

What we think

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Their silence was shared by the Communist Party's 'Morning Star'.

An innocent observer might be forgiven for wondering why this should be so, since until very recently, demonstrations on Vietnam by the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign were given a very big build-up by the capitalist press.

And the 'Morning Star', after all, claims to pay attention to developments in politics and the labour movement.

Supporting the Socialist Labour League and Young Socialists demonstration on Sunday were, for the first time, the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and the 'International Socialists', and Tariq Ali spoke at the mass meeting which followed.

Now the SLL and the Young Socialists are well used to the black-out treatment by both the capitalist press and the 'Morning Star'. But never before have the activities of the VSC failed to receive the attention of the press. And it is well known that the Communist Party is fond of trying to portray all such groups as more 'reasonable' than the SLL and the Young Socialists.

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There are some lessons here for everybody concerned. Certain features distinguished Sunday's demonstration and meeting from earlier Vietnam demonstrations and these were responsible for the changed attitude.

It was a demonstration primarily of workers, organized through campaigning in their factories and trade unions by the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists.

It brought together not just students, but young workers from the Young Socialists who are fighting for an alternative socialist policy and leadership and who understand that the fight on the Vietnam war is identical with the struggle in Britain on all other questions facing the working class.

The campaign was initiated and led every day by the Workers Press, and represents another big step forward in establishing this paper as a decisive factor in the class struggle.

These factors combined to produce a demonstration entirely under the political programme, organization and revolutionary discipline of the Trotskyist leadership, the Socialist Labour League, in Britain.

All this represents not a protest against the Vietnam war, which was the essence of the earlier demonstrations such as those of VSC, but a real movement for political changes in the working class.

The capitalist press previously encouraged the VSC as an alternative to the Trotskyist movement and its appeal to the youth.

In this way they wanted to separate the political fight on Vietnam and the everyday struggles of the working class.

Our demonstration represented a victory against that separation and a preparation to continue the struggle for socialist consciousness in the working class.

The press and TV silence is therefore understandable. Protest and radical phrasemongering, even when they lead to adventurous 'confrontations' with the police, are one thing.

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Nationally, close on 5,000 members of the National Union of Teachers were in the second day of their forty-eight-hour strike at a total of 345 schools.

The round-the-clock picket outside Mrs Barbara Castle's headquarters was started by placard-carrying strikers from Walworth School, Southwark.

They will be relieved tomorrow by a team from a school in the Camden area.

Both the pickets and the march from the Greater London Council's County Hall headquarters to the DES, planned for next week have been presented by the NUT executive as a means for gaining the maximum publicity for the teachers' case during this 'third wave of strikes'.

A lobby of MPs is also scheduled to take place in eight days' time. Publicity and the 'wise counsels of some MPs—to which the teachers' official leaders want the rank-and-file to hitch their wagon—are, to say the least, fickle stars.

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'Those who fought under the Biafran banner'—so long and against such difficulties', the paper says, 'had legitimate demands and aspirations.'

If the 'Star' is unable to state openly what these 'legitimate demands and aspirations' are, it is because the basis of the Biafran break-away, as we stressed yesterday in the Workers Press, was an attempt to Balkanize Nigeria in order to tighten imperialism's grip on the Eastern province's rich oilfields.

Fleet Street's synthetic emotion is part and parcel of this drive by the imperialists to keep their hands firmly on the super-profits from Nigeria.

While it castigates Wilson for arming Nigeria, the 'Star' deliberately conceals the fact that Soviet arms played as big a role as British weapons in the Nigerian victory.

Also, of course, it hides the support for Biafra from fascist Portugal and Gaullist France.

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The British Communist Party's new-found opposition to Soviet policy in Nigeria, like that to the invasion of Czechoslovakia, is entirely unprincipled.

It is opposing the Soviet Union solely in order to embrace imperialist interests, once again in response to the same middle-class pressures.



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Czech attack heralds new purge

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THE CZECH Ministry of the Interior announced on Monday that it had uncovered a 'Trotskyite' organization which had allegedly been 'urging the overthrow of the political system.'

The statement claimed that the organization had aimed at creating a 'political crisis' in Czechoslovakia, and had attempted to build up cells throughout the country.

This latest stage in the Stalinist purge is, without doubt, the most sinister.

The trial and execution of Slansky and ten other leading Czech Communist Party members in 1953 was based on framed-up charges involving a 'Trotskyist' plot to overthrow the Czech government and restore capitalism.

Spy
Yugoslav President Tito was alleged to have masterminded this 'plot' and was slandered as a fascist spy and assassin in the pay of imperialism.

To charge real or imaginary groups of Trotskyists with creating a 'political crisis' in Czechoslovakia is too absurd for words.

What we have seen building up for many years in Czechoslovakia is the crisis of Stalinism, which develops through the bitter clash between the revolutionary needs of the working class and the privileged interests of the

counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy. Trotskyism as a theory and a movement arose through a fight to understand and oppose the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy; it did not create it.

The Kremlin-backed bureaucracy of Prague, however, have no interest in the finer points of Marxist theory and history.

Entrench
Novotny's old friends in the Party apparatus and secret police are taking advantage of Husak's drive against the pro-Dubcek wing of the Party to entrench themselves even more firmly.

Those that raise the slander of 'Trotskyite plots' in Czechoslovakia do so with the tacit agreement, if not encouragement, of the Soviet Party leaders.

The uncovering of such a fictitious plot could well be the necessary prelude to a show trial of Czech oppositionists, in which police stooges could easily figure as some of the 'Trotskyist' plotters, as they did in the three Moscow Trials of 1936, 1937, and 1938.

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The demonstration began when Mr Agnew laid a wreath at the Australian war memorial, the first official function of his visit.

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POLICE WANT STRIKE: The right of police to strike over pay and conditions will be demanded at the Scottish Police Federation's annual conference in May.

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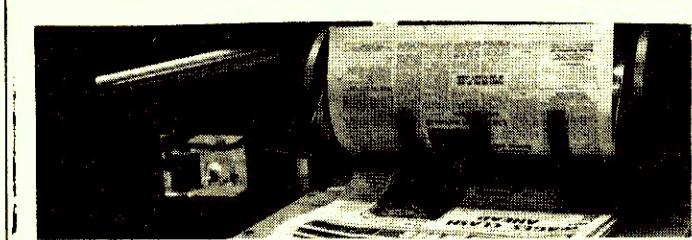
In a letter to all London area MPs, he claimed the fares as a whole under this system would be less than under any other because the costs would be lower.

of its analysis to the ideas of Trotskyism. It was precisely to halt and crush this fermentation of ideas among intellectuals and the working class that the Soviet bureaucracy took its decision to intervene.

The excuse that Czechoslovakia stood on the verge of counter-revolution and capitalist restoration was simply a transparent attempt to provide a militant-sounding cover for its action against the Czech state and working class.

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Sunday January 25, 2-30 p.m.

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As previously reported in the Workers Press, the AEF's Swindon district committee has already called for the executive's backing—a call which has now been supported by the union's South London district committee and the Battersea No. 1 branch.

Now Tottenham No. 7 branch—which has already itself endorsed the campaign—has unanimously approved the following resolution:

'Considering the enormous damage done to the labour movement by the continued co-operation of the British and American governments in the Vietnam war and the so-called defence of South-East Asia, we call on executive council to officially endorse the campaign to stop Wilson's visit to Washington which we consider a symbolic gesture to Nixon.'

Four members of the union's executive have already put their signatures individually to the Workers Press petition, which is on similar lines.

FURTHER support for the campaign has come in from the North-East coast. In South Shields, 20 Tailors' and Garment Workers' Union members from John Collier's clothing factory—including shop steward Anna Gardie and Communist Party member J. Riddle—have signed the Workers Press petition.

In Gateshead, seven members of the local NUR No. 1 branch—including branch secretary Alec McFaddon—and four members of AEF No. 2 branch have signed.

Among the Gateshead AEF members signing was branch secretary T. G. Anderson.

The petition has been signed in Newcastle by T. G. Herron, president of the Newcastle Colliery Mechanics' Association and secretary of Blaydon Labour Party; Les Allen, Communist Party member and convenor of Thermal Syndicator W. T. Laws, Trades Council delegate and chairman of Newcastle Hospitals ASTMS branch, and by five AEF members at Vickers' Elswick works.

Six members of Sunderland Trades Council—including E. Ennev, secretary of the local DATA branch, and Communist Party members G. Price, W. Vincent and R. Dunn—have signed the petition.

In Reading, more than 100 trade unionists, tenants, young workers and students have signed the petition.

THIRTY-TWO ETU, PTU, ASW, ASTMS and T&GWU members from ICI's Wilton site have signed the petition.

Among them were T&GWU convenor J. Grace, ETU convenor P. F. Marshall and PTU convenor K. Nilan.

AT Daniel Doncaster's engineering plant, Sheffield, 33 workers have signed the petition. Included were three Communist Party members and AEF shop steward H. Parker.

Quarterly
Other Sheffield signatories include eight workers from Temperley Springs—among them AEF convenor E. Beard and Communist Party member J. Ryan—and ten shop stewards attending the AEF quarterly meeting.

A SUCCESSFUL campaign by Nottingham Young Socialists has brought the support of Trades Council members S. Platt, G. Challand and P. Reid; T&GWU full-time official C. Mason; T&GWU 591 branch chairman J. Burton; Students' Union president T. Smith; journalist R. Gosling and Communist Party members N. McMillan, R. Parry, R. Mock, R. Sharpe, G. Cant and E. Singleton.

Thamesmead
Bernie Fuller, ASW Thamesmead site steward and Communist Party member, has signed the Workers Press petition.

Tony Lee, Ford shop steward from the South Croydon plant, was among 67

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Striking Spanish miners change tactics

FACED WITH the threat of dismissal, the striking Spanish miners have been compelled to change their tactics. Miners' leaders are reported to have worked out a plan to maintain pressure on the company—Hunosa—by rotating the pits affected by strike action. At its peak last Saturday, 30,000 miners were out. The men are demanding bigger bonuses, increased sick pay and basic wages. The company has so far refused to meet these demands. The militancy of the strikers confirms that the Spanish working class has fully recovered from its defeat in the Civil War of 1936-1939, and has no fears about taking on the Franco regime and its capitalist backers.

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Many teachers are in-

creasingly dissatisfied with what they regard as 'safety-valve' policies from the NUT executive.

Even the long-awaited 'area withdrawals', much less national strike action, have not so far emerged.

Although many branches meet tonight to discuss proposals for area action, teachers point out that the executive is going to put this first to a referendum before bringing forward concrete plans.

As one London striker told the Workers Press: 'All the emphasis now is being placed in how "reasonable" the £135 claim is.

'They're saying "all we want to do is get back our 1967 living standards". The claim is, in fact, calculated on that basis.

Emphasis

'At the same time, all the emphasis is being placed on salaries and none on fighting the education cuts in general.

'I think the executive wants to avoid a struggle against the government in any form. They really want us to believe a publicity campaign is going to soften the Burnham Committee's heart.

'One teacher who got up at Monday's strike meeting to question whether this policy had any real effect was just ignored by the executive.

'They just won't discuss this.

With the government determined to make an incomes-policy test case of the teachers' claim, these are dangerous trends.

'Protest'

So-called 'left' tendencies, such as the Communist Party and the International Socialist group, are busily helping the official leaderships sell protest politics to the teachers all along the line.

Covering up with claims that 'teachers are a conservative section', 'they won't support any wider action' and 'nobody will strike unless they're on full pay', they in fact help to strengthen the government's determination to stand firm.

Only all-out action on a national scale is going to break that determination.

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THE FORMATION of the Third, Communist International in March 1919 made huge inroads into the ranks of the reformist parties of the Second International in most capitalist countries.

But nowhere did the new Communist Parties succeed in winning a majority of the working class.

After the subsiding of the first post-war revolutionary wave the Communist International had to face up to the reality that, while it commanded only minority support in the working class, there could be no question of a struggle for power.

This was the lesson that Lenin and Trotsky drew not only from the experiences of Bolshevism in the Russian Revolution, but also from the attempt by the leaders of the German Communist Party to artificially convert a sharp but still partial struggle of miners in central Germany into an insurrection, while the bulk of the working class remained passive after previous defeats.

This theory of the 'offensive' was condemned by Lenin and Trotsky as an adventurist short-cut to power that evaded the vital struggle to win the confidence and leadership of the majority of the working class.

This is the historical background to the tactic of the United Front.

While social democracy maintained its grip on the bulk of the working class there could be no talk of revolution and little prospect of even partial struggles succeeding without the backing of reformist-led workers.

Both the unity of the class and the struggle against social democracy demanded a change of tactics by the Communist Parties in those countries where the Third International had won significant, but not decisive, support.

The limits and possibilities of united front agreements between the parties of the Second and Third Internationals were carefully laid down in many documents published by the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

IMG's claim

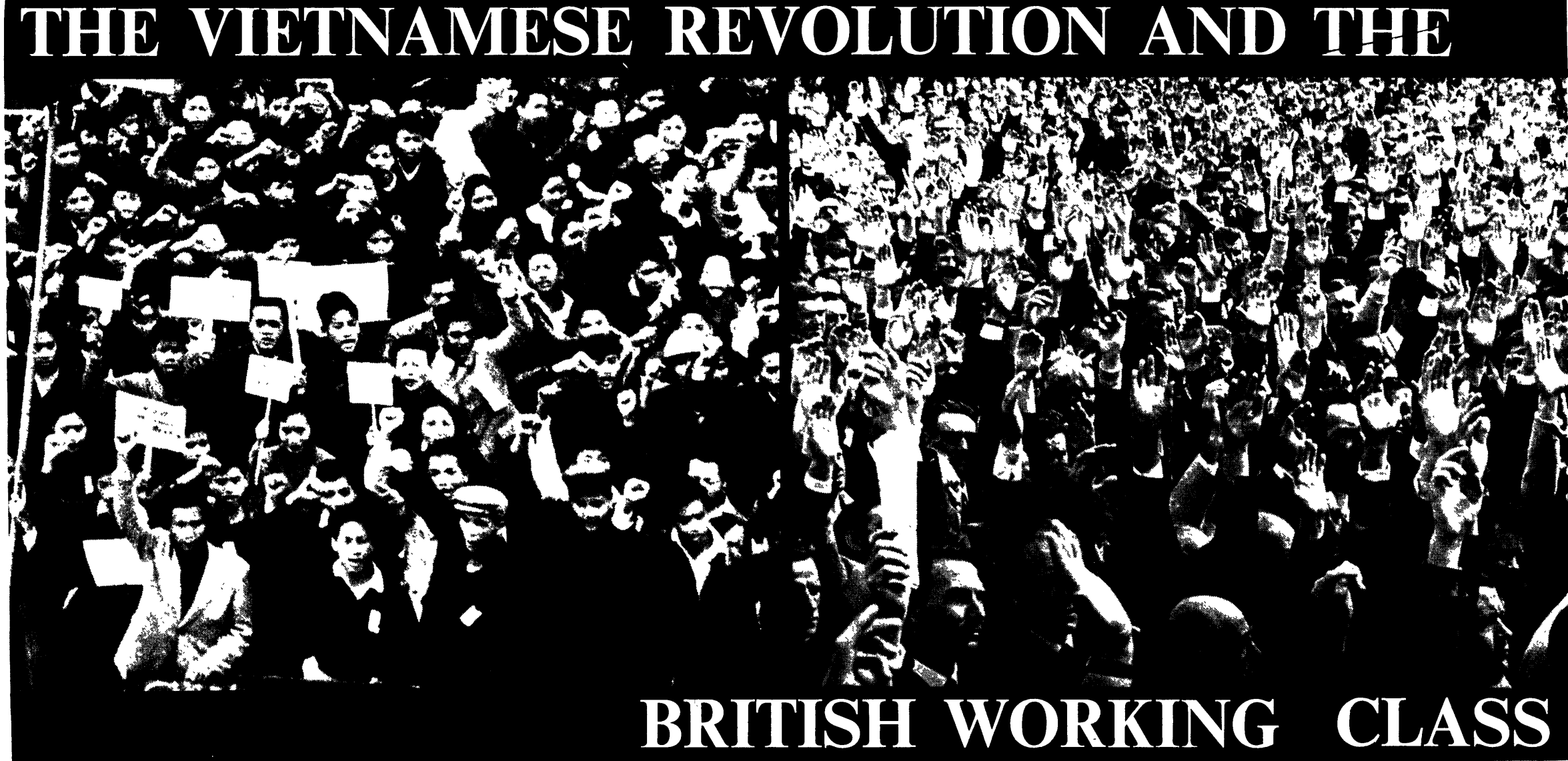
We must refer to these documents when evaluating the International Marxist Group's claim that they are applying the tactic of the United Front in the work of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign.

In the December 1921 Directive on the United Front, the Executive Committee of the Comintern made the following points:

"The communist vanguard can only gain if new sections of workers are convinced by their own experience of the illusory character of reformism and compromise. . . . While accepting a basis for action, communists must retain the unconditional right and the possibility of expressing their opinion of the policy of all working-class organizations without exception, not only before and after action has been taken, but also, if necessary, during its course. In no circumstances can these rights be surrendered."

So even within the terms of the Pablotto conception of the united front (which we, of course, reject) this Leninist principle of maintaining the right to criticize was broken by the VSC, even though our attacks were aimed at a tendency that had been excluded from the campaign on the grounds that it had refused to accept the position of solidarity with Vietnam.

In the Comintern Manifesto 'For the United Proletarian Front' of January 1922, the tactical nature of the United Front was made still clearer:



THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION AND THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS

... we say to you: All right, you do not yet dare to take up the fight for the new, the struggle for power, for the dictatorship, with arms in hands; you are not ready to launch the great offensive on the citadels of world reaction. But at least rally for the fight for bare life, for bread, for peace. Rally for these, struggle in one fighting front, rally as the proletarian class against the class of exploiters.

"Tear down the barriers erected between you and come into the ranks, whether communist or social-democrat, anarchist or syndicalist, to fight for the needs of the hour."

"When you begin the fight you will see that you need the sword of dictatorship if you are to triumph. But we know that this dictatorship is possible only if the great majority of the proletariat reach it through their own experience, and that is why the Communist International and the communist parties, in patience and fraternity, wish to march together with all other proletarians, even if they fight on the basis of capitalist democracy."

This then was the united front; a fighting agreement between the main organizations of the working class, initiated by the communist parties where they had sufficient mass following to compel the social-democratic leaders to take such proposals seriously.

Such conditions certainly applied in Germany, France and Italy at the time these documents were written. They most certainly do not apply to Britain today.

If there is any doubt on this point we refer readers to Trotsky, who wrote in March 1922:

"In cases where the Communist Party still remains an organization of a numerically insignificant minority, the question of its conduct on the mass-struggle front does not assume a decisive practical and organizational significance."

"In such conditions, mass actions remain under the leadership of the old organizations which by reason of their still-powerful traditions, continue to play the decisive role. Similarly the problem of the United Front does not arise in countries where—as in Bulgaria, for example—the Communist Party is the sole leading organization of the toiling masses."

"But wherever the Communist Party already constitutes a big, organized, political force, but not the decisive magnitude; wherever the party embraces organizationally, let us say, one fourth, one third or even a larger proportion of the organized vanguard, it is confronted with the question of the United Front in all its acuteness." (The First Five Years of the Communist International, Vol. two, page 92, emphasis added).

Some important lessons

A SERIES OF THREE ARTICLES BY ROBERT BLACK—PART TWO

It is absolutely impossible to pretend that in Britain any party or tendency claiming to be communist commands such a mass support in the working class to make the tactics of the united front applicable.

So, from its very first issue, 'International' undertook the revision of Leninism. It carried on where 'The Week' left off.

The united front is applicable only to the struggle for leadership within the mass organizations of the working class.

The IMG transposes this tactic into the middle-class circles of student protest that dominate the political life of the VSC.

And they go further than this. When the National Council of the VSC published its statement of policy, it made enormous concessions to the Stalinist revision of the united front: "Our campaign recognizes its own historical precedents [this at least is correct], in the 1930s, united fronts composed of liberals, democrats, communists and socialists were forged to oppose the onslaught of fascism, and International Brigades were organized to lend material support to the heroic struggle of republican Spain to defeat the fascist intervention."

"These struggles were joined and supported by people of diverse political views, from parties with diverse political programmes, united only in their opposition to the fascist

menace' (emphasis added).

What is described as the united front here is the old Stalinist blue-print for defeat, the **Popular Front!**

It was precisely this alliance of liberals, democrats, communists [note, not Stalinists] and socialists that strangled the Spanish Revolution and handed the working class and poor peasantry over to the fascists.

For good measure, the same formula, with identical results, was applied by the Stalinists in France.

Messrs Jordan, Purdie and Ali also know that it was precisely to fight the betrayals perpetrated by the Stalinist popular front that Trotsky insisted on the foundation of the Fourth International in 1938. But Pablotism has long renounced the struggle to build Trotsky's international.

Instead it devotes its energies to revising the programme of the Fourth International, by substituting Stalinist conceptions such as the popular front carefully dressed up in the Leninist language of the united front.

Rightwards turn

The 'historical precedent' in which the VSC's 'united front' is the rightward turn of the Soviet bureaucracy towards alliances with capitalist 'liberals' after the victory of the German Nazis in 1933.

In winding up his previous tactic of denouncing social democrats as 'social fascists', greater enemies of the working class than even the real fascists, Stalin returned not to the united front of Lenin, but to the popular front now revived by the Pablottes, here and in the United States.

The essence of the Stalinist popular front was its support for class collaboration. As the VSC policy statement rightly says, it was "composed of liberals, democrats, communists and socialists."

This turn in Stalinist policy was proclaimed at the 7th Congress of the Communist International in August 1935.

But Thorez, leader of the French Stalinists, had already applied the new policy by opening negotiations with the bourgeois Radical Party earlier the same year.

His report to the 7th Congress puts the VSC statement in its true Stalinist perspective:

"On the eve of each of the two congresses of the Radical Party, in Nantes in October and in Lyons in March, the Communist Party organized big meetings where representa-

tives of the Central Committee outlined our conception of the People's Front, addressing themselves to the Radical delegates. . . . At the end of May the Party decided to extend the People's Front still further. . . ."

Upon invitation, the Socialist Party associated with our initiative. The Radical Party, the Republican Socialist Party, the Socialist Party of France [a section of this Party, led by Marcel Deat, was to pass over to fascism very rapidly], the Group of Left Independents and the Pupist groups (composed of renegades from our Communist Party) replied to our call."

This is exactly the alliance proposed by the VSC.

By its very class and political nature, the programme of such a combination automatically excludes a programme based on the requirements of



A Popular Front demonstration in Spain organized by the Stalinists. The Popular Front successfully strangled the Spanish Revolution.

the working class, because in the alliance are drawn the political spokesmen for the liberal bourgeoisie.

This was precisely the intention of the Stalinists in beginning the "popular front manoeuvre, and of the Radicals and the Republicans in Spain supporting it.

Trapped in this way between Stalinism, social democracy and the 'liberal capitalist' working class was stifled and led to defeat.

For this reason the experiences of the popular front are recorded in the 'Transitional Programme of the Fourth International' adopted at its founding conference in 1938.

The IMG claims to adhere to this programme. What have they to say on its indictment of the alliance of 'liberals,

democrats, communists and socialists'?

"Under the banner of the October Revolution, the conciliatory politics practised by the 'People's Front' dooms the working class to impotence and clears the road for fascism. "People's Front" on the one hand—fascism on the other: these are the last political resources of imperialism in the struggle against the proletarian revolution" ('Transitional Programme', pp. 9-10).

In revising the 'Popular Front' under the guise of the United Front, the IMG thus gives a 'left' even 'Leninist' cover to the betrayals of the Stalinists who shortly after the launching of the 'International' joined forces with the VSC to turn the campaign towards pressure on Wilson.

The theoretical justification for this turn had already been mapped out by Pat Jordan in his article 'Marxists and the Labour Party'. ('International', Vol. 1 No. 2):

"Activities such as the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and the workers' control campaign keep together unorganized militants in meaningful activity and exert pressure on local labour parties."

This is just a more 'left' version of the Stalinist line of pressure on Wilson. And as we shall see, the two theories converged during the preparations for the October 27, 1968, demonstration.

In earlier demonstrations organized or supported by the VSC, the Stalinists were attacked for opposing raids on various 'symbols' of imperialism or for favouring different routes of march to those proposed by the VSC.

Much hot air was generated in the columns of 'Black Dwarf' over these questions, and it seemed as if there were important differences between the rival factions.

For example, in a three-cornered debate in the 'Black Dwarf' of August 14, 1968,

'A bit of organized activity, movement, whistles, masks, drums, props. . . . The scene is that political action is more a reality lately. Right now the kids are angry. In the stomach not in the head. It's that easy.'

With the 'brains' of the 'Black Dwarf' guerrillas firmly embedded in their stomachs, it certainly was 'that easy' for the Stalinists.

When it came to resisting the Stalinist take-over of the VSC in relation to policies, the ranters of 'Black Dwarf' were mere babes-in-arms.

In the July 1968 number of 'International', the glad tidings were announced, the YCL had adhered to the 'solidarity' position of the VSC:

"So far as we are concerned we are extremely pleased that the YCL has changed its position on the struggle against the war in Vietnam. . . . we must recognize this as a step forward."

So behind the bluster and bravado of the 'Black Dwarf' over military strategy, the IMG was extending its hand to the Stalinists.

The political line of the projected October 27 demonstration was also being carefully tailored to meet the reformist requirements of the Stalinists.

Above all, insisted 'International', the main blows of the campaign must not fall on the Labour government:

"It must be around a militant policy of support for the Vietnam people against American imperialism. It should, of course, have as a secondary target, the exposure of the British government's role. But this is not best done by blurring the issue into a general anti-Wilson government demonstration. We are in favour of that type of demonstration but it is not the job of VSC to organize it." (emphasis added.)

For the IMG solidarity with the Vietnamese people can be expressed and developed without a struggle against the enemy at home—the British ruling class and its agents in

to be the largest ever reveals the phenomenal growth of political consciousness among militants throughout the country. Two facts show how the press campaign has failed: organizations have continued to join the October 27 Ad Hoc Committee (two recent additions were the Student Movement and Slant, the left-Catholic group).

Tariq Ali should not have been surprised by the entry of the church into the campaign. Once the Stalinists were brought in without any firmly agreed political and class lines, their baggage train of assorted liberals and clergy were certain to follow and after all the policy statement by the VSC quoted earlier sung the praises of this type of alliance.

Now, with the aid of the Stalinists, the alliance was beginning to take shape, with the 'Trotskyists' of the IMG right in the middle.

Ali rounded off his explanation of 'Why we are marching' with the ill-advised boast that:

"October 27, whatever happens, will be a momentous day in the history of the British left."

Those on the revolutionary left who participate [the Student Christian Movement?] will be the core of a new movement. (Those who stay away will be consigned to the proverbial dustbin of history.)

It will continue to grow until a revolutionary left socialist movement strong enough to settle accounts with British imperialism emerges. That is why we are marching.' (emphasis added.)

That may have been why Tariq Ali thought he was marching, but it was certainly not why the Stalinists joined the march. This was, of course, understood by all concerned.

Ali claims that the march of October 27 was a step towards the construction of the revolutionary party in Britain. Yet how can this be reconciled with Pat Jordan's statement in the same issue of 'International':

"Very suddenly the Communist Party changed its line and the YCL has been active in the preparations for October 27. This change of line fills us with great joy and we look forward to seeing members of the Communist Party breaking with other aspects of their Stalinist past." (emphasis added).

Since when has support for the popular front involved a break with Stalinism?

Break from Trotskyism

Betty Reid's anti-Trotskyist pamphlet 'The Ultra-Left in Britain' reveals that satisfaction, if not active joy, was also felt in Stalinist circles as it became more and more clear that the IMG not only were breaking, but had broken, from their Trotskyist past:

"In March 1968 an Ad Hoc Committee initiated by the VSC held a demonstration in which Communists and members of the Young Communist League took part as a conscious and organized action. [emphasis added.] Other activities initiated by the Ad Hoc Committee culminated, in the very big and successful October 27 demonstration in 1968. . . . The character of the leadership and material produced, and the co-operation of the non-socialist forces [a reference to Ali's warm welcome for the Stalinists' clerical allies] was a very great advance on previous demonstrations they had organized. . . . the tone. . . was positive, and resulted in a high degree of unity of all forces excluding the small lunatic fringe."

Even Ernie Tate of the International Marxist Group wrote an article on the lessons of the demonstration which was a far cry from the days when he launched into a similar article. . . . describing a previous demonstration and gleefully retailing the number of police casualties as the first positive results to record'. (p. 56.)

Jordan claims that Communist Party support for October 27 was the beginning of a break from that Party's Stalinist past.

Yet Reid, a hard-line Stalinist, claims that it was the IMG that saw reason, and dropped its noisy leftism to settle down in joint harmony with her 'non-socialist forces'.

It lies beyond the scope of this article to go into the details of the IMG's current move towards the 'liberal' wing of the British Communist Party, headed by Monty Johnstone.

Bob Purdie, who with Jordan is the main exponent of theory that the term Stalinism is no longer applicable to the British Communist Party, will no doubt find the appropriate excuses for the 'anti-Stalinist' Johnstone's refusal to sign our petition demanding that Wilson cancel his visit to Washington.

It was this agreement on the question of pressure on social democracy that had brought together the Stalinists and the IMG in the campaign for the October 27 demonstration. Far from being, as Tariq Ali claimed, the beginning of a new movement, the demonstration proved to be the death agony of a very old one: radical protest.



Lenin and Trotsky saw from the experience of the German Insurrection in 1918 (left) that it was necessary to win the confidence and leadership of the majority of the working class before making a struggle for power.

FRANCE

Campaign against Garaudy continues

THE PERIOD leading up to the National Congress of the French Communist Party is witnessing an unprecedented campaign against the ideas of Roger Garaudy, leading spokesman in the 'dialogue' with the Church and opponent of the Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia in August 1968.

Although Garaudy has been permitted to have his say in an article published in the Party daily, 'L'Humanité', a methodical attack on his position is being carried out.

Contributions

These include contributions from Party members in the same paper and a 20-page critique in the monthly journal directed to party intellectuals, 'La Nouvelle Critique'.

Garaudy for a long time enjoyed a licensed position to engage in discussion with reverend Jesuits and generally to show how 'flexible' the Party could be.

His own record is that of a firm Party-liner for many years who, amongst other things, wrote an orthodox, i.e. Stalinist, thesis which earned him a doctorate from Moscow University in Stalin's day.

Garaudy was able to square his conscience with the needs of the Stalinist bureaucracy and with Thorez for many years.

His pen was always at their disposal to pervert Marxism and cover up their tracks.

He saw many of his old friends denounced by Party hacks, expelled or forced to leave. He accepted the Soviet version of the Hungarian Revolution just as he swallowed many other things about which, in his position as a member of the Central Committee and a frequent visitor to Russia and eastern Europe, he could hardly plead ignorance.

It is now easy for his enemies in the Party to show that the rightward course was visible many years ago.

Whatever his personal contribution, there is no doubt that in the main he was faithfully interpreting the Party line. Even over Czechoslovakia he only carried the official criticism of the intervention a stage further.

The important thing now is to destroy Garaudy politically; a task which is rendered all the easier by the nature of his political position.

BY TOM KEMP

Before the Party membership he can be denounced as an unreliable intellectual who has broken with Marxism.

The 'dialogue' with the Catholics, treated sceptically by many worker-members anyway, can, by implication, be used to discredit him.

At this time, too, the Garaudy affair performs a useful function.

It draws criticism away from the Party leaders and focuses it on one deviant individual.

Tactics

There have been many occasions in the history of the French Party when similar tactics have been used: against the famed 'Barbe-Celor group' in the early 1930s, then against Doriot, and, since the war, against Auguste Leceur, André Marty and others.

It is not surprising that Garaudy is unable to make a Marxist critique of the Party's past or of its relations with the Soviet bureaucracy.

Instead of turning towards the working class, Garaudy sees a special role for intellectuals, technicians and other sections: the very clientele courted by 'new left' tenden-

cies such as the Unified Socialists (PSU).

Perhaps it is in the Party of Rocard that Garaudy will find his next political home.

Garaudy is a product of French Stalinism which he has done so much to make palatable to the intellectuals. It is significant that when he began to remove the blinkers with which the Party had equipped him for so long, he moved instinctively towards the position of reformist socialism.

In a negative way he exposes the hypocrisy of the official line which has long pointed out and cautiously followed the road which he pursues at break-neck speed.

Criticisms

The official criticisms of Garaudy's writings are valueless as contributions to Marxism, correct as some of them may formally be.

It would be necessary to carry the criticism much further, to take in all the revisions of Marxism which the Party has officially encouraged for the past 40 years.

Criticism of the Party is probably more ready to break

out in the rank and file than at any previous time. There is the obvious question of the Party's role in the May-June events in 1968.

The leadership must avoid a fundamental discussion about the general strike and whether or not there was a revolutionary situation.

Its position on Czechoslovakia also evokes criticism both from those who regard it as retreating from its initial stand of opposition to military intervention under Soviet pressure and that from those old-timers who regard the original opposition as being a betrayal of the Soviet Union.

'Orthodoxy'

In directing all its fire on Garaudy's open revision of Marxism, the Stalinist leadership of the French Communist Party is able to make a great parade of its own orthodoxy.

But more and more workers, and especially the youth, are realizing that this claim is bogus and that the French Communist Party has been the home of opportunism ever since it embraced the Stalinist tactic of the 'popular front' in the middle-1930s.

It is to this period of Stalinist degeneration, and its roots in the reformist theory of 'socialism in one country', that advanced workers in France must now direct their attention.

WEDNESDAY TV

BBC 1

9.15 a.m. Schools. 12.25-12.50 p.m. Nai Zindagi-Naya Jeevan. 1.00 Disc A Dawn. 1.30 Watch With Mother. 1.45-1.53 News and Weather. 2.05-2.50 Schools. 4.20 Play School. 4.40 Jackanory. 4.55 Tales of Tsar Sultan. 5.15 Tom Tom. 5.44 Hector's House. 5.50 National News and Weather. 6.00 London-Nationwide. 6.45 The Doctors. 7.10 Laugh Parade: 'Merry Andrew'. With Danny Kaye. A timid schoolmaster becomes involved with a travelling circus. 8.50 Main News and Weather. 9.10 Wednesday Play: 'Mille Miglia'. Play about Stirling Moss. 10.15 International Football: England v. Holland. 11.00 24 Hours. 11.35 Weather.

ITV

11.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m. Schools. 4.17 Tingha and Tucker. 4.30 Crossroads. 4.55 Lift Off. 5.20 Redgauntlet. 5.50 News. 6.03 Today. 6.30 The Ghost and Mrs Muir. 7.00 This Is Your Life. 7.30 Coronation Street. 8.00 The Champions. 9.00 Kate. 10.00 News At Ten. 10.30 Lonnie. With Lulu and Miki Antony. 11.00 Professional Wrestling. 11.45 What The Papers Say. 12 midnight The Best Days Of Your Life.

REGIONAL BBC

All regions as BBC-1 except at the following times:
Midlands and East Anglia: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Midlands Today, Look East, Weather, Nationwide. 11.37 News, Weather.
North of England: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Look North, Weather, Nationwide. 11.37 News, Weather.
Wales: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Wales Today, Weather, Nationwide. 6.45-7.10 Heddw.
Scotland: 2.30-2.50 p.m. Modern Studies. 6.00-6.45 Reporting Scotland. 10.15-11.00 Sportsreel. 11.37 News, Weather.
Northern Ireland: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Scene Around Six, Weather, Nationwide. 11.37 News, Weather.
South and West: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Points West, South Today, Spotlight South, West, Weather, Nationwide. 11.37 News, Weather.

REGIONAL ITV

CHANNEL: 11.00-11.57 a.m. Schools. 1.40-3.00 p.m. Schools. 4.04 Puffin's Birthday Greetings. 4.11 Hatty Town. 4.20 Finders Seekers. 4.55 London. 6.00 Channel News and Weather. 6.10 The Pursuers. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Treasure Hunt. 7.30 London. 8.00 The Saint. 9.00 London. 11.45 Epilogue followed by News and Weather in French followed by Weather.
SOUTHERN: 11.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m. London. 4.00 Houseparty. 4.15 News. 4.17 London. 6.00 Day By Day. 6.30 The Doris Day Show. 7.00 London. 8.00 Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased). 9.00 London. 10.30 Facing South. The problems of coastal erosion. 10.50 News. 11.00 London. 11.45 Weather followed by Heroine of the Congo.
WESTWARD: As Channel except: 11.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m. London. 4.02 News. 4.04 The Gas Honeybun Show. 6.00 Westward Diary. 11.40 Faith For Life. 11.46 Weather.
ANGLIA: 11.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m. London. 4.30 Newsroom. 4.35 Romper Room. 4.55 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 London. 8.00 Marcus Welby MD. 9.00 This is... Tom Jones. 10.00 London. 11.45 Reflection.
HARLECH: 11.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m. London. 4.18 It's Time For Me. 4.25 Mr Piper. 4.55 London. 6.01 Report. 6.20 Batman. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 London. 8.00 Marcus Welby MD. 9.00 London. 11.45 Weather.
HARLECH (Wales) as above except: 3.25-4.18 p.m. The Prisoner. 4.25 Introduce. 4.29-4.55 London. 6.00 Y Dydd. 6.26 Castle Haven. 6.51-7.00 Report.
ATV MIDLANDS: 11.00-11.57 a.m. Schools. 1.40-3.00 p.m. Schools. 4.00 News. 4.02 Women Today. 4.15 Peyton Place. 4.40 Tingha and Tucker. 4.55 London. 6.00 ATV Today. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 London. 8.00 Department 5.
9.00 London. 11.45 Pulse followed by Weather.
ULSTER: 11.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m. London. 4.30 Romper Room. 4.50 Ulster News Headlines. 4.55 London. 6.00 UTV Reports. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 London. 8.00 Marcus Welby MD. 9.00-11.45 London.
YORKSHIRE: 11.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m. London. 4.00 Houseparty. 4.15 News. 4.17 Hatty Town. 4.30 F Troop. 4.55 London. 6.00 Calendar. Weather. 6.30 The Beverly Hillbillies. 7.00 London. 8.00 The Saint. 9.00 This is... Tom Jones. 10.00 London. 11.45 Weather.
GRANADA: 11.00-11.57 a.m. Schools. 1.40-3.00 p.m. Schools. 4.45 Encore University Challenge. 4.15 News. 4.17 London. 4.25 The Short Story. 4.55 London. 6.00 Newsview followed by Octopus. 6.30 The Beverly Hillbillies. 7.00 London. 8.00 Laredo. 9.00 London. 11.00 The Papers. 11.20 Wrestling.
TYNE TEES: 11.00-11.57 a.m. Schools. 1.40-2.55 p.m. Schools. 4.10 Newsroom. 4.13 Sean The Leprechaun. 4.30 Women On The Warpath. 4.53 Newsroom. 4.55 London. 6.00 Today At Six. 6.30 Focus On Youth. 7.00 London. 8.00 Man In A Suitcase. 9.00 London. 11.45 News. 12.02 a.m. God In Good Season.
SCOTTISH: 11.00-11.57 a.m. Schools. 1.40-3.00 p.m. Schools. 4.20 Scotland Early. 4.30 London. 6.00 Scotland Now followed by Police Call. 6.30 Raw Deal? 7.00 London. 10.30 Sportsport. 11.00 London. 11.45 Late Call.
GRAMPIAN: 10.58-11.57 a.m. Schools. 1.38-3.00 p.m. Schools. 4.17 Hatty Town. 4.30 Calendar. Weather. 6.30 Grampiam News. 6.10 Grampiam Week. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 London. 8.00 Gideon's Way. 8.55 Police News. 9.00-11.45 London.

BBC 2

11.00-11.20 a.m. Play School. 7.05 Square Two. 7.30 News and Weather. 8.00 Man Alive: 11 Plus, part 1: The Old Way. 8.50 Solo: Jeremy Brett as Byron: a portrait. 9.10 Show Of The Week: The Morecambe and Wise Show. 9.55 Europa: Woman's Place in the World. 10.30 My World... And Welcome To It. 10.55 News, Weather. 11.00 Line-Up.

CINEMA

By Brian Moore

A reckoning



Nicol Williamson in a scene from 'The Reckoning' currently showing at the Plaza cinema, Piccadilly.

'THE RECKONING', directed by Jack Gold and written by John McGrath, now showing at the Plaza, is, I think, a dangerous film.

At the outset I must say that this is not due to the intentions of the makers, but there are elements in the film which are confused and ambiguous which turn their intentions against them.

It is worth examining these weaknesses because I believe they flow from a basic political and theoretical confusion and they provide at the same time some insight into their sources. First, let's see what is the film's narrative.

Mick Marler is a pushing, ambitious, ruthless sales executive. He has energy and quick responses, an asset to his boss, whom he is able to manipulate.

He has a large expensive house in Virginia Water, drives a big Jaguar like a maniac, and has an upper-class wife, with whom he has a violent and aggressive sexual relationship.

At the outset he is involved in fighting off an office coup. His boss is up for the chop and he manipulates to defeat the opposition.

In the middle of this comes news that his father is seriously ill in Liverpool.

He drives there only to find his father dead and later, that he was beaten up by some young thugs. In short, that he was murdered.

Mick Marler, of Irish working-class descent, is expected to avenge personally his father's death.

The journey back to Liverpool and a brief affair with the doctor's receptionist put him back in contact with his working-class origins.

He begins to feel that his life in London, his job, the society he now moves in has reduced him to nothing more than an actor, someone unreal.

On returning to London he can't stand his wife's upper-class indifference, her social cool, so he gets drunk, breaks up a party she is giving and slugs a member of the firm.

For this he is suspended from work and his wife walks out on him.

Funeral

From Liverpool it is confirmed that the police aren't interested in the old man's death and it is clear that Marler must avenge it.

He returns for the funeral, and, providing himself with an alibi, kills the murderer who turns out to be a frightened boy in a leather jacket.

He then buries his father, says goodbye to his aunts and mother, and leaves.

He wonders whether to contact the receptionist, but he sees her in the street with her kid, the drab council flats behind her, and drives on.

Is it this that determines him? Is it the death on his hands? It isn't clear, but he comes back to London full of fight to retain his job.

He takes his boss's secretary to bed, finds out the 'dirt' on him and promptly goes to the managing director the next day with a file full.

Jack Gold, director of 'The Reckoning'.



He is promoted to his new ex-boss's position and his wife comes back to him.

Driving home with her, he shoots the red light of a road works signal. He hurtles along the one-way traffic line with a lorry approaching head-on. Miraculously he gets out of it.

As he says: 'If I can get out of that, I can get out of anything'.

By his actions, his opportunism, his ruthlessness, his ambition within the capitalist system, he stands condemned, and this is finally the judgement that the film would have us opt for.

But there is equally an ambiguity about this. His role is fixed within the context of hero; his energy, fast cars, etc. all add up to a certain glamourization.

son, he is a compelling and irresistible character.

A further confusion is that a coherent criticism of capitalism, its exploitation and oppression of workers, comes from Marler's mouth.

At his wife's party he savagely denounces the fraudulence of their parasitism, and the audience identifies and sympathizes with him.

Similarly the crisis that he goes through in Liverpool when he feels his own fraudulence we are meant to warm to.

I'm not suggesting that characters are without their ambiguities and complexities, or that such contradictions cannot be contained within one person, but at the same time they must be placed by the film-maker.

In a way there is a random exploitation of Marler; at one moment he is the mouthpiece of the film, then at another sympathy is yanked away from him and he stands condemned.

We get the impression that his 'left' outpourings directly connect with and flow into his final ruthless stance.

For sure, the history of the labour movement is richly studded with left postures that become right-wing opportunist-

on simplified stereotypes and not on the rich variation of life itself.

The Irish emigré community in Liverpool is a special social community, but this wasn't really explored.

Instead we had a sentimentalized view of backwardness, and the line between sentimentality and patronage is a very narrow one.

What we have is a romanticized middle-class viewpoint. Nowhere is this more striking than in the characterization of the doctor's receptionist played by Rachel Roberts.

She is a preposterous character, a literary invention, both in her dialogue and her posture, a sort of symbol of a working-class emancipation. She is direct, earthy, sensual etc. She has the 'common vulgar touch' that fires the imagination of Marler.

It is with her that he realizes his life is an act. She is 'the most real thing I've met in years'.

And it's here I think that is the key to the fundamental weakness and source of the film.

The polarization of classes is seen in terms of what is more 'real'. The working class are more 'real'. It would follow that the middle class are 'unreal'.

Working-class experience is more 'valid'.

Submission

Here we have implied a total idealization of the class, which, in political terms, means an adaptation and submission to its backwardness.

But the class struggle is not fought out by greater or lesser 'realities' of life style, but by the daily conflict which the primary contradiction of capitalism creates.

The fight is for the consciousness and leadership of the class for revolutionary ends. This means a conscious fight against backwardness.

It is precisely at this point that Marxism breaks sharply with idealism.

'The Reckoning' has all the tensions of confusion characteristic of a lot of the work of the 1960s.

It is someone trying to grapple with something that at that point they can't resolve.

This accounts for the creative patchiness of the film, the lapses in concentration, and that indecisiveness which produces confusion.

At difficult moments it tends towards oversimplification, as though the shutters have been brought down over too-difficult questions.

It contrasts quite starkly with 'Comrade Jacob'—a later work of John McGrath—which is much more resolved, confident and coherent.



A Czechoslovak youth attempts to reason with a Russian soldier during the Stalinist invasion. Garaudy's denouncement of the invasion only carried the official Communist Party criticism a stage further.

RAIL ACCIDENTS ON THE INCREASE



BY A WORKERS PRESS CORRESPONDENT

'THE GENERAL upward trend in train accidents of all types is continued,' says the chief inspector of railways in a recent report to the Ministry of Transport on the safety record of railways in Britain during 1968.

The most alarming increase was in derailments, with an increase of 43 per cent in goods train derailments over the four years up to 1968.

This type of accident is doubly serious as the possibility always exists of other trains running into the derailed wagons.

The figure of total derailments for 1968 is given as 367 (31 passenger and 336 goods). The report states that:

... the upward trend in train accidents is caused mainly by technical defects

although recently an increase in human errors has played its part.

On the reason for the derailments the report states: 'In recent years the increase in goods derailments has been wholly the result of increases in those in which the first vehicle to leave the rails was a two-axle short wheelbase (SWB) wagon i.e. one having a wheelbase of 10 feet or less.'

Another alarming trend which continued into 1969 was the increase in buckling of continuous welded rail: seven cases in 1968.

Plans exist to install this type of line at the rate of 500 miles a year with all the major main line and commuter routes completed by 1974.

The number of fires in trains also rose from 157 in 1967 to 208 in 1968, and some types of locomotive were withdrawn from service.

The government's drive for 'efficiency' and a profit at all costs can only result in a deterioration in public services whatever safety precautions are taken.

Productivity deals give priority to speed-up and staff reductions; all else is secondary.

In this situation it is comparatively easy to load railway workers with work sequences and schedules beyond normal capacity, then proclaim 'human error' when they fail to react like machines to abnormal circumstances.

Safety officers concerned with the welfare of all railway workers and users should certainly expose the use of ancient and out-dated rolling stock, but would do well also to closely examine the clauses of the August 1968 productivity deal agreed by the NUR executive.

Productivity and the busmen

No more retreats

LEADERS of Britain's 70,000 municipal busmen are at present negotiating for 45s increases on their members' basic rates.

How is this claim—submitted in the middle of December—to be won?

Low pay, long hours and the threat of productivity deals and service cut-backs have dogged the busmen over the last few years.

Last month's ignominious backing-down forced on London's busmen—who, worried by the implications of the re-organization of the capital's transport system, had threatened to strike on January 1—indicates that the union leaders are no more going to fight now than they did in 1968.

By an Industrial correspondent

SINCE JULY 17, 1968, union leaders have been running headlong to keep up with the demands made by the bus employers and the government for more productivity and one-man operation.

July 17 was the date on which representatives of Britain's 70,000 busmen called at a special delegate conference for a national strike against the freezing of their £1 pay award by the Labour government.

The strike, as a result of the union leaders' manoeuvres, never took place.

The busmen were divided. The National Bus Company was formed to integrate the transport system, but if anyone has the illusion that this has been done to improve services and to benefit passengers and crews they are sadly mistaken.

For 'nationalization' read 'rationalization' of buses. Capitalism in crisis cannot even afford to provide cheap bus services for the population. As with the health and education services, falling profits demand cuts in transport.

This affects only the working class and not the employers with their private cars, public schools and chauffeur-driven limousines.

Discipline

The formation of the National Bus Company and the Prices and Incomes Board's 1968 report on the buses were part of the Labour government's policy for disciplining the working class in line with the needs of British capitalism.

The job of the union leaders, assisting the Communist Party, has been to convince workers that the employers are all-powerful and that developments like, for example, one-man operation are 'inevitable'.

An example of the effect of this was encountered by the Workers Press at the Castleford, Yorkshire, depot of the West Riding Automobile Co. One driver claimed that one-man operation would not mean working as a proof of his withdrawal by the Manchester Corporation Transport Department and the Halifax Joint Omnibus Company.

Another driver, who sat on his local branch committee, told us that busmen had been guaranteed a 51-hour week—paying £22 gross—and a written 'no redundancy' agreement.

Where the busmen in fact got this situation under control?

Overtime

The run-down in the industry hits busmen who have for years relied entirely on overtime earnings to make up a decent living wage perhaps harder than many other sections of workers.

They are faced with a choice—either fall back on a basic wage of about £13, or accept productivity deals. These productivity deals are equally pernicious and all have one central purpose—the demolition of the bus industry and the conditions of those who work in it.

These productivity deals can be divided into three types: one-man operation, consolidated basic wage and cost-per-mile bonus.

It is necessary to go into detail on each of these in order to explain their implications.

ONE-MAN OPERATION THIS is not a new development, neither is it 'progress' or inevitable.

It is essentially a backward step. Many older busmen will recollect that one-man operation was widespread before the war and that it was only when busmen were organized that conductors were introduced on these services.

It can never be progress for one man to do two men's jobs. The re-introduction at this time of one-man operation is an integral part of the Labour government's attack on wages and living standards.

Whatever 'no redundancy' clauses are written into single-man operation agreements, there takes place an increasing cut-back in staff employed and in overtime working; at the same time as this process is taking place in every industry.

One-man operation has been justified as the basis of higher wages for crews, lower fares, better buses and better services and yet wherever single-

manning has been introduced, it has been accompanied by cuts in earnings for the majority of busmen, massive cuts in service, up to 30 per cent increases in fares and the packing of up to 90 people into one bus.

In addition enormous delays occur and the strain on drivers becomes intolerable.

CONSOLIDATED BASIC WAGE

THIS agreement has been accepted in Bristol and is being negotiated at the moment in a number of areas, including the West Yorkshire Road Car Company.

The idea is as follows. All conditions, overtime agreements, etc., are given in exchange for an increase in the basic wage.

What the employers want is an end to spreader payments, all penalty payments, time-and-a-half for Sunday working, extra payment for Saturday working.

In other words, in exchange for an increase of between 8d and 1s 3d an hour, agreements which have been fought for over 30 years will be scrapped.

Busmen would work Saturday and Sunday for ordinary time, there would be no premium payments for starting very early and finishing very late and overtime would be paid, not at time-and-a-half, but at a figure around time-and-a-quarter (including rest-days).

This business of selling existing agreements for temporary wage increases can be likened to the introduction of Measured-Day Work in engineering and is equally fatal.

COST-PER-MILE BONUS A MODEL agreement has been circulated by the National Joint Council for the Omnibus Industry and operates as follows.

The present cost-per-mile is calculated by dividing the total expenditure by the number of miles operated annually. The savings made by changes in operating conditions are shared 50-50 by men and employers.

Changes in operating conditions means cuts in standing time, cuts in running time, cutting spare time between trips and mobility of labour (using drivers as cleaners).

Where this agreement has been negotiated in Castleford the busmen have received a magnificent increase of 2d an hour in exchange for break-neck operating times.

All these three types of deal have been accepted nationally by the union leaders.

Unity The need for unity of busmen with all workers is now a matter of supreme importance. It appears that the government has another card up its sleeve.

There exist all over the country thousands of coach-drivers employed by small firms. Of these drivers only a handful are in any union and they are paid at hourly rates as low as 3s.

The compromise at the moment an army of potential scab labour and a great source of danger to organized busmen.

The hiring off of certain sections of the nationalized industries to private contractors, e.g. liner-train depots, servicing at London airport, construction of locomotives, etc., gives the key to the government's intention.

Already up to 300 coaches from private firms operate every weekend in summer from Leeds, as duplicates for coastal and express services at up to a tenth of the cost of coaches operated by trade union members.

These coach firms are taking an increasing share of school and factory contracts.

The government has deliberately left out of its nationalization plans these coach firms, many of whom operate under 'hire and release' clauses and whose drivers' hours take no account of legal limits.

Yorks lead Busmen from Leeds depot of the West Yorkshire Road Car Company have given a lead.

They first of all rejected one-man operation under any conditions and at their last meeting decided against any

wage deal involving the sale of strings. They have placed before the next meeting of their central committee (meeting of branch secretaries and chairmen from all West Yorkshire Road Car garages) a demand that the committee open immediate negotiations for a £20 basic wage with no strings and campaign for this demand throughout the union. All busmen must support this demand. There can be a united struggle for a decent wage. Remove those union leaders who are opposed to this demand. Fight for the withdrawal of all one-man buses. No more retreats! £20 basic now!

ITALY

Coalition talks reveal ruling class splits

STATEMENTS following inter-party negotiations to resurrect an Italian centre-left government have revealed the depth of ruling-class divisions.

The talks, agreed between the Socialist Party leadership with the Christian Democrats and Republicans, also expose the crisis of the rulers' accomplices in the labour movement in the face of the working-class onslaught.

The immediate issue is the hundreds of criminal charges pending against workers and socialists following the class struggles of the last months.

The Italian capitalist class has never been able to sustain constitutional fictions of the division of powers and the independence of the courts.

The pressing of the charges is recognised by all as an openly political matter.

Warning Christian Democratic Minister of Labour Donat Cattin, himself an ex-trade unionist, and therefore sensitive to the strength and temper of the working class, thought it his duty to warn against the danger that for the next few months each week will see the opening of trials of 20, 100 or 200 workers.

At the same time he appealed for a centre-left government which, while 'sufficient unto itself', would nonetheless 'appreciate the utility of convergence' with the Communist Party representatives.

The Socialist Party, as reported in Workers Press, has appealed for the charges to be dropped in a general amnesty.

Meanwhile their proposed partners in government, the Saragat Social Democrats, took the opportunity to express the open hatred of the working class which is the political twin of such hypocrisy.

Scorns amnesty Their spokesman, Preti, cast scorn on the idea of 'curing abnormal situations by issuing an amnesty every year' and opposed any infringements of the 'independence of the judiciary' which would 'damage the prestige of the state'.

As the political hiring of President of the Republic Saragat, he is well placed to appreciate the benefits of bourgeois law and order.

In the same speech he called for a centre-left government which would permanently exclude Communist leaders.

Neither the prostration of the Socialist Party nor the manoeuvrings of the Stalinist leadership for entry into government offer any hope to the working class.

Pirelli and Farmitalia workers

Sheffield engineers laid off

SIX hundred workers at Daniel Doncaster's Sheffield engineering plant have now been laid off as a result of the week-old strike by 109 maintenance workers.

The lay-offs, which followed a mass meeting called to discuss the dispute, began on Monday.

It had previously been agreed that strike action would immediately be taken if any workers were sent home.

Communist Party stewards, however, had recommended the men to stay at work.

Members of the All Trades Unions Alliance are fighting this recommendation.

Press silence

FROM PAGE ONE fight to break it from reformist ideas and leaders; that is quite another thing. And if the VSC and Tariq Ali associate with such things, they must be shown that they are no longer considered 'newsworthy'.

For the same reasons the Stalinists and their 'Morning Star', because they are tied to class compromise and covering up for the Wilson government, share the silence of the capitalist press.

That is the surest sign that Sunday's demonstration hit home. It is the surest sign that our campaign to stop Wilson's visit to Washington is correct and is already inflicting severe blows on the Stalinists.

T.U.C. 'GUIDELINES'

ANY guidance from the TUC has got to be from the right wing. Scanlon has always been reckoned a left-winger. Now he has got to either stand by the TUC or go against them.

In the past, resolutions from the rank and file have generally been disregarded and referred back. Most of these leaders are tied up with the official Labour Party.

The biggest snag in the 'guidelines' is tying of the hands of the shop stewards. Most strikes are spontaneous, but the stewards would be tied down by the officials. This ties the trade union movement firmly to the state machine which would make us into puppets.

It gives the government a free hand to put the prices up and keep wages down.

The ordinary trade unionist has to do some serious thinking. In a recession they can clamp down at any time. Trade unionists have to fight for a socialist outlook.

The campaign to stop Wilson's visit to Washington plays a part in this fight. We have to pay for the war, whether we like it or not, through repayments of debts and profits of US-owned industry in Britain.

The campaign brings people out in the branches and makes them think about the issues. Most people think that the war is nothing they can do with them.

But the government is trying to tie us to the state machine, which is helping the American state machine carry out the war in Vietnam.

Any people throughout the world who are fighting US imperialism are fighting the workers' battle.

If the YCL and CP say the spade-work has not been done for such a campaign, they have had ample opportunity to do it over the past ten years.

It's no use asking Wilson to do anything. The CP has got to come out with some positive action if they want to do something about Vietnam. They must take up the fight to stop Wilson going alongside the SLL.

I would think they have refused so far because they took the line from Russia of not giving out-and-out backing to the Vietnamese struggle.

G. Taylor (AEF), Birmingham.

Stewards' hands would be tied—Birmingham trade unionist

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Build the All Trades Unions Alliance

FROM PAGE ONE

trade unionists on the shop floor. It is this movement which is responsible for the failure of the incomes policy, that has resisted wage cuts, and is now pushing up wages.

The employers themselves could not have drawn up a better clause than this one: 'Meetings of members are a useful and authorized method of consultation, but that such meetings are not entitled to make decisions, or to instruct shop stewards to take actions which are at variance with union policy, or with obligations arising out of establishment agreements or industry-wide agreements to which the union is party'.

After the AEU National Committee which accepted the package deal, strings and all, Scanlon said that shop stewards would not be able to reject the strings, only decide the price locality for operating them.

Jones, as we know, has already spoken out in favour of productivity bargains on television.

The question that Bro. Hindle should think over is why did the 'Morning Star' distort the whole question of the TUC 'guidelines' in its issue of December 30, 1969.

It is the cover that the Communist Party gives that we should look more closely at.

On Sunday, June 1, 1969, they were instrumental in organizing a conference at Birmingham Town Hall on the threatened anti-union laws.

The main job of this conference at which Scanlon, Roberts of the AEF, Doughty of DATA and left Labour MP Orme,

Communist Party calls for 'Wilson to visit Washington and to speak for Britain'. A purely nationalist demand.

Britain, the nation where employers and workers have the same problems. Nationalist demands can only lead to the defeat of the working class.

The Communist Party, the TUC, the Labour Party and the employers can all get together on such demands.

Remember Colt Engineering, who started backing Britain by asking workers to work overtime for nothing.

No doubt with the return of the Tories in 1970 we will hear much more about the problems of the British nation.

With their demand on Vietnam the Communist Party treats a dangerous road to anti-communism and nationalism.

In my opinion the lesson is clear. The 1920s and 1930s teach us that Stalinism, reformism and centrism can only betray the working class.

Only the building of the revolutionary party on the programme of Marxism can defend the trade unions.

This means building the All Trades Unions Alliance as the industrial arm of the Socialist Labour League.

All Trades Unions Alliance as the industrial arm of the Socialist Labour League building up the sales of the Workers Press in every factory and union branch, mobilizing a massive campaign to stop Wilson's visit to Washington, and then on to defeat the TUC's 'guidelines' as part of the preparation to take the power in the 1970s.

Alan Wilkins, AEF shop steward and Trades Council delegate, Coventry.

Stop Visit

FROM PAGE ONE signatures recently won by Young Socialists in the area. PRESSURE of space yesterday prevented us from printing the text of the letter sent to the US Ambassador from Sunday's 'Stop Wilson's visit to Washington' demonstration and meeting.

Signed by Workers Press editor Michael Banda, for the editorial board, this read: 'A demonstration and mass meeting of 1,500 trade unionists and Young Socialists on January 11, 1970, instructed us to send the following letter to you.'

'This demonstration and mass meeting of trade unionists and Young Socialists protests at the US government's harassment, violence and judicial persecution against the Black Panther movement, and demands the immediate release of Bobby Seale and all imprisoned Black Panther members'.

THE concluding paragraph of the letter handed in from Sunday's Young Socialists' demonstration at Downing Street, omitted yesterday, reads:

'[The demonstration] demands that the Prime Minister cancel his visit to Washington as a first step towards a complete break from all military, political and diplomatic support for US imperialism.'

Purge

FROM PAGE ONE This was, of course, the identical formula used during and after the Kremlin intervention against the Hungarian workers' of October-November 1956.

That the Czech bureaucracy should seek to present Trotskyism as the spearhead of resistance to Stalinism is, of course, no accident.

The growth of Trotskyism has been carefully studied, slandered and warned against in the Soviet press, and here the Prague Stalinists are simply taking a cue from their masters.

We say here and now that if the Husak regime attempts to arrest, persecute or slander any group fighting for the ideas of Trotskyism in Czechoslovakia, we shall mobilize all our strength inside the British labour movement against it.

The Czech working class is faced with immense political problems, the greatest of them being the struggle to understand its own history and the origins of the movement that has betrayed it—Stalinism.

Clarification Political and theoretical clarification cannot proceed under the lash of bureaucratic repressions, slanders, show trials and censorship.

Just like the rest of us, the Czech workers have a right to re-discover their own political past. They have to do this in order to secure their own socialist future, for which they have fought so stubbornly against both imperialism and Stalinism.

The slanders of a 'Trotskyist plot' are designed to discredit the very theories that provide this key to action. That is why we must insist: Hands off all Czech anti-Stalinists!

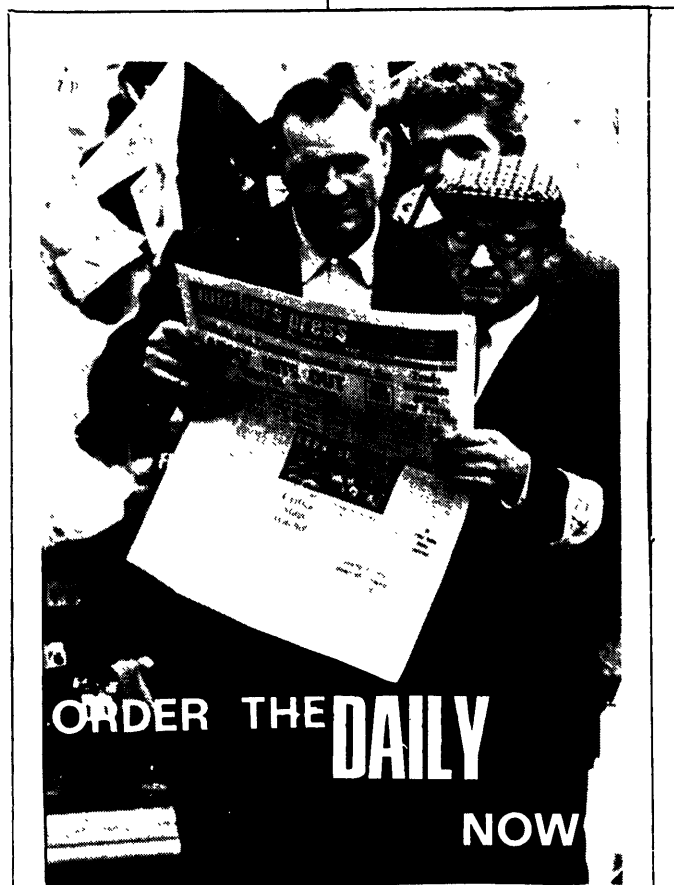
WEATHER

London area, SE, central Southern, NW and central Northern England, E and W Midlands, Edinburgh, Glasgow area: Rather cloudy, showers, perhaps longer outbreaks of rain. A few sunny intervals. Wind S, moderate. Very fresh, locally strong. Very mild. Maximum 10C (50F). Channel Islands, SW England: Rather cloudy. Outbreaks of rain, perhaps thunder. A few sunny intervals. Wind southerly, strong, locally gale. Mild. Maximum 12C (54F). Northern Ireland: Rather cloudy, outbreaks of rain. A few bright intervals. Wind easterly, moderate or fresh. Very mild. Maximum 9C (48F).

Outlook for Thursday and Friday: Rather cloudy with rain at times in most places. Probably becoming a little colder in the East.

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U.S. crisis hits aero-space programme

Skilled workers face loss of jobs

THE DEVELOPING recession in the United States economy is now raising the spectre of mass unemployment before the working class in every capitalist country.

Within the United States itself, as reported in Friday's Workers Press, sharp increases in the cost of living and the threat of redundancy now face every section of the working class.

Two recent announcements reveal that even skilled workers and technicians who, in the past, have considered their jobs secure are now coming under attack as Nixon's measures to curb inflation begin to bite.

Officials at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) have stated that the Apollo-13 shot, scheduled for March 12, is to be postponed until April 11 and Apollo-14 from July 11 until some time in the autumn.

The revised schedule will entail considerable cuts in the overtime payments to assembly and launch crews at Cape Kennedy.

More involved However, much more is involved than this. The suggestion that the delays will give space scientists more time between flights to analyse data is an attempt to cover up a further slowing-down in the US space programme.

Over 200,000 workers have already lost their jobs with NASA since 1966 and more will certainly follow.

The present cuts will mean the cancellation of Apollo 20—the last flight in the Apollo series, while Apollo-19 will not be launched until 1974, a postponement of over two years.

Not restricted However, the squeeze on government expenditure is not restricted to the space programme. There are now indications that the Nixon administration is having second thoughts on the plans to go ahead with the construction of the Boeing 2707, the giant supersonic transport aircraft.

This project—a direct challenge to the Soviet Tu 144 and the Anglo-French Concorde—has been estimated at 4,500 million dollars. Ninety per cent of the cost of the first stage is to be financed by the government.

A White House announcement has stated that 'it is the unequivocal position of this administration that no commercial supersonic aircraft will be allowed to fly over populated areas at boom-producing speeds'.

Nixon knows that such a restriction—must limit the possible market for the STT.

All Trades Unions Alliance meeting

DAGENHAM Lessons of the 1969 Ford strike and the fight for parity Wednesday, January 14 8 p.m.

Marsh Green School New Road Dagenham

NORTH KENT 'Lessons of the Grangemouth strike' Thursday, January 15 8 p.m.

Rose and Crown London Road Dover