" was attacked by a large number of stewards, with seven voting against and with a large number of abstentions.

LEADING FIGURE

The convenor of the plant, Bill Roche, is a leading figure in "participation", he is chairman of the Cars Council. If this plant, one of the biggest in BLMC pulled out then this would be a blow to the continuation of "participation" nationally.

The two votes took place only

VICTIMISED AFTER TRIUMPH FIGHT

Following the 10-day go-slow at Triumph's Canley plant in Coventry shop steward Jack Sprung has been suspended on full pay. He is charged with conducting a camera team on an "unauthorised" tour of the plant.

As we go to press shop stewards are discussing the case. There must be a determined effort to reinstate Sprung, who has a record of conflict with the right wing.

BLOCKED

During the go-slow, which was sparked off by a dispute over productivity payments blocked by the Labour government's £6 limit, workers organised production without control of foremen and resisted attempts by right-wing T&G convenor Eddie McGarry to call off the action.

Even when the workforce returned to management fixed production levels it was only after a ballot, and agreement depended on

payment of full wages during the dispute, an assurance that the increased productivity would be taken into account in future pay negotiations, and that the company books should be open for MPs to investigate charges of investment wasted on extra supervisors.

OPPOSITION

Even so there was opposition to calling off the go-slow from 1,538 out of the 5,427 who voted. Many workers have been further angered by management's refusal to pay more than 75% wages for the period of the go-slow.

The dispute has many important lessons, the main one being the need to remove the likes of McGarry and build a new leadership.

This is all the more pressing at Canley (at present with 8,000 manual workers) where it has been announced that car production will be phased out by 1980.

TRANSFERRED

The Dolomite range is being transferred to Solihull and other models will either be transferred or run out altogether. Canley will become a plant producing engines and gear boxes.

While it has been stressed by management that there will be adequate retraining, those wishing to stay with car assembly could be found jobs at Solihull, and that redundancies are "unlikely", it is also the case that this all depends on adequate finance from the NEB.

Workers at Triumph should extend their recent demand for an MPs' investigation of the company to one for a trade union open the books committee. What are the real plans for Canley and its workers?

MAY 26 Support

The annual conference of the NUJ voted on April 29th to support the day of action called for May 26th by the Assembly of Labour.

This decision came on the same day as the decision of the Clyde Confederation and Glasgow Trades Council to support. They would also be organising a meeting of shop stewards to discuss what form "including strike action" the protest will take.

Already the Merseyside UCATT shop stewards have taken a decision to organise a stoppage and demonstration on that day and the demonstration has been supported by the joint building unions on Merseyside.

BOILERMAKERS

The London District Committee of the Boilermakers Union is circularising its branches and stewards for support.

In Oxford the right-wing on the District Committee of the AUEW voted down a call for strike action,

BUILDERS' BLIND ALLEY

The result of the 7th National Building Workers Charter Conference was the same as that of the previous six.

The Stalinist dominated editorial board programme, put before the conference was just the same as that of previous years.

On wages there was no campaign to break state control of wages; on unemployment there was the usual Stalinist advice to capitalism to reflate the economy and impose the reactionary policy of import controls; and on the jailing of Des Warren they called for "renewed activity by the trade union movement".

The latter resolution is particularly disgraceful - it doesn't even

AUEW Postal Ballots Aid Right Wing

In the recent results of several ballot elections in the AUEW there have been varied results.

In some areas the "Broad Left" candidates have made gains. In N. Ireland for instance, in the elections for Divisional Organiser they unseated a right-winger.

Other "Broad Left" victories were in the Regional Officers elections in Scotland and in the North West where they topped the ballot in areas previously held by right-wingers.

But in most elections right-wingers held their positions: in the ballot for the Assistant General Secretaryship, extreme right-winger John Weakly leads Bob Wright by 82,097 to 63,723 in the first round with 110,000 votes to be redistributed.

And in the Midlands, the right-wing made gains where they unseated two "Broad Left" supporters from the Birmingham West District Secretaryship and Divisional Organiser.

From these election results it is clear that the postal balloting system - with the capitalist press again in the localities carrying lists

of the "moderate" (right-wing) candidates and witch-hunting the opposition - is a major weapon of the right-wing.

With their policy of refusing to organise resistance to state control of wages and the advocacy of "worker Participation" by leading supporters of the "Broad Left" like Bob Wright, they get the witch-hunting of the capitalist press without in any way posing an alternative policy which militants could fight to win votes for.

While of course we urge our own members and readers to vote for the "Broad Left" candidates in the next round of elections, the necessity for an alternative to both "Broad Left" and right-wing candidates becomes clearer.

The only candidate who stood against the "Broad Left" perspectives was a WRP member in the elections for Divisional Organiser in Coventry where right-winger Jim Griffin was elected to replace another right-winger.

Griffin received 10,383 votes while the WRP member, Alan Wilkins came second with 1,578 votes, ahead of four other candidates; a clear indication that within the union workers are looking for an alternative.



Over 5,000 London trades unionists marched on May Day. All out May 26th

four members of DC voted in favour of such action. The DC has decided to support the lobby of Parliament.

The march and lobby of Parliament will be starting from Tower

Hill assembling at 1pm and moving off at 2pm. All WSL members and supporters should get strike action where possible and should support the local demonstrations or the national lobby and march.

Correction

In the article in our last edition entitled *Sheffield Stalinists Attack Jobs* there was a factual error.

We incorrectly reported that Colin Taylor and Ian Thackeray, convenor and JSSC Chairman of Laycocks had signed an agreement with management "with no recourse to stewards or membership".

We now learn that in fact 2½ years ago such an agreement was accented by a mass meeting



Stalinist industrial organiser Bert Ramelson:

ASTMS: Jenkins offers words not action



Clive Jenkins speaking at the TUC. Left phrases a speciality.

Even before it starts it is obvious that the bureaucratic leadership of ASTMS is aiming to suppress all motions demanding action from them, at the union's Eighth Annual Conference in Eastbourne on May 8th-10th.

The time tabled "Programme of Business for 1976", was issued to delegates at the end of last week. It consists of priority subjects determined in consultation between the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) and the National Executive.

Contained within it are 9 composites (covering 29 motions), 15 motions and 38 amendments. But the original agenda had 262 motions and almost as many amendments which means the SOC and NEC have discarded 218 motions according to their (very dubious) priorities.

The suppression of motions demanding action is very clear in the section on Women's Rights. The ASTMS leadership often boasts of the support it gives to the fight for women's rights but this support is only verbal.

This year all the motions on women's rights except one have been deleted from the agenda. The one that remains is the only one that does not call for anything specific but simply expresses solidarity with women's rights.

No motions on specific problems like abortion are included.

Both wage controls and import controls are on the agenda - one composite resolution of three motions for controls and one motion against.

But if the past record of the ASTMS leadership is anything to go on they will again express verbal "opposition" to any form of wage control only to toe the TUC line.

ACCEPTED

So far, regardless of firm conference policies for free collective bargaining, the Jenkins leadership has completely accepted the Government cuts in the living standard of their members.

No resolution on the preliminary agenda included the necessary policy of a fight to defend living standards through a sliding scale of wages clause linked to the rising cost of living.

But it is crucial that ASTMS delegates reject all forms of wage control and expose the capitulation of Jenkins on these questions.

On another key area of policy - the fight against redundancy and unemployment - some careful compositing by the Standing Orders Committee has "lost" an amendment and two resolutions

(from the Charing Cross and Thameside Branches) calling for a policy of fighting for work-sharing on full pay to counter employers' attempts at voluntary or compulsory redundancy.

They also in this way eliminated the linked call in the Thameside Branch for the "opening of the books for inspection by trade union representatives".

Instead a composite resolution on economic policy steers a vague course between various motions avoiding any commitment to action.

The most blatant suppression of motions is in the section headed Public Expenditure Cuts. Out of approximately thirty motions (many of them detailed) on all sections of Public Services only one motion - on Education Cuts - is on the final "Programme of Business".

All twelve motions calling for the defence of the Health Service are dropped from the agenda. In the view of the ASTMS bureaucracy, the increase in private practice and catastrophic cuts in the NHS, posing the prospect of the collapse of the service in any meaningful form, is not a "priority".

But a motion calling for the replacing of the House of Lords with a democratically

elected second house in their view apparently is a priority.

LAST YEAR

At last year's conference, a policy for the defence of the NHS was adopted. It called for the abolition of private practice both inside and outside the Health Service, an injection of finance and a sliding scale of state expenditure to protect the Health Service from inflation, and the setting up of elected Trade Union committees to look into the day to day running and finance of the Health Service.

But since the passing of this motion the NEC has done nothing to defend the NHS.

The Conference Annual Report has just one paragraph on NHS cuts, which says there "might be problems" in Merseyside and London!

The officials blithely ignore the fact that there are problems nationally; there are proposed closures in most areas and cuts are

being carried out in every NHS hospital!

The excuse given for excluding most of the NHS motions will no doubt be that they "reaffirm existing policy" - but the difference this year is while certainly reaffirming correct policy, many motions are calling on the leadership for action - not words.

Oxford Health Service Branch wants strike action; Central London Medical, a conference of Health Service members and a Trade Union enquiry, while SE London Medical calls for an active campaign for industrial action to put an end to private practice.

CHALLENGE

Delegates at the ASTMS conference must fight to have vital questions like the NHS, included in the agenda, and challenge the leadership's scandalous inaction against the cuts - which violates union policy.

Union leaders.....cont'd from Page 1.

That is why democracy and independent action are now under attack throughout the trade union movement; in the AUEW, Scanlon and the NEC order members to abandon toolroom strikes in British Leyland; in Hull, the T&GWU Regional Committee deprives 19 docks stewards of their credentials after a mass meeting rejected its recommendation; in the NUT new rules are pushed through threatening to expel members disobeying Executive instructions, while the TUC itself attempts to railroad the Rule 14 "gag" measures through Trades Councils.

The leaders, of course, attempt

to cover up their assault on democracy. The £6 limit (which has cut real take home pay by ten per cent in a year) was, they say, a "great achievement" for the trade union movement. They claim it was "accepted" by the working class.

Such a huge cut in living standards has been "accepted" only in the sense that no leadership has been given for a fight back. At every level the bureaucracy has blocked action.

In these ways the leaderships treat the views and interests of members with growing contempt.

None of the TUC's negotiating committee has the slightest mandate for the agreements they are now trying to make in the name of millions of workers.

Even when union conferences have voted in favour of wage control, as the T&GWU conference did last year, they have attached conditions about increasing social services and measures to reduce unemployment.

Yet union leaders are again ready to do a deal to cut wages with a government whose policies have enormously increased unemployment and cut social services, and whose declared aim is to cut them much further.

The only way to fight for the independent interests of the working class is to reject all forms of "social contract", conditional or unconditional.

The growing resistance in the labour movement to wage control must be built into an all-out fight to end all talks about wages between unions and government.

Trade unionists should campaign urgently for the recall of emergency union conferences to call to account these leaders and to adopt a programme - including a sliding scale of wages and social expenditure and work sharing on full pay - which can defend workers against inflation and unemployment.

Publication Fund

When the Publication Fund officially closed on May 1st we had received a further £36.80, making a grand total of £530.80. With more money still on its way to us, we have achieved a very satisfactory conclusion to the Fund.

Together with an encouraging response to our first book *The Battle for Trotskyism* this means we can now proceed to publish over the coming months a series of books and pamphlets dealing with various aspects of the current political situation as well as the history of the Trotskyist movement.

In order to further develop the work of the WSL the Monthly Development Fund which members and supporters have been fighting to collect alongside the Publication Fund, will now be raised to £600 a month.

It is important that all members, supporters and readers immediately pitch into the struggle to raise this sum, starting with the May Fund.

All donations should be sent to: WSL Monthly Development Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

RULE 14

CAMDEN TRADES COUNCIL DEFENCE COMMITTEE

PUBLIC MEETING
Friday 7th May at 7.30pm
Small Hall, Conway Hall
Red Lion Square, London

Spaincont'd from Page 1.



Arias Navarro

ced to long periods of imprisonment.

Fraga is still, however, trying to drive a wedge through the Democratic Coordination by separating the CP and left-wing parties from the Socialists and Christian Democrats.

The latter have been allowed to hold several meetings in Madrid and in early April the UGT was permitted to hold an open congress at which representatives of the Workers' Commission and USO also spoke.

The Congress showed up a significant division in the UGT (which claims 20,000 members) between supporters of the political line of Felipe Gonzalez and the leadership of the PSOE and an opposition, centred in Madrid, critical of the class-collaborationist policies of the Gonzalez leadership.

Gonzalez and UGT Secretary General Nicolas Redondo carried the Congress, but not by a huge margin. In spite of declarations that the union should be "independent" of political parties, the major posts were all kept in the hands of members of the PSOE leadership.

The Gonzalez leadership like the Stalinists have condemned Arias' latest policy speech.

But both parties have reacted with bewilderment to the growth of repression; their emphasis on peaceful struggle amounts to an attempt to disarm the Spanish working class. But the militancy of workers on May 1st shows that that will be a hard thing to do.

BACK ISSUES

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WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Liverpool

Our Programme to Defend Jobs and Wages
Tom Halls Tavern
(formerly The Strand)
Brunswick St., Near Pier Head
2.30pm May 26th.

Skelmersdale

Our Programme to Defend Jobs and Wages
Tuesday 25th May at 7.30pm
Quarrybank Community Centre,
Ormskirk Rd, Skelmersdale

Coventry

Fifty Years After the General Strike
Tuesday May 11th at 7.30pm.
Lanchester Polytechnic

Room 7128