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WHILST STEWARDS DEMAND 'OPEN THE BOOKS'

RYDER LEADS BOSSES ATTACK

The recommendations of the Ryder inquiry in no way constitute nationalisation. They are a straight forward battle plan against British Leyland workers - backed by the authority of government and entirely in the interest of the employers. The finance is provided through a majority state shareholding with handouts of 3p per share above market price to the shareholders. These funds are to be used as a lever to force Leyland workers to accept rationalisation, speed-up and unemployment. Any pretension to any form of nationalisation is exposed by the recommendation in the report that Leyland remain within the Engineering Employers Federation - an organisation of private employers set up to fight workers in the engineering industry.

Socialist Press, in our April 3rd edition, predicted that the report would become "the spearhead of attack against British Leyland workers". This assessment has proven to be completely correct. These findings, introduced into Parliament by Wilson, welcomed by Benn and accepted by the Tories, combine blackmail, witch-hunting and class-collaboration into a plan to drive up the rate of exploitation in the Leyland plants and provide a blueprint for other sections of industry. The management changes are simply the criticism of one capitalist by another for not effectively fighting his labour force.

STAGES

The report spells out in clear terms how the fight is now to be carried through. The £200m equity capital and £500m long-term loan capital, to be made available over the period up to 1978, will be advanced in stages. Each new stage will only be advanced if speed-up, flexibility and unemployment have been peacefully accepted by workers during the previous stage. To quote the report: "We have recommended that the capital expenditure programme and the injection of government finance should be staged and that each new stage should depend on evidence of a contribution both by BL's workers and its management to a reduction in industrial disputes and increased efficiency". This section was re-emphasised strongly by Wilson when he ac-



RYDER

cepted the report on behalf of the government, he backed this with the threat that "one million jobs are at stake" if British Leyland goes into liquidation.

The implications of the reference to industrial disputes is unmistakable. It means that if workers resist any management offensive - speed-up, reorganisation, attacks on agreements or the victimisation of militant workers they will be promptly be threatened with the withdrawal of finance and the dole. The report endorses Leyland's introduction of Measured Day Work

and advocates that further steps are taken towards corporate bargaining - which would put wage negotiations entirely in the hands of the officials and tie the combine to the weakest sections.

Harry Urwin, Assistant General Secretary of the T&GWU, was a member of the Inquiry team, together with a merchant banker, the former chief executive of Ford Europe and a city accountant. The fact that the report was the unanimous view of this team indicates the kind of support which workers can expect when they come into conflict with its recommendations. Urwin's position means that the report is T&G policy in all but letter. When dockers came into conflict with the Jones-Aldington report, a similar blueprint for the speed-up and run-down of the docks labour force, they were instructed back to work by Jones and the T&G Executive and two of the leaders are understood to be pending disciplinary measures for not recommending a return to work.

CONVENORS

The report however sees class-collaboration going much deeper than even Urwin's key appointment. Its plans for the use of the reformist layers in the trade unions, especially convenors, are made brutally clear. It says "We have therefore proposed a new structure of joint management/union councils, committees and conferences in which BL shop stewards and particularly senior shop stewards will have a major role".

Ryder then defines this "major role" as "the need to provide a forum in which representatives of BL's workers can contribute effectively to improving efficiency".

Later in the report this is made even clearer. When saying that the number of disputes must be reduced and productivity improved it goes on to say that the joint councils are "to seek the action required to do this".

Such proposals however did not originate with Ryder. The door was opened for him by the collaboration already mooted by the "leaders" of the BL shop stewards movement - Robinson of Austin

on behalf of the Stalinists and McGarry of Standard Triumph for the right-wing. In their document sent to Ryder the emphasis all through was on "co-operation" and "efficiency". Nowhere did it spell out in unambiguous terms the basic principles of the defence of jobs, wages, conditions and agreements. Nowhere did it propose the organisation of resistance to Ryder. They simply made abstract statements about nationalisation with no intention of creating the conditions to fight for it.

In view of this it was no surprise that the report was welcomed in broad terms by both these gentlemen, followed by Len Murray for the TUC, Bob Wright for the AUEW and Moss Evans for the T&G.

Contrast this collaboration with the fight being put up from sections of workers and stewards within Leyland to force the company to open their books. This is being fought for as a part of the fight for the defence of jobs through the demand for work sharing on full pay. The most important development is the resolution from Cowley which was carried unanimously at the meeting of stewards from the motor industry held in Digbeth on April 23rd which said: "This meeting demands that the employers in the motor industry and ancillary trades open all their books to the works committees in each factory in order that the true position can be known by those workers whose lives are affected by short-time and redundancy".

SPEED UP

The fight for policy is crucial. Ryder proposes not only the use of unemployment as a big stick, but a substantial reduction in jobs now. The report says: "The improvement of productivity will mean a gradual reduction in the number of workers required to produce a given number of vehicles". This is the creation of unemployment by speed-up, but there is already widespread short time working and voluntary redundancy with the car market continued back page, cols 4&5

950,000 ON DOLE

The jump in unemployment to 950,000 after the largest monthly increase since 1948, demonstrates without a shadow of doubt the rapid development of the economic crisis:

It comes at a time of year when unemployment usually falls, due to seasonal factors. Such an increase, alongside an unreduced rate of inflation, now standing at an annual rate of 25%, gives the lie to the view that wage pressure is the main factor behind rising prices.

The "remedy" advanced by the Labour 'left' and the TUC - massive reflation - is now completely utopian. Further injections of government finance into ailing capitalist enterprises will increase inflation, especially since huge sums of money will have to be borrowed from the international money markets at commercial rates of interest, depressing still more the value of the pound. At the same time these firms themselves will be forced to raise prices in an attempt to increase profits.

But to increase profits and reduce the rate of inflation, government finance must be accompanied by measures to increase the rate of exploitation of the workers still at work - through speed-up and wage cutting. This

No one who starts from a belief in the continued viability of capitalism under these conditions can produce any realistic alternative to these vicious policies. This is why although mouthing horror at the Budget, Labour's 'left' melted away into the shadows rather than challenge Healey at the meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and, with few exceptions, voted for the proposals to slash jobs and increase taxes.

Unemployment is now crucial to the employers, since by increasing competition amongst workers for a diminishing number of jobs it creates conflicts between those in work and the unemployed, and seeks to undermine resistance and hold down wages.

But at a time when more and more the case is being proved for nationalisation of bankrupt firms without compensation, and for workers' management of nationalised firms to protect jobs and conditions, the reformists refuse to carry out even the smallest fight for jobs, and turn their backs on the necessary demand for work sharing on full pay.

Such a programme is critical if the task of uniting employed and unemployed workers, now a pressing need for every Trades Council and trade union branch, is to be carried through. There can be no defence for the unemployed based on separate organisations of unemployed workers or "claimants unions". Full trade union rights and organisation must be opened up to the unemployed in every union.

At the same time the demand must go out for workers' committees from companies bankrupted in the crisis and

continued back page, col 3

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ITALY WORKERS FIGHT FASCISM

The massive response to the general strike call by the Italian trade unions on Tuesday of last week was a warning to the fascists throughout Europe.

Originally the strike was planned as the fourth in a series of 'protest' stoppages against the government's economic policy, especially unemployment and inflation. The trade union leaders - especially the Stalinist leadership of Italy's largest trade union federation, the CGIL - intended it as a form of pressure on the Moro cabinet, and as a means of strengthening their parliamentary manoeuvres for a coalition based further to the left.

But the strike actually took place following a series of dozens of bombings and assaults by extreme right-wing groups, which have been frequent for several years, but which accelerated in the last few weeks. These culminated in the deaths of two young left-wingers in Milan and the unprovoked shooting of a Communist Party worker, Rodoifo Boschi, by plain-clothes policemen guarding the Florence offices of a fascist organisation.

MASS RESPONSE

The strike therefore became a mass response by all sections of the working class and trade union movement to the mounting wave of fascist violence and provocation, and against the forces in the police, the state apparatus and the capitalist parties who connive at it. Twelve million workers downed tools. In Milan the four-hour national strike call was extended to eight hours, shutting down the city for the whole day.

In dozens of cities mass marches and demonstrations took place; well over a hundred thousand workers gathered in the central square of Milan as six different marches converged for a single demonstration.

The response - far bigger than the turn-out on the fragmented 'general' strike calls of a few hours on reformist policies over the last few months - showed that the working class movement is ready to back even the most cautious lead on such an essential question as the defence against fascism.

It is this readiness for struggle that has derailed the anti-communist 'law-and-order' campaign headed



Rome: students protest at fascist violence

by Amintore Fanfani, secretary of the Christian Democrats, the main capitalist party, and former apologist for Mussolini. Fanfani, supported by factions within the Christian Democrats who are opposed to the Communist Party's perspective of a coalition agreement, demanded tougher police and legal measures to deal with the rising 'crime rate' - on this platform they hoped to produce a substantial swing to the right in the regional elections, scheduled for mid-June.

But the response of the Stalinists and Social-democratic leaders to the fascist threat has been wholly inadequate. Defenders and architects of Italy's post-war 'democratic' constitution (which left a large part of Mussolini's legislation intact) they again turn to the capitalist state as the sole defence for the workers' movement. They now peddle the illusion that more stringent legal measures against fascist organisations, such as the draft bill now being discussed in the Chamber of Deputies, can be the answer to the danger.

What reveals such policies as a fraud is the series of conspiracies - for a coup d'état, to protect fascists from arrest and prosecution and to infiltrate left-wing organisations - in which many of the senior officials of the state appara-

the only way to deal with fascism is through the organised, armed strength of the working class itself. Last week's demonstrations were given an added effect by the fact that they fall almost exactly on the 30th anniversary of the liberation of northern Italy from Mussolini and his Nazi backers - in April 1945.

But this liberation was carried out, in most of the northern cities, by armed resistance groups who led a number of mass workers' uprisings. Capitalist rule in Italy was only re-established by the deliberate policy of the Stalinist leaders, who from the beginning attempted to disarm the victorious resistance forces, and handed the power back first to the 'allied' military authorities, and then to the constitutional assembly. The fact that fascism is able to raise its head at all in Italy today stems from this betrayal.

The spread of fascist activity underlines the need for a revolutionary, Trotskyist party in Italy, able to politically challenge the Stalinists and social democrats. An essential part of such a challenge must be the demand for workers' militias, based on the trade unions, the factory councils and other workers' organisations, which will protect the workers' movement against violence and provocations.

The bitter lessons learned in the struggle against fascism will strengthen the struggle for such a policy. In the summer of 1948, when a young fascist attempted to shoot Communist Party leader Palmiro Togliatti, a spontaneous general strike erupted in many of the Italian cities. Resistance members took up the weapons which they had kept (against the instructions of their leaders) and set up road blocks in a number of areas. The Communist Party leadership had to strain every political muscle to restore 'order' - one result of which was the removal of the Communist Party from government. The lesson of the last few months in Italy is that the real traditions of the resistance cannot be carried forward by manoeuvres for coalition with the capitalist politicians, but only by revolutionary policies drawing on the strength of the workers' movement as an independent force.

tus have been implicated in the last few years. All these organisations, including the armed forces, the criminal police, the intelligence services (SID), and even the forest guards, are riddled with pro-fascist and savagely anti-communist elements. The idea that they will ever be able to enforce laws to suppress the fascists, inside and outside their own ranks, is a reformist pipe-dream.

The Italian workers' movement has already shown in practice that



PRG soldiers riding through Da Nang

In Thailand, Maoists guerrillas last week defeated the Pramoj government's army in engagements on the Mekong river. Pramoj has publicly committed himself to the removal of US troops from Thailand. In the Philippines, President Marcos, long-time ally of US imperialism, has made a rapid 'readjustment' of foreign policy, even threatening to take over Clark Field, the largest US airforce base outside America. Indonesian foreign minister, Malik, held out an olive branch to Hanoi, publicly declaring that an Indochinese federation could help neighbouring countries to 'resist the ambitions and pressures of the great powers in the area.' Malaysia and Singapore, the other two members

of the ASEAN 'alliance', have also recognised the Khmer Rouge government in Cambodia, and are pushing for closer relations with Peking. And spokesmen of the S. Korean regime have also expressed worries about the effectiveness of US 'support'.

But the diplomatic shifts in S.E. Asia in no way alter the reactionary character of all these regimes, and their utter hostility to the liberation forces in their own countries. The revolutionary victories in Indochina have shaken them; it is now the duty of the Cambodian and Vietnamese revolutionary governments to give political and material support to the liberation fighters in the neighbouring countries.

S.E. ASIA PUPPET STATES TREMBLE

Unable to fight, unable even to surrender competently, the undignified collapse of the US puppet state in South Vietnam forms the mirror in which half a dozen imperialist regimes in S.E. Asia and the Pacific can read their own future.

Last week Kissinger's protege Thieu fled to Taiwan and a reported exile in Hampstead taking with him over £30m in gold - almost £1 for every man, woman and child in Vietnam. Behind him, with 15 divisions of liberation forces poised within easy striking distance of Saigon, the parasites and policemen of his regime queued up at rapidly closing Western embassies for visas to take them to well-deserved exile.

RESHUFFLING

Meanwhile the remnants of Thieu's regime embarked on almost a week of 'reshuffling', under the guidance of the French Foreign Office in which the only goal was to find a cabinet with which the Provisional Revolutionary Government would agree to negotiate a surrender. Nothing could more clearly show the rotten character

of regimes like Thieu's - where not a single anti-communist is willing to stay and 'defend freedom' - than liberated Da Nang, where the vast majority of the people have welcomed the NLF soldiers, and the liberated imperial capital of Hue, where the NLF was able to hold a 30,000 strong political rally this week.

BARBARIC

Yet up to the last moment, Thieu's generals fought with the most barbaric US military equipment. Reports last week revealed that, as Xuan Loc fell, South Vietnamese aircraft bombed the outskirts with 'decompression' bombs. When these explode they remove the oxygen from the air over a considerable area, so that those not killed by the blast die of suffocation.

But what the liberation of Cambodia and Vietnam have shown is that no amount of technological savagery can guarantee the survival of imperialism in S.E. Asia. Regimes throughout the area are now being shaken. In Laos, the coalition of the Pathet Lao with bourgeois politicians is in jeopardy as Pathet Lao forces clash with government troops along the main highway.

TURKEY

Arthur Hartman, special envoy of US Secretary of State Kissinger and President Ford, landed in Athens last week in the wake of massive demonstrations by almost three thousand young workers and students against NATO and US bases in the country.

The main demonstration called by the youth sections of all the left-wing political parties, took place on April 21st, the eighth anniversary of the colonels' putsch in 1967. Shouting 'Fascism shall not pass!', and 'Ghikas (Minister of 'Public Order' in the Karamanlis cabinet) is a fascist!', large numbers of the demonstrators marched towards the American embassy, where they were met by violent police charges, backed up with tear gas and armoured vehicles. Several dozen people were injured or arrested.

Hartman's task is to find a way - with the collaboration of the Greek and Turkish governments - to preserve US interests in both Greece and Turkey. Commuting between Athens and Ankara, one of his main tasks is to pressure the Turkish cabinet into making territorial and political concessions in the occupied northern part of Cyprus, while preserving, with promises that the Congressional ban on military aid to Turkey will soon be lifted, Turkish membership of NATO.

SHAKEN

But Hartman and his chiefs are playing a delicate diplomatic game. The Karamanlis government in Greece has been shaken not only by the anti-American demonstrations, but by the shift to the left in a series of local elections during April. And in Turkey the Demirel government is a fragile bargaining-partner. Formed only a month ago, after weeks of intricate negotiations, it rests on the co-operation of Demirel's Justice Party with three groups of extreme right-wing parliamentarians, including Erbakan's fanatically Muslim and anti-communist Party of National Safety, which supports the complete annexation of Cyprus by the Turkish army, and the pro-fascist Party of National Action. Demirel himself, whose inaugural statement to Parliament in April promised to 'fight against communism and all subversive attempts to threaten national unity and republican order' represents to the full the corrupt and brutal character of the national bourgeoisie. With inflation running at about thirty per cent a year, and unemployment around 1,800,000 the government will seek to use the Cyprus question as a diversion from their failure to do anything about the acute economic crisis which now presses on the workers and small farmers. Cyprus is also a cover for keeping the army - and the threat of resumed military rule in the wings of politics, and for the Government's open tolerance of right-wing violence against the labour movement. Five left-wing students were wounded by gunfire, and hundreds arrested, when fascist 'commandos' attacked a demonstration at Istanbul university a week ago.

STALINISM

The thoroughly reactionary character of the Demirel government has in no way altered the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy. Since 1964 the Kremlin has been angling with a succession of right-wing Turkish regimes for 'neutrality' from NATO, overlooking the state repression against left organisations and the right to strike. The restoration of Demirel, regarded as the chief 'Washington' man among Turkish politicians, in an open coalition with fascist elements, is one of the bitter fruits of this cynical disregard of the interests of the Turkish workers movement.

WRP 'PRINCIPLES'

Since the mass expulsions from the WRP of those sections which now comprise the Workers Socialist League, the departure of the WRP leadership from basic class principle has been spectacular. When 22 expelled members lobbied the WRP Annual Conference on December 15th last year, to hand out documents, Healy called the police. Recently Healy has been systematically identifying our members in Workers Press. The letters reprinted below were sent to Healy on 28th December 1974 and April 8th 1975. We have received no reply. This week, after receipt of our letter, Healy printed a photograph of yet another of our members in Workers Press whom he knew at the time was being harassed by the immigration authorities. We therefore publish this correspondence to the labour movement.

28th December 1974

8th April, 1975.

Dear Comrade Healy,

We write to you as the Executive Committee of the Workers Socialist League, which was provisionally constituted on Sunday December 22nd, 1974. Our movement, which will maintain an ongoing critique of the wrong perspectives of the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party as part of the fight for the continuation of Trotskyism in Britain and internationally, will of course fight on its own perspectives in the workers movement. The foundation of our movement was entirely precipitated by your bureaucratic response to the political questions advanced for discussion by Comrade Thornett, culminating to the mass expulsion, prior to the Conference, of everyone who in any way supported his position. It was at all times our wish that these issues should have been fought out in a principled way, within the rags of the Workers Revolutionary Party, and under its constitution. This you were determined to avoid.

Some of the expulsions were carried out by an (unconstitutional) sub-committee of the Political Committee, and still more by correspondence with no hearing being afforded at all. As a result, a number of us, some still in the WRP, found it necessary, because of the suppression of views and the distortions being presented to the membership, to lobby the London Area Aggregate, and to distribute Alan Thornett's Second Document (which you had agreed to distribute and then suppressed) at the First Annual Conference of the WRP.

We arrived at the Conference (at Battersea Town Hall) just after 9.00 pm with the intention of handing out our literature. On arrival, we found that a large number of police, including dog vans, special branch and police women were already deployed around the building, with others held in reserve close by. We estimate the number of police involved to be close on a hundred. It was clear from the approaches the police attempted to make to us that not only had they been called in by the Workers Revolutionary Party leadership, but had been told that it was our intention to instigate considerable violence. As a result of this our comrades who wanted to exercise the normal right to distribute literature at a Conference, were harassed continuously by this large force of police. In addition your action exposed WRP members in the Conference had the WRP an organisation, to the surveillance and penetration by the police.

Politically of course your action is unprecedented. We had the incredible spectacle of the 1st Annual Conference of the WRP being held under the protection of the State, or more precisely the use by the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party of the forces of the state in a factional conflict with a group of members and expelled members wishing to express the views for which they had been denied expression within the party.

We therefore wish to register the strongest possible protest against your actions, which are so completely contrary to Communist principles. We think you are obliged to give a political explanation of your actions, and we call upon you to print this letter, together with your reply, in Workers Press.

Yours fraternally,

WSL Executive Committee.

Dear Comrade Healy,

On the gates of the BLMC Cowley Assembly Plant this morning the Economic League were distributing leaflets advertising a dossier on militant workers in the industry, giving their political affiliations (with an address to send for postal copies). This dossier is published in order that those workers identified in it can be witch-hunted or blacklisted by the employers who of course are supplied with copies.

After reading today's Workers Press, however, we wonder if the Economic League need bother to distribute information regarding members of the WSL. It seems the employers are being supplied with all they need through the medium of the Workers Press, which has engaged in a systematic identification of our members. We are not here talking about well-known members, but militant workers in factories, and comrades in jobs where direct victimisation is a constant factor.

In your centre page article "Thornett's Philosophy" in today's Workers Press for example, you publish photographs of BLMC workers and identify them as WSL members. You are well aware that this opens these workers to victimisation. You know the individual workers concerned, the fight they are in with the employer and their vulnerability to victimisations. You also know from our past joint experiences that the BLMC management scrutinises the Workers Press daily for such information. It is clear you have not forgotten this by the care you take (correctly) to avoid the unnecessary identification of your own members.

We are happy that Cde Slaughter defends your philosophical positions in reply to our critique. There is much yet to be said about the philosophical questions held by yourself and the WRP, and we expect you to reply. But when in doing so you expose our members to victimisation by the employers - that is something quite different.

You did this knowing full well that the comrade concerned not only works for a notoriously ruthless employer, but that he was recently sacked and politically witch-hunted, and although successfully defended he stands constantly close to victimisation.

Let us take another example. In the last of your three recent articles on 'Thornett's Expulsion' you published a photograph and named one of our comrades, even revealing the position he had previously held in the WRP.

We consider the protection of any militant worker or a member of any political tendency in the labour movement against the employer to be a principle. The Workers Socialist League will stand by the principle under all circumstances.

We therefore demand that you politically explain the incidents detailed in this letter, and that you give us a firm assurance - publicly or privately - that you will in future act in a principled manner.

Yours fraternally,

WSL Executive Committee.

WHAT IS THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE?

The Workers Socialist League was formed on December 22nd, 1974 after over 200 members were expelled from the Workers Revolutionary Party.

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

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

This split was a product of particular political conditions. The rapid development of the economic crisis and the forward movement of the working class all over the world, which has since escalated to an even more rapid development, began to produce the conditions to build revolutionary parties.

Yet it was precisely in this period that the WRP began to decline in all its areas of work. It was this decline more than any other factor which raised questions which led to an examination of the political positions of the WRP leadership and to Alan Thornett's documents. As the split emerged, the sectarianism of the WRP, its departure from the Transitional Programme, and the way its maximum programme isolated the WRP from the working class became clear.

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

The impossibility of any kind of opposition within the WRP forced us to found the Workers Socialist League as an independent organisation which will maintain and fight to develop the traditions and principles of Trotskyism. We are continuing to maintain a critique of the WRP leadership, but most important to us now are the new developments in trade union work and new areas opened up by our break from WRP methods. We are now turning to recruit and train the new forces thrown forward into struggle in this period - not only trade unionists, but also professional workers, housewives, students and youth - in the fight to construct the new party.

We have shown already that we continue to fight against all forms of revisionism - whether the state capitalist theories of IS or the Pabloite revisions of the IMG, and against Stalinism and reformism. Already it is clear that our struggles for Trotskyism in Britain take place under conditions which must create similar splits and discussions throughout the world. For this reason the WSL is now engaging in a process of internal discussion prior to a full founding conference, a vital part of which is to hammer out and adopt perspectives for the building of the Trotskyist Fourth International, and the development of revolutionary parties based on the Trotskyist Programme in every country in the struggle to end capitalism.

We were able to assemble the necessary political, editorial and material resources to begin regular publication of *Socialist Press* just five weeks after provisionally constituting the Workers Socialist League. Already the paper is winning important new contacts and establishing a firm base in the workers movement as the organiser of a Trotskyist party of considerable political strength.

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LETTERS

The Editorial Board wants to encourage readers' letters on any subject. Send them to: 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, NW5 1HR.

CLAY CROSS - FURTHER CHARGE

The attacks on the Clay Cross Labour councillors, which began under the Tory government as punishment for their refusal to implement the reactionary Tory 'Fair Rents Act' are still continuing after fourteen months of Labour government.

The latest blow is the imposition by the Tory-appointed District Auditor, Herbert Harrison, of a further £52,209 surcharge on 21 councillors.

This comes on top of an existing £6,985 surcharge on 11 of the 21 for their refusal to increase rents in line with the Tory Act.

The £52,209 comprises £11,000 paid in bonuses and standby payments to council manual workers, £11,000 paid in increases to war-

dens of old people's homes and £30,000 in wages to new workmen whom Mr. Harrison considers were "not needed" by the council.

In other words the Labour government is prepared to stand by and watch while principled Labour Party members are victimised by the law for using their elected authority to carry out legitimate actions in defence of living standards in Clay Cross. It is in line with a government which has itself used troops to smash a strike in Glasgow for wages, and has brought in economic measures to slash employment in the interests of capitalism.

The surcharge has brought a response from around 100 Labour MPs who have signed this Commons motion:

"That this House believes the responsibility for fixing wage,

salary and employment levels lies with elected councillors and not with appointed district auditors, and, therefore, condemns the decision of a district auditor to surcharge Clay Cross councillors a total of £52,000 for carrying out their responsibilities in these fields."

Yet clearly this particular issue must be seen as a part of the consistent policy of class betrayal being carried out by the Wilson leadership and must be fought within the Labour Party on that basis. All penalties must be lifted from these councillors, who have acted to defend their class, and the full weight of the Labour and trade union movement must be directed against Wilson and the right wing.

STATE CAPITALISM 'POLITICAL TRADITION' OF I.S.

A review of Tony Cliff: *State Capitalism in Russia*, Pluto Press (1974).

"We often seek salvation from unfamiliar phenomena in familiar terms. An attempt has been made to conceal the enigma of the Soviet regime by calling it 'state capitalism.' This term has the advantage that nobody knows exactly what it means. The term 'state capitalism' originally arose to designate all the phenomena which arise when a bourgeois state takes direct charge of the means of transport or of industrial enterprises. The very necessity of such measures is one of the signs that the productive forces have outgrown capitalism and are bringing it to a partial self-negation in practice. But the outworn system, along with its elements of self-negation, continues to exist as a capitalist system...."

"...The first concentration of the means of production in the hands of the state to occur in history was achieved by the proletariat with the method of social revolution, and not by capitalists with the method of state trustification. Our brief analysis is sufficient to show how absurd are the attempts to identify capitalist state-ism with the Soviet system. The former is reactionary, the latter progressive".
(Leon Trotsky, *Revolution Betrayed*, pp 245&247-8)

He fails in both attempts, but the ideas thrown up became the basis of the capitulation of IS to the superficial appearance of stability presented by post-war capitalism, as expressed in the revisionist economic theory of the "permanent arms economy".
As regards accumulation, all that military competition ensures is that Russia devotes much of its productive resources to armaments. This would be necessary even for a healthy workers' state.

Cliff however seems to think that 'competition' is the cause of capital accumulation. In fact as Marx insisted, capitalist competition

relations are validated by laws. The nationalisation of land, the means of industrial production transport and exchange, together with the monopoly of foreign trade, constitute the basis of the Soviet social structure. Through these relations, established by the proletarian revolution, the nature of the Soviet Union as a proletarian state is for us basically defined."
(*Revolution Betrayed* p 248)

Trotsky understood that "a social organ (and such is every class) can take shape only as a result of the deeply rooted inner

bureaucracy has risen above a class which is hardly emerging from destitution and darkness, and has no tradition of dominion or command. . . .
"In this sense we cannot deny that it is something more than a bureaucracy. It is in the full sense of the word the sole privileged and commanding stratum in the Soviet society."

The strength of the bureaucracy as a bonapartist form of rule rests on the isolation of the USSR and the pressures of world imperialism which through the bureaucracy's policy of 'socialism in one country' hinder the process of world revolution necessary for the international development of the productive forces needed to achieve socialism.

Despite this, a comparative development of the productive forces has taken place in the USSR. If therefore Russia is capitalist, then it must be the case that, as Grant noted:

"If we have state capitalism in Russia (ushered in by a proletarian revolution) then it is clear that the crisis of capitalism on which we have based ourselves for the past decades was not insoluble but purely the birth pangs of a new and higher stage of capitalism.....This would shatter the entire theoretical basis of the Leninist-Trotskyist movement".
(E. Grant: Reply to Cliff c. 1948)

This attack on Trotskyism is the one consistent thing IS has tried to do. Once the analysis of the present epoch as one in which capitalism can no longer fundamentally develop the productive forces is overturned, then with it is overturned any understanding of the crisis of leadership in the working class and the necessity and possibility of building revolutionary leadership.

Cut adrift without any understanding of the epoch in which we live, and writing off the past revolutionary gains of the working class, IS begins only from the spontaneous movements of workers. Here it breaks decisively with Trotskyism. Trotsky founded the Fourth International in 1938 on the basis of massive defeats for the working class in the period following 1917, because he understood that these defeats expressed the crisis of proletarian leadership.

Flowing from this was the need to raise the consciousness of the advanced sections of workers in line with the objective tasks posed by the crisis of capitalism, through the struggle for the Transitional Programme.

For the IS however "The history of the Fourth International has shown the futility of creating an organisation that does not reflect a rising tide of class consciousness".
(*International Socialism* 18 pp2-3)

This is a clear recipe for centrism and pragmatism, opening the way for the rank-and-file, opportunist politics of the IS.

Trotskyists take their starting point not with the spontaneous movements of the working class, but the conflict between the consciousness developed by those movements and the objective requirements of the working class.

In doing so they come into conflict also with the state capitalist theories of IS. It is on this basis that the WSL fights to build the Fourth International as the revolutionary leadership in the working class, by taking up the struggle to defend and develop the Transitional Programme.

(see also our analysis of Cliff's latest book "The crisis: social contract or socialism?" - *Socialist Press*, number 5, April 3rd, 1975)

BY JOHN LEA.

The International Socialists have just re-issued Tony Cliff's book on Russia. This was first written in 1948 in the internal Bulletin of the Revolutionary Communist Party, and was competently refuted (by Ted Grant) in the next issue. Its publication reflects a growing crisis in the IS group.

Even leading IS members now protest at the lack of 'politics' in their paper, *Socialist Worker*. In a desperate attempt to establish some sort of a 'political tradition' around which to retain the membership, the IS leadership have recently been digging up and republishing some of the best-forgotten writings of Cliff and other anti-Marxist 'theoreticians' of the IS.

Cliff's book was simply a confused capitulation to the Cold War, and an abandonment of Marxist analysis in place of a purely 'moral' repugnance to Stalinism.

Capitalism corresponds to a particular historical stage in the development of the productive forces. The capitalist owns the means of production and undertakes production of commodities for exchange on the market in order to expand his capital. In this process capital takes the form alternately of money and means of production. The expansion of capital is the increase in value held by the ruling class. The source of this value is the unpaid labour time of the working class, who own nothing but their labour power.

ASSERTION

Cliff tried however to assert that the Soviet bureaucracy was the ruling class of a new 'Bureaucratic State Capitalism' though he was never able to prove this fiction throughout his book. It remained an *a priori* assertion. In the chapter devoted to 'proving' this hypothesis, having quoted Marx to the effect that the essence of capitalist production is 'accumulation for accumulation's sake' Cliff then just proceeds to the assertion:

"We can say therefore that the Russian bureaucracy 'owning' as it does the state and controlling the process of accumulation is the personification of capital in its purest form." (p. 169)

This totally begged the question of whether it was capital that was being accumulated or simply means of production. The question of how the surplus value of the soviet working class is transformed into capital at the hands of the bureaucracy was never explained by Cliff.

Cliff could find no sources of capital accumulation in Russia, since as he says "The division of labour within Russian society is in essence a species of the division of labour within a single workshop."



LENIN and TROTSKY: I.S. believes that all the gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution have been destroyed by the parasitic Kremlin bureaucracy.

(p. 203) Under capitalism, the accumulation of means of production is only important as part of the process of capital expansion. The process of capital accumulation takes the form of money invested in means of production for the purpose of expanding the sum of money.

This process periodically breaks down, resulting in a falling rate of profit and a cessation of production by capitalists. Needless to say Cliff is able to identify no such process in Russia. As Trotsky wrote in his classic analysis of the degenerated workers state in Russia *Revolution Betrayed*:

"The attempt to represent the Soviet bureaucracy as a class of 'state capitalists' will obviously not withstand criticism. The bureaucracy has neither stocks nor bonds. It is recruited, supplemented and renewed in the manner of an administrative hierarchy, independently of any special property relations of its own. The individual bureaucrat cannot transmit to his heirs his rights in the exploitation of the state apparatus. The bureaucracy enjoys its privileges under the form of an abuse of power. It conceals its income: it pretends that as a special social group it does not even exist. Its appropriation of a vast share of the national income has the character of social parasitism. All this makes the position of the commanding Soviet stratum in the highest degree contradictory, equivocal and undignified, notwithstanding the completeness of its power and the smoke screen of flattery that conceals it."
(pp. 249-50)

Cliff tried to find the causes both of the absence of crises in Russia and the cause of 'capital' accumulation in the international military competition with the west.

is the result of capitalists attempting to preserve the value of their capital especially in times of economic crises. Likewise, if Russia was a capitalist state then certainly arms production would not stave off the falling rate of profit, in fact it would exaggerate the tendency through inflation as it has done in the capitalist states.

State Capitalism in Russia presents us with a galaxy of similar confusions, and distortions of Marxism. Against the mumbo jumbo of people like Cliff Trotsky consistently insisted that in analysing the nature of the Soviet Union it was necessary to



CLIFF: refuted by Trotsky.

begin from the contradiction between the nationalised property relations and the parasitic bureaucracy, not, as Cliff considered, with the totalitarian political rule of the bureaucracy alone. Trotsky analysed the Soviet Union in terms of its relations of production as a workers' state.

"Classes are characterized by their position in the social system of economy, and primarily by their relation to the means of production. In civilised societies, property

needs of production" (*In Defence of Marxism*). By contrast the bureaucracy hinders the development of the productive forces in the Soviet Union. Such development as there has been has taken place despite the bureaucracy. The planned economy of the USSR, based on the nationalised property relations presupposes for its proper working, a Soviet workers' democracy. In the absence of the capitalist market, the management by the working class, through its soviets and factory committees, of all levels of the productive apparatus is the only method of successful planning. In this sense the proletariat is the only class that expresses the "deeply rooted inner needs of production. The bureaucracy, by diverting production to its own ends, and being based upon the suppression of workers democracy, cannot plan effectively. It is this contradiction that is the source of the numerous mistakes and 'crises' in the Soviet economy, not some mythical 'State Capitalism'.

Trotsky was far from ignoring the extent to which political power had been arrogated by the Kremlin bureaucrats:

"In its intermediary and regulating function, its concern to maintain social ranks, and its exploitation of the state apparatus for personal goals, the Soviet bureaucracy is similar to every other bureaucracy, especially the fascist. But it is also in a vast way different. In no other regime has a bureaucracy ever achieved such a degree of independence from the dominating class. In bourgeois society, the bureaucracy represents the interests of a possessing and educated class, which has at its disposal innumerable means of everyday control over its administration of affairs. The Soviet

... THE WOMAN QUESTION ...



The position of women in capitalist society was stressed time and again by Lenin and Trotsky, and Trotsky in the Transitional Programme, the founding document of the Fourth International, underlines the importance of bringing women into the revolutionary party. Yet this is a field which has been allowed by the British Trotskyist movement to remain in the domain of middle class liberals.

Speaking to a conference of working women in the Soviet Union on 23rd September, 1919, Lenin said:

"... You all know that even when women have full rights, they still remain factually downtrodden because all housework is left to them. In most cases, housework is the most unproductive, the most barbarous and the most arduous work a woman can do. It is exceptionally petty and does not in any way promote the development of the woman."
(Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 30, pp. 40-6)

OPPRESSION

And we all know that this is still the situation in the family today. Of course, it can be argued that the technological developments made since 1919 have considerably lightened the 'arduous work' of the housewife. Similar developments have decreased the manual labour of workers in industry, but this in no way lessens the oppression of workers by the employers. For the content of this oppression lies in the social relations of capitalist production. So the essence of woman's oppression must be understood by undertaking a serious study of the social relations within the family. As Engels wrote, in *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*:

"Today, in the great majority of cases, the man has to be the earner, the bread-winner of the family, ... and this gives him a dominating position which requires no special legal privileges. In the family, he is the bourgeois; the wife represents the proletariat." (emphasis added)
(Marx and Engels Selected Works, Vol. 3, p. 247)

The gains won by women since Engels was writing — the right to vote, the Married Women's Property Act, the omission from the marriage service of the word 'obey', etc. — have done nothing to change this basic inequality. As Engels goes on to explain, democratic legal

equality won will serve to expose where the real roots of the oppression lie — in the capitalist system:

"In the industrial world, however, the specific character of the economic oppression that weighs down the proletariat stands out in all sharpness only after all the special legal privileges of the capitalist class have been set aside and the complete juridical equality of both class is established. The democratic republic does not abolish the antagonism between the two classes; on the contrary, it provides the field on which it is fought out. And similarly the peculiar character of man's domination over woman in the modern family, and the necessity, as well as the manner of establishing real social equality between the two, will be brought out into full relief only when both are completely equal before the law. It will then become evident that the first premise for the emancipation of women is the re-introduction of the entire female sex into public industry; and that this again demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society be abolished." (as above)

This was clear to Lenin after the October Revolution, when full legal equality was provided for women, restrictions on divorce lifted, abortions freely available, etc., and the requirement was then for women to fully enter productive work:

TRANSFORMATION

"Notwithstanding all the laws emancipating woman, she continues to be a domestic slave, because petty housework crushes, strangles, and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen and the nursery, and she wastes her labour on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-wracking stultifying and crushing drudgery. The real emancipation of women, real communism, will begin only where and when an all-out struggle begins ... against this petty house-keeping, or rather when its wholesale transformation into a large-scale economy begins."

And he goes on to explain the means by which this transformation can take place:

"... Public catering establishments, nurseries, kindergartens — here we have examples of these shoots, here we have the simple, everyday means ... which can really emancipate women, ... they (these means) were created by capitalism but remained first a rarity and secondly ... either profit-making enterprises ... or acrobatics of bourgeois charity" ..."
(Lenin Collected Works, Volume 29 pp. 428-9, emphasis in original)

Let us look at the situation in western capitalist countries today: mothers of young children drugged by anti-depressants in order to face the 'petty, nerve-wracking drudgery', state nurseries provided for children of unsupported mothers only — and even here there is great pressure on the mother to stay at home, causing almost complete isolation from the outside world — and private nurseries for those rich enough to pay. Nursery schools exist but, as the Plowden Report emphasised, this provision is strictly for the child's education and certainly must not assist the mother to take employment outside the home. Playgroups have been organised by groups of mothers because of the State's refusal to provide these basic services but again, because of their limited hours, they are of no value to the working mother. Public eating places and laundering facilities of course exist strictly as capitalist enterprises and certainly do not regard service to

working people as their raison-d'être.

The plans of the October Revolution were to provide a finished system of social care and accommodation: child-care centres, social dining rooms, schools, hospitals, etc. However, as Trotsky explains in *Revolution Betrayed*, the actual liberation of women was unrealisable on a basis of "generalised want". (In other words not until the material conditions existed.) The growth of the

idea of leadership, maintaining that every woman must be left free to regain her confidence after a lifetime of domination by the male sex. Thus the emphasis is on individual solutions and certainly not on any class analysis of society.

Here the socialist women in Women's Liberation from the IMG and IS bear the major responsibility for this lack of fight for a clear political leadership in the movement. Much of the activity in Women's Liberation revolves

in the movement is that it diverts completely away from a materialist approach to the problems facing women:

"... And what is the result of this futile, un-Marxist way of dealing with all this? That the great social question appears as an adjunct as a part, of sexual problems. The main thing becomes a subsidiary matter. That does not only endanger clarity on that question itself, it muddles the thoughts of the class conscious women generally ... Is now the time to amuse proletarian women with discussions on how one loves and is loved, how one marries and is married?
(Lenin: as above)

ABORTION LAW

The Women's Liberation movement is also, though, attempting to mobilise action for legal reforms. We support completely the fight against the new abortion law proposals introduced in Parliament by the MP White which would restrict drastically the availability of abortions merely to cases of extreme medical risk. The decision to have children should lie with the woman whose life will be radically altered by becoming a mother, and with her alone. The Health Service should operate in order to protect the health of women, who would otherwise be forced into the hands of the 'back-street' abortionists with dangerous consequences.

The fight for the Working Women's Charter must also be supported. However the only way to mobilise a fight in the working class on these issues is through the organisations of the working class — the trade unions — and central to this fight is the fight against the reformist leadership in the trade unions which has held back on the fight on the Equal Pay Act and which we have recently seen in action at the NUT conference against a delegate proposing action for the Working Womens Charter. The struggle must be to build a revolutionary leadership in the unions which will fight on these issues and begin to mobilise working women in the struggle for socialism, and thereby gain the material conditions for lifting the oppression of women.

We are totally against any concept of separate organisation for women. As Lenin said:

"The inseparable connection between the social and human position of the woman and private property in the means of production must be strongly brought out. That will draw a clear and ineradicable line of distinction between our policy and feminism. And it will supply the basis for regarding the woman question as a part of the social question, of the workers' problem; and so bind it firmly to the proletarian class struggle and the revolution ... Our ideological conceptions dictate the principles of organisation: no special organisations for women. A woman communist is a member of the party just as a man communist."
(Lenin to Klara Zetkin, Autumn 1920; Reminiscences of Lenin, Klara Zetkin)

This article is intended to provide the basis for a discussion within the Trotskyist movement on the question of demands through which the revolutionary party can raise the level of women's day-to-day struggles to show the necessity of the socialist revolution.

We invite readers' comments and contributions to this discussion.



Women's Liberation demonstration.

bureaucracy under Stalin's leadership was accompanied by the movement away from the social dining rooms of the more well-off layers, and generally the lack of proper provision: "A child-care centre in which the child feels worse than he does at home is not a child-care centre but a bad orphan asylum" — reported a Soviet newspaper in the mid-1930's. "You cannot abolish the family — you have to replace it" said Trotsky, and Stalin's refusal to make adequate provision opened the door to the re-introduction of the woman's role in the home. Subsequently divorce and abortion laws were tightened up and the modern situation is summed up in the experience of a Polish mother who has to get up at 5.30 in order to take the child across the city to his kindergarten return and do a full day's work in her local factory, shop, fetch the child home and then cook and clean up for the whole family.

around the Consciousness Raising groups where small groups of women meet regularly in 'closed' sessions to delve deeply into their innermost thoughts in order presumably to purge themselves of their feelings of inadequacy which the domination of the male sex throughout their upbringing has nurtured. These sessions inevitably turn into discussions and 'frank' revelations about sexual problems. Lenin was very clear on these kind of groups which were prevalent in the feminist movement at his time:

"It seems to me that these flourishing sexual theories which are mainly hypothetical, and often quite arbitrary, arise from the personal need to justify personal abnormality or hypertrophy in sexual life before bourgeois morality, and to entreat its patience. This masked respect for bourgeois morality seems to me just as repulsive as interfering in sexual matters. However wild and revolutionary the behaviour may be,



Working class housewife in slum area.

The growth of the Women's Liberation movement over the recent period shows the possibilities for women — traditionally, by virtue of their isolation in the home, completely unorganised — to become a fighting force. However this movement is almost totally comprised of women from the middle class and completely refuses to entertain

it is still really quite bourgeois. It is, mainly, a hobby of the intellectuals and of the sections nearest to them. There is no place for it in the party, in the class conscious, fighting proletariat."
(In discussion with Klara Zetkin, Autumn 1920; Reminiscences of Lenin, Klara Zetkin)

The biggest danger of this activity

'AID' TO FAMINE

by R. Roberts

The last article showed the fallacy of the "world food crisis", how enough food could be produced if it were not for the fetters imposed by capitalist relations of production. The inflationary crisis intensifies shortage and price rises a hundredfold. Poor countries with balance of payments problems have suffered drought and world demand for grain has increased.

Prices have risen, doubling between 1970 and 1973 as speculators looking for a profitable way out of declining industrial investment, have cashed in through advanced buying of future production of basic food commodities. In an attempt to contain domestic inflation the US has stopped grain and fertiliser exports - a hammer blow at the economies of underdeveloped countries. Domestic prices rose even faster in Britain as the Tories took the cost of agricultural support from import levies instead of the Treasury, and negotiated entry into the Common Market.

This working out of the inflationary crisis of capitalism in the world economy, while it threatens cuts in the living standards of workers in the West, brings starvation and unemployment in those countries capitalism has kept economically underdeveloped and thus intensifies the political crisis for imperialism throughout the world.

REVOLUTION

This is seen clearly if we examine the agrarian problem in the underdeveloped countries. A revolution in agricultural technique is needed to enable these countries to support even the rural population, let alone the large industrial workforce necessary to raise the overall technical level and productivity. Yet this change in methods can only come about when the exploitation of the peasantry by the landowners and by monopolist suppliers and contractors has been eliminated through social revolution.

Production on the land is shackled by the exploiting role of western capitalism which not only plunders resources, looking simply for a return on its investment, the 'imperial tribute', but which also perpetuates imperialist subjugation by supporting corrupt bourgeois nationalist governments and puppet rulers.

The working of the 'Green Revolution' in India provides a good example of the contradictions. After the two-year drought from 1965-67 the USA persuaded the Indian government to use the high-yield variety (HYV) Mexican dwarf wheat which can double grain yield. The increase of 3.8m tons of wheat over the pre-drought 10.7m tons was dramatic for the few Northern states which used these varieties, but the rest of India was unchanged because only these few states had sufficient irrigation. Likewise the use of HYV rice is restricted to a few areas on the East coast with large river deltas.

These varieties are critically dependant on adequate irrigation, drainage, large amounts of fertiliser (up to 4 times as much as for traditional plants) and pesticides, and on farm machinery to prepare and reap the multiple harvests possible in one year.

These 'inputs' cost 1125 Rupees per hectare in 1971, when the national per capita income was only 600 Rupees. Who can afford it? In a typical HYV rice area, 61% of farmers own less than half a hectare, 38% own between 1/2 and 2 hectares, and the last 1% own most of the land (up to 1,000 hectares each). A small farmer has to borrow money for these 'inputs' but the banks and co-ops only lend to big

rich farmers with land as security: the smallholders are forced therefore to resort to private lenders charging 100-200% interest. The loan can obviously never be paid back and the smallholdings are sold at a pittance to the moneylenders, the peasants becoming landless labourers.

The tenant and sharecroppers in the poor population face massive rent increases from landowners using the HYV varieties - up to 70% of their crops is taken. Like the peasants, if they can't raise loans they are thrown off the land.

The big landowners, with cheaper capital borrowed from the banks, see their profit soaring and buy land that the poor are forced off, while the rich from the towns join in the land bonanza.

The switch to HYV grain by capitalist farmers for its high profit also means that pulses, the main source of protein which is already in very short supply, are abandoned. Protein deficiency, which stunts the mental growth of children and increases susceptibility to disease, is

drought, and the 'Ecologist' blamed 'bad weather' for the first fall in world food production since the Second World War in 1972. Climatic changes and natural hazards have always been with us. But this is only one side of the problem.

The floods in Bangladesh in the autumn of 1974 caused widespread starvation among millions of refugees only because of the feudal agricultural relations which, as in India, mean that peasants live so close to subsistence levels that when any land is flooded, they are lost. Facing a situation where they pay half the crop to a landlord as rent, and have to borrow at 100-200% rates of interest when their half of the crop runs out, where when they sell grain to raise cash to repay loans the price manipulated by the monopolists is low, and may have doubled when they are forced to buy seed later in the year, the small farmer has no margin to survive.

One of the 'drought' areas worst hit was the Sahel region of Northern Africa, which is vulnerable

ment. Brazil had to make her processed coffee uncompetitively priced, and the US had protected the vast profits of its coffee processing industry by aborting a promising industry in Brazil.

Development in the Indian textile industry is prevented by import quotas and tariffs applied especially by Britain to protect the home industry. So underdeveloped countries are prevented from diversifying their exports and thus advancing their technical level and living standards.

The problems are intensified by the slump in demand due to the growing recession. Only sugar, out of the four major commodities on the London Commodity Exchange, and only tin out of the metals on the London Metal Exchange, ended 1974 at prices above those of 1973. This rapid price erosion has caused producer countries to form associations, to cut exports and defend their price. Agreements were proposed in Latin America for bauxite, copper, silver, iron ore, coffee and bananas.

American imperialism declared economic war on such attempts in the Trade Act, passed in January. This refuses trade preferences and tariff advantages to producer countries which are members of commodity associations, while granting them to manufacturers from the rest of the world. Imperialism is determined not to allow underdeveloped countries room to breathe.

The self defence of imperialism at the expense of the economic ruin of the ex-colonial world is seen clearly in the field of "aid".

'Aid' has never been a gift to poorer countries but always a means of tightening the grip of imperialism, in any case, the increase in landless and unemployed has meant that in most famines there has been no local shortage of food, but the victims have had nothing to buy it with.

Aid goes to countries offering the best commercial opportunities. Most is 'tied aid' - tied to purchases of goods often uncompetitive in price or quantity that would find no buyer on the world market, and often not needed anyway. Much aid is in the form of loans the enormous rates of interest on which increase third world debt and new aid is just used to pay them back.

STRATEGIC

The returns on such 'aid' are greater than the aid itself - in one year the Latin American subsidiaries of US corporations sent back £425m profit to the US - more than double the amount the whole region received in new investment and foreign aid put together. Aid is used to keep reactionary ruling elites in power and prevent local social reform and revolution, and covers huge sums spent for political or strategic purposes. Even food aid is used this way. United States Public Law 480 states that the policy of congress is "... to make maximum efficient use of surplus agricultural commodities in furtherance of the Foreign Policy of the United States".

An official of the Department of Agriculture who wrote the first draft of the law has explained: "I could see the possibility of the American government controlling a couple of dozen countries through these free-food shipments. We could control them because the food gave us power over the cities... because everyone would know we would not unload the wheat if the government went overboard to the Communist left."

Now since 1973 the US has suspended export sales of fertiliser and decided that the 75% drop in US food-aid over the 10 years



A family of Tuareg nomads, victims of drought in Central Niger

rapidly increasing.

If this were not enough, fertiliser is so short that twenty times the present consumption is needed even for traditional varieties of grain. Such vast quantities are not available to India on the world market, even if the national economy could pay for it - which it can't, with the increased price of oil and other imports. The world shortage of chemical fertiliser which has tripled prices has come from monopolies like the group of mines in Saskatchewan, Canada supplying most of the world's potash. They have kept production down deliberately to force prices up. By similar tactics Morocco, which supplies two-thirds of the world's market for phosphates, has forced prices up 600% since 1972.

So while foreign manufacturers dump toxic insecticides (which are banned as dangerous in their home countries) on the Indian market, the US can use as much fertiliser as that used throughout the whole of India just on lawns and golf courses!

EXPLOITERS

There can be no end to famine and no solution to the world food crisis while capitalist and semi-feudal relations of production channel surplus into the hands of a small class of exploiters, while millions of peasants and landless labourers living at the brink of starvation cannot even afford to buy grain sent over in "aid" shipments.

The picture is often presented by capitalism's apologists, of famine being caused by natural disasters like flooding or drought. One TV documentary (criticised in the previous article) blamed a long term change in world weather narrowing the monsoon zone and causing

should not be replaced.

For the workers and peasants of the under-developed countries there is no solution in seeking increased "aid" or merely in increased commodity prices. The central question is to end their exploitation by world imperialism and by national capitalism and landlordism. Thus the masses now come into the struggle against the moneylenders, the landlords and the monopolists as a part of the world development of the class struggle. As Trotsky's Transitional Programme states:

"Colonial and semi-colonial countries are backward countries by their very essence. But backward countries are part of a world dominated by imperialism. Their development, therefore, has a combined character: the most primitive economic forms are combined with the last word in capitalist technique and culture. In like manner are defined the political strivings of the proletariat of backward countries: the struggle for the most elementary achievements of national independence and bourgeois democracy is combined with the socialist struggle against world imperialism. Democratic slogans, transitional demands and the problems of the socialist revolution are not divided into separate historical epochs in this struggle, but stem directly from one another." (p. 41, emphasis added)

LINKED

This position has been vividly borne out in the struggles in Indo China and indeed the Chinese revolution itself. Again, as Trotsky continues:

"In this sense the present programme (the Transitional Programme) is completely applicable to colonial and semi-colonial countries, at least to those where the proletariat has become capable of carrying on independent politics. The central task of the colonial and semi-colonial countries is the agrarian revolution, i.e. liquidation of feudal heritages, and national independence, i.e. the overthrow of the imperialist yoke. Both tasks are closely linked with each other." (p. 42)

The key question for Trotskyists is to understand how these struggles must flow over into transitional and socialist demands through the conscious intervention of revolutionaries in conflict with the Stalinist theory of rigidly distinct separate 'stages'.

At the same time the demand for the nationalisation of the land and collectivisation of agriculture must be put forward, in such a way as Trotsky says that "from its very basis it should exclude the possibility of expropriation of small farmers and their compulsory collectivisation. The farmer will remain owner of his plot of land as long as he himself believes it possible or necessary". Thus the big estates must be expropriated and collectivised, while leaving the small holders to take their own decision to go over to socialist planned production. To assist this however the banks must be nationalised and merged into a single national institution under the management of workers committees, which can then provide favourable terms of credit for the small farmers as well as financing the large collectives. The nationalisation of the banks does not therefore mean the nationalisation of small deposits but the best guarantee that those deposits can be of value to their owners.

CONTROL

At each point the struggles of small farmers must be directed towards the demands which establish the strongest links with the working class in opposition to monopoly capitalism. Again as Trotsky wrote:

"... the banks, the trusts, the merchants rob the farmer from every side. Only the

The First MAY DAY

by Alan Clinton

In each new period of the struggle of the working class movement it becomes necessary to remind the rising generation of the sacrifices which have been needed to set up our organisations and establish our rights.

It came as a surprise to one of our members in his union branch the other week to discover that nobody seemed to know why May Day is celebrated as International Workers' Day. The general opinion was that it might have something to do with fertility rites, Morris Dancing and the beginning of Spring, so it seemed a good idea to explain that its origins really lie in a particular struggle to improve workers conditions and to express solidarity with those who have suffered to maintain them.

provocateur or an attempt to pay off a personal grudge.

However, any careful consideration of the case was impossible at the time in an atmosphere of witch-hunt and hysteria built up by the press and exploited by the legal system. After numerous raids and arrests, eight men were found guilty of 'conspiracy' - not because they could have played any part in the incident, but because they advocated policies which according to the police might have led to it.

Of these one committed suicide and four others were hanged in 1887. With the rope around his neck, one of them, August Spies, declared: 'There will be a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today'.

The stepping up of the struggle for the eight hour day ensured that the Haymarket martyrs were not forgotten. The American Fed-

As Healy's budget chopped to the ground any lingering hopes among trade unionists that the social contract meant preservation of jobs or living standards in exchange for "restraint" in wage claims, the pressure has increased on the trade union leaders.

Workers are demanding these leaders fight for increases to match the escalating rate of inflation - now an annual rate of 25.4%.

In London, busmen have been able to extract an offer of a 12 month cost of living deal paying 75p for every 1% increase in the Retail Prices Index, starting from next month.

This eliminates the reactionary "threshold" conception, since no "trigger" is involved whereby a certain level of price increase is tolerated. It is a considerable step towards a full sliding scale of wages though of course a sliding scale would include all increases in living costs determined by trade unionists and not centre on merely the government-distorted figures of the Retail Prices Index.

But even this creates agony for the trade union bureaucracy. Teachers' leaders for instance, put on the spot by the 20-30% settlements conceded to power-workers, civil servants, and miners, have been forced to scrap their earlier 28% claim in favour of one for about 26%.

Yet the NUT leaders showed their reluctance to fight by blaming the employers for not settling quickly, as union official Henry Clothier said "They could have had a quick settlement but they chose not to do so. It will now cost them much more..."

Similar embarrassment is shown by the railwaymen's leader Sid Weighell, who, forced by the pressure of his membership reflected through the NUR executive, has reluctantly rejected British Rail's 21.2% offer and is holding out for 30%. Desperately attempting to prevent strike action (only defeated by two votes on the executive) Weighell has called for non-binding instant arbitration, while preparations go ahead for a strike.

He plainly feels uncomfortable in confronting the employer, and blames his members. "It has made

my life intolerable," he said, "because my members don't accept the situation that the gate should be closed now with the NUR the only one left outside." Left to himself, Weighell obviously would have sold out long ago.

It is this massive working class pressure, escalated by the budget attacks on living standards, which is now disrupting the wage cutting social contract between the Labour leaders and the TUC. This is not for want of trying by the TUC. Len Murray made clear last week his disappointment that wages had been forced up. He said that the social contract had been "very successful" in many ways, but admitted "wages and salaries have gone up much faster than we had hoped".

Without TUC influence "things really would have gone through the ceiling," said Murray, thus proudly stating his belief that the TUC's function is to keep down wages in line with the needs of capitalism.

This raises the need for a new and determined leadership in the unions to replace the present half-hearted and shame-faced reformists.

LANCASTER: FIVE STUDENTS EXPELLED

Every action by students in defence of grants and the right to free education is now being viciously fought by the university authorities, with the full backing of the Labour government.

A clear example of this is the wholesale victimisation of student militants at Lancaster University, where five students (including the Union President, Dick Soper) have been expelled and eight suspended for a year. The charges arise from an occupation of the administration block, which developed from their rent strike action in the struggle for increased grants. The occupation was broken up by police after 12 days. The victimisations are intended to intimidate the student move-

ment in the hope of preventing further action.

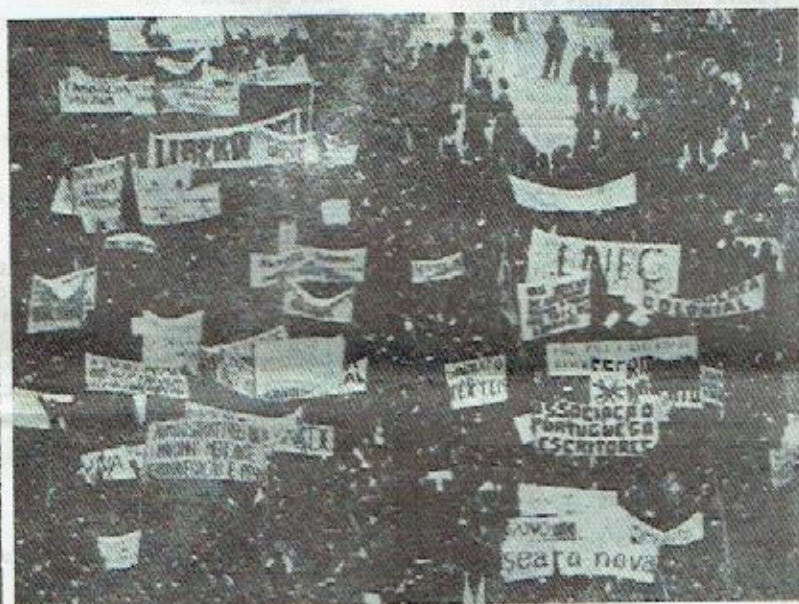
At the same time as these savage sentences were announced by the kangaroo court of the Lancaster Disciplinary Committee, the occupation continued at Warwick University against the withholding of grant cheques and as an escalation of their continuing rent strike.

NATIONAL POLICY

Yet, as shown in *Socialist Press* (17.4.75) the rent strike policy is national policy of the NUS and it is an obligation on the national leadership to generalise these correct and necessary struggles. The danger to individual students arises from the abdication of leadership within the NUS, and from the way the grants struggle has been restricted to simply a "student" issue. It is

part of the fight of the working class to defend free education, and against the reactionary policies of the Labour government on wages, jobs and public spending.

Students must therefore take every opportunity to force their leadership into carrying through the official NUS policy with the full strength of the union, at the same time in every area carrying out an active struggle to win support from the trade union movement. In developing this fight, the linked demands for a sliding scale of grants and for a sliding scale of education spending linked to the rising cost of living are vital to defend jobs in education and the living standards of students and workers. But central to the fight now is the defence of the victimised Lancaster students and their full reinstatement by the University.



Lisbon: May Day 1974.

In 1884 an obscure American workers organisation by the name of the Federation of Organised Trade and Labour Unions issued a call for a legal eight hour day and for a general strike if this was not obtained within two years. Many actions were initiated on this call in the following period throughout the United States, and though individual employers were forced to concede shorter hours, there was no general legal change.

When the two-year period came to an end on 1st May 1886, workers in every part of America were on strike or were preparing to do so to obtain the eight hour day. In Chicago at least four workers were shot dead as they tried to prevent the entry of scabs into a factory.

On the evening of 4th May about 3000 people gathered in the Haymarket Square in the centre of town to protest. As they were dispersing, the police suddenly charged into the crowd, and a bomb went off killing seven policemen. To this day it is uncertain who let off the bomb, but the most likely explanation is that the explosion was the work of an agent

of Labour, to which most unions were affiliated at the time, took up the call for further action if there were no concessions by 1st May 1890. In 1889 when the Socialist (second) International was set up, one of the first motions it passed called for action in every country on that day aiming 'to reduce the working day by law to eight hours'.

Thus on May Day 1890 there were stoppages of work and demonstrations throughout Europe and North America on this demand, and many gains were reported from France, the United States and elsewhere. Only in Britain did the conservative trade union leaders refuse to initiate any action on May Day itself, but called instead for demonstrations over the following weekend.

This rather shame-faced practice is no doubt partly responsible for the fact that few British workers now seem to know that May Day began in militant action and solidarity with those throughout the world who have lost their lives and livelihoods in the struggle for the emancipation of their class.

peasant economy) is lost by all those who turn their backs on the Transitional Programme and merely generalise about the "colonial revolution".

Yet it is only through the fight for such demands that the united strength of workers and peasants can be mobilised both to defeat imperialism and the national bourgeoisie and to be prepared to take the struggle forward to the establishment of a planned economy with the full and democratic participation of workers and peasants committees and soviets.

Only in this way can the world food crisis be solved.

LETTER: Chinese Trotskyists

We have received the following letter from Gregor Benton of the Chinese Department, University of Leeds. The main papers published in Britain which claim adherence to the principles of Trotskyism have all received copies, and some have already published it. For our part, we would strongly endorse its call for the issues to which it refers to be taken up throughout the Labour movement.

According to a recent Hsinhua News Agency dispatch, "war criminals just released by special amnesty numbered 293 in all, including 290 war criminals who belonged to the Chiang Kai-shek clique, two war criminals from the Japanese puppet regime in Manchuria and one war criminal from the puppet 'Inner Mongolian Autonomous Government'. This means that all war-criminals held in jail have now been released." (19 March 1975, Peking)

But no similar amnesty has ever been declared in the case of those revolutionaries, in particular the Trotskyists, who were arrested in the course of a nation-wide raid on the night of 23-24 December 1952. Altogether 200 persons were seized. No indictment was ever made public. No public trial was ever held. Those arrested were refused contact with their relatives and friends.

It is therefore impossible to say with any certainty what happened to those Trotskyist militants since. We do not know what "crimes" they were charged with. We do not even know how many of them are still alive. What little information we have indicates that most of the younger ones are now living under supervision after 5 years or more of imprisonment, and are barred from employment. The older comrades continue to rot behind bars.

Who are these Chinese Trotskyists Mao judges more dangerous to his regime than Kuomintang counter-revolutionaries? They include:

1. Chen Ch'ao-lin: a founding member of the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese Trotskyist movement, a leader of the 1925-27 revolution. A prominent writer and translator. Assuming that he is still alive, Cheng will be 74 years old. He will have spent 30 years in jail - seven under Chiang Kai-shek, twenty-three under Mao.
2. Chiang Tseng-tung: a leading activist in the Shanghai labour movement and a participant in the Shanghai general strike and uprising of 1927. If still alive, he would now be about 65.
3. Ho Chi-shen: a student leader in Peking in the early 'twenties, who joined the CCP shortly after

its formation. Together with Mao, Ho played a leading role both in the 1925-27 revolution and in the revolutionary movement in Hunan Province after its defeat. Like Chen Ch'ao-lin, Ho will have spent seven years in jail under Chiang and 23 under Mao - his old comrade-in-arms. If alive, he will now be 79 years old.

4. Ying Kwan: a student in France with Chou En-lai in the early 1920s, an intimate friend of Marshal Ch'en Yi and a leading activist in the CCP in Anhwei Province during the 1925-27 revolution. Ying Kwan was also a founding member of the Chinese Trotskyist movement. As a Trotskyist, he was jailed twice by the Kuomintang police during the 1930s. If still alive, he would be about 75 years old.

5. Lin Huan-hua: a revolutionary leader of the younger generation. He worked underground in the anti-Japanese resistance from 1938-1945, and was a member of the Executive of the Canton Printworkers' Union when arrested by the Maoists. He is now a little over fifty years old.

This issue must be taken up throughout the labour movement and a campaign launched for the immediate release of all Chinese Trotskyists and other revolutionaries still in jail.

continued from page 6

farmers themselves, with the help of the workers, can curb this robbery. Committees elected by small farmers should make their appearance on the national scene and jointly with workers' committees and committees of bank employees take into their hands control of transport, credit and mercantile operations affecting agriculture." (p. 29)

The richness of these demands worked through by Trotsky on the basis of the experience of the Russian Revolution (which itself took place in a backward, largely

At its meeting in Aberdeen the Scottish TUC adopted a resolution calling for sliding scale of wages agreements. The motion, from Stirling Trades Council, calls on unions to fight for cost of living clauses which would transform threshold agreements into a sliding scale of wages based on a cost of living index worked out by the trade union committees. This important decision comes at a time when this demand is developing in the mass movement. It goes alongside the demand to open the books adopted by the Birmingham meeting of motor industry shop stewards on April 23rd. It is not enough, however, simply to pass resolutions on these demands. The Scottish TUC allowed the troops to be used against the Glasgow dustmen who were fighting for wages. Only through a fight against these leaders will these correct demands for the sliding scale of wages be implemented.

'LEFTS' RESCUE WILSON



Wilson: Still in the saddle

Labour Prime Minister Wilson now stands blatantly in breach of the decisions of every policy-making body in the Labour Party, and is only preserved by the reluctance of the 'left' to push him out. This is the message, loud and clear from the Labour Party Special Conference, held in the Sobell Sports Centre, Islington on Saturday. The Conference threw out by a 2 to 1 majority Wilson's policy of entry into the Common Market and called for a 'no' vote in the referendum in line with a resolution submitted on behalf of the NEC majority by Brian Stanley, P.O.E.U. General Secretary. Not one delegate would get up to move the logical conclusion to

that position - that if Wilson's policy is thrown out, Wilson himself, along with Jenkins, Prentice, Callaghan and the pro-Market faction should also be removed. Wilson thus remains in his position by default, ruling the roost from a minority position, free to sack ministers like Heffer who step out of line, and carrying out the strategic requirement of British capitalism by advocating British entry and by staging this referendum rather than follow the mandate given him by the labour movement.

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NEC

Now that the conference is over, and Wilson still in the saddle, the press is trying to whip up a frenzy against Benn's supposed "plot" to isolate Wilson by directing through the NEC a campaign for a "no" vote. Of course the NEC would be correct in using all party resources to carry out agreed party policy

LOYAL

Where does the 'left' stand on these questions? Perhaps they can best be characterised by the loyal opposition of the *Militant* group, whose speakers confined them-

and in fighting Wilson. But of course all the hullabaloo about the referendum simply covers over the fact that a principled socialist leadership would not be putting such an issue to a vote - but would merely withdraw unilaterally from the capitalist confederation of the EEC. While calling for a "no" vote in the referendum, we stress again that the crucial issue at this point is the fight to remove Wilson as Labour leader, and expose those who protect him with 'left' talk in the labour movement.

PORTUGAL: ELECTION

The results of the Portuguese election, for all the confusion and compromise emanating from the leaders of the Communist and Socialist Parties, represent an important blow by the working class against capitalist policies and, above all, against any attempts at a right-wing or military comeback. The very small vote (7%) for the most right-wing party running, the Centre Democrat Social Party (CDS), which carried the approval of the British Tory Party, was a clear signal that not only the working class, but most of the peasants and the middle class, will have no truck with the political formations most clearly compromised by association with fascism. The Socialist Party and the Communist Party together won a clear majority (55%) of the votes, and a clear command of the Constituent Assembly. At the end of the election, therefore, the main obstacle standing in the way of a government of working class parties was one of their own making - the fact that both the Communist Party leader Cunhal and the Socialist Party leader Soares had signed a treacherous electoral 'pact' with the chiefs of the Armed Forces Movement a fortnight before the election. The road to power for the Portuguese workers' movement lies not through a bourgeois parliament which is just a front for AFM rule, and handcuffed by the major parties before it is born, but in the strengthening and unification of the organs of workers' power which already exist - the committees of workers, soldiers, peasants and tenants in the localities.

NF IN Bradford

Last Saturday, 26th April, the anti-working class racials of the National Front were allowed to march through the centre of Bradford and hold a meeting in St. George's Hall. A counter-demonstration was called by the Trades Council but having done this, the officials apparently considered that after this their responsibilities ended. Though 7000 trade union members were mobilised in 1972 against the Industrial Relations Act the Trades Council did nothing against this potentially greater threat to the working class movement, (not to mention Bradford's enormous immigrant community). The AUEW District Committee that week refused to consider the proposal of a delegate, a WSL member, to take up the question. As a result only one trade union banner appeared on a counter-demonstration of 3000, together with the Indian Workers Association and a large contingent of students. All political tendencies within the working class movement were represented including a section from the Workers Socialist League. Even the sectarians of the WRP sent a small group on the counter-march, though they disappeared before the arrival of the fascists. The Trades Council having abdicated from the organisation of trade unionists against the fascists tried to prevent even a meeting at the spot where the counter-demonstration was called. The anti-fascists marched through the centre of town and eventually were followed by about 400 National Front members under heavy police protection. These were allowed by police to punch and kick the anti-fascists with impunity, and a number were injured. The feelings of workers in Bradford were shown by the housewives and pensioners who went to retaliate by wielding their handbags at the fascists. A clear call and determined organisation from the working class movement would draw out a response which would make it impossible for the National Front again to show their face on the streets of Bradford or anywhere else.

astms

The Annual Conference of ASTMS, the white collar and technicians union, is being held on 10th, 11th and 12th May in Bournemouth. The agenda containing motions and amendments clearly shows, as far as members are concerned, that the economic crisis, particularly inflation, together with the defence of democratic rights, should be the dominating factor in shaping union policy. The Annual Report from the National Executive, however shows the role of the reformist leadership in protecting the Labour government in its defence of capitalism. The report gives an account of the union's achievements over the last year - quoting many large percentage pay increases, but does not mention any form of cost of living clause in any agreement which has been won or even fought for. So most of the pay increases will have already been eroded by inflation. Once again this shows how far the NEC is from the requirements of the membership, which has submitted many motions calling for realistic threshold agreements and sliding scales of wages on an index decided by trade unionists, as opposed to the Retail Price Index. The section on the Health Service exposes all these contradictions. It also shows that the NEC has in no way tried to fight for a free NHS and the ending of Private Practice. From all over the country, however, motions have been submitted calling for the blocking of private patients and more action by the NEC. A large number of Health Service branches have already started a black on private patients, and have taken a stand openly opposed to the Labour Government and its lack of action, yet the NEC does not even mention this struggle in the Report. To break the working class from its reformist leadership is an obvious necessity. It is already coming into conflict with the limitations of this leadership on the whole range of daily trade union struggles. The success of this ASTMS conference will be measured by the extent to which the inadequacies and betrayals of the NEC are exposed and fought by the delegates.

(Continued from Front Page) rapidly declining further. Ryder therefore equals unemployment on a considerable scale. The report completely establishes the case for the books to be opened. The figures revealed show that not only was nearly all the profit distributed to shareholders as dividends rather than used as investment but that these profits were based on false book-keeping. The report says, for example: "A substantial proportion of BL's fixed assets were old and had been fully written down. The depreciation charge was therefore an inadequate measure of what should have been spent on capital investment".

BOOKS FIDDLE

In other words Stokes and company were fiddling the books in the interest of the shareholders with the jobs of a million workers and their families involved. The case for opening the books of every BL plant and every associated supplier is unanswerable. The "leadership" of the Combined Stewards Committee must be forced to stop collaboration with Ryder and fight to implement the Cowley resolution. Ryder, ex-chairman of Reed International, well knows the role of leadership when it comes to a fight. In a section of the report therefore he continues the witch-hunt started by Leyland management in Cowley last year when Alan Thornett was victimised. He makes the following statement in an attempt to strengthen the right wing and weaken any shop steward prepared to fight to defend jobs, wages, conditions and agreements in the Leyland plants. He says: "It may be argued that some of the shop stewards are motivated by extremist political views, and do not act in conformity with the policy of their members. It must be for the members themselves to recognise the responsibilities which the shop stewards are exercising on their behalf, and to ensure that the right people are chosen to exercise these responsibilities". In other words he is saying elect yes-men who will accept every dictate of the company because if you elect someone who will lead

a resistance we will stop the money and put you on the dole. He is reported to be considering backing this up with the appointment of Derek Whittaker, the managing director of the Cowley complex, who directed the victimisation last year to the key position of head of the new Cars Division. These threats must be set against the incredible mismanagement Ryder was forced to reveal in the report, such as competition between models in the same sector of the market and the chaotic component planning.

The report is heavily abridged on the basis of "commercial confidentiality" - commonly known as business secrets. So even now with workers' jobs at stake they are not to know the truth. Benn's role in this is central. The plan is to be administered by his National Enterprise Board which will have provisions for opening the books to selected TU bureaucrats, in order to suck them into further collaboration, whilst making it a criminal offence for them to reveal such information to the working class - as *Socialist Press* was first to point out on February 6th. Benn does this under a left cover of fraudulent "workers' participation" in the Ryder plan.

STRATEGIST BENN

Therefore Benn, the great advocate of nationalisation, emerges as, in many ways, the best long-term strategist of capitalism. Many of the industries which grew up in the boom period can no longer find the capital needed for the super exploitation of workers necessary in today's cut-throat competition. They now find this capital through the Labour Government and Benn. British Leyland workers must reject the Ryder report outright. They must demand that their leaders also reject it and fight for full nationalisation under the management of elected committees of workers - not simply capitalist nationalisation which in British Steel has led to the announcement of 20,000 redundancies beginning in the next few months. Ryder must not be seen as an issue simply for BL workers but a test bed for an offensive against the whole working class.

£500 monthly development fund

From the first edition of *Socialist Press*, where we analysed Benn's Industry Bill, under the headline 'Jail For Opening the Books?', our paper has exposed the betrayals of the reformists, while fighting in practice in the workers' movement for the demands and principles of the *Transitional Programme*. Our paper is already winning a very favourable response from many new readers. To improve it and move towards weekly publication we need your support.

Send donations to our £500 per month development fund to: *Socialist Press*, 31, Dartmouth Pk Hill, London NW5 1HR.

The feelings of workers in Bradford were shown by the housewives and pensioners who went to retaliate by wielding their handbags at the fascists. A clear call and determined organisation from the working class movement would draw out a response which would make it impossible for the National Front again to show their face on the streets of Bradford or anywhere else. In Swindon, AUEW District Secretary Les Thompson has called for the town's labour movement to prevent a planned National Front demonstration through the town on Saturday, May 3rd. His statement, the direct result of pressure from WSL members, must be followed by the full mobilisation not only of the Swindon AUEW District Committee, but all anti-fascists in a counter-demonstration on May 3rd.

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(Continued from Front Page) those threatened with closure to meet in order to draw up a plan of useful public works to create new jobs after their firms have been nationalised. Such a programme, which must also include a sliding scale of wages to compensate for inflation, comes into immediate conflict with capitalism's measures for survival, and the reformist trade union and labour leadership, posing the need for new leadership in the workers' movement.

WSL..PUBLIC MEETINGS

BIRMINGHAM
Digbeth Institute
WEDNESDAY 28th MAY 7.30
Speaker: A.Thornett

BANBURY
Town Hall
FRIDAY 16th MAY 7.30
Speaker: A.Thornett

A Programme to Fight Unemployment and Short Time