

SOCIALIST PRESS



FORTNIGHTLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

No 58 * 13 April 1977 * 10p

HEATHROW, PORT TALBOT SUPPORTING STRIKES ARE NEEDED

The working class is on the move against wage control. And this move stands in stark contrast to the determination of the right wing union leaders to impose a Stage 3 of the Social Contract—as shown by the NUT Conference acceptance of Stage 3, and the attack on free collective bargaining by railwaymen's leader Sidney Weighell, who described it as "a grab-as-grab-can scramble".

But if the right wing is making preparations, they have their allies on the 'left'. The Communist Party-led Leyland stewards conference on the Social Contract on April 3 was turned into an endorsement of Stage 2 of wage control, an essential prerequisite for a Stage 3. And it attacked pay strikes now taking place.

Such ideas are dismissed with contempt by the working class moving towards struggle.

Following on the example of the British Leyland toolmakers' recent four week pay strike, 500 electricians at the British Steel Corporation's Port Talbot works struck on 23 March in defiance of their union leaders, and closed down the plant. They are demanding a new pay deal for working on a new and more complex plant.

And at Heathrow Airport, 2,500 of the airport's 4,000 maintenance engineers are working to rule and refusing to work night shift in support of their claim for increased shift allowances.

The response of British Airways management, following on the example of British Leyland's ultimatum to the toolmakers, was to sack 1,200 of the engineers in an attempt to split the dispute.

BACK TO WORK

And the response to this situation of the AUEW leaders, headed by Maoist Reg Birch, also followed the example of the toolmakers' dispute—they simply instructed their members back to work.

This is because these pay strikes, in some ways more clearly than the toolmakers, represent a challenge not only to Stage 2 of pay controls but also to the authority of the official union leadership who have set themselves the task of policing the Social Contract.

And for this reason the union bureaucracy rapidly moved beyond calls for a return to work to gang up with management attempts to organise wholesale scabbing.

BLACKLEGGING

This involved calling in the bureaucratic layer of "representatives" on the National Joint Council for Civil Air Transport.

16 out of 17 of the unions represented (the sole exception being the AUEW) agreed jointly with management to allow supervisory staff and managers to carry out checks normally done by the maintenance men.

This would allow some European flights to resume through pre-arranged blacklegging.

As we go to press (Monday) the Heathrow stewards are about to discuss a fraudulent peace initiative involving arbitration put forward by management.

If they decide to reject this deal, their first step must be to call out the dayshift engineers, who are still working normally.

If the stewards climb down and accept arbitration it will represent a blow for the employers and the trade union bureaucracy.

HOSTILE

The hostility of the bureaucracy to the strikers is understandable. They know that if the Port Talbot electricians and the Heathrow engineers win it would demolish Stage 2 and make a Stage 3 impossible.

This is why supporting action for these strikes is so urgent. It is time for all those who have talked of support, such as the group of Glasgow conveners, to translate this into action.

It is time for Roy Fraser, Leyland toolmakers' leader, who correctly stated after a toolroom stewards' meeting last week that at Heathrow the right to strike is at stake, and said supporting action would be considered, translated this talk into action.

And all those sections of the AUEW who began organising strike support for the toolmakers when they were threatened with the sack should now prepare similar action to defend the Heathrow men against victimisation.

And any attempt by British Steel Corporation to import extra steel supplies to break the Port Talbot strike must be met by blacking on the docks—where dock stewards themselves have agreed a 20% claim after August—and blacking on road transport.

APRIL 20

This kind of support is vital in the fight to break Stage 2. The one day token strike on April 20 called by the Communist Party-led LCDTU and the Leyland stewards is of value only in so far as it mobilises behind these strikes (see back page).

The weight of responsibility on the shoulders of stewards who lead struggles in the period is heavy.

On the one hand the working class is searching for a new leadership, seeing the betrayals of the TUC leaders and union officials. Wherever a lead is given there is a huge response.

But on the other hand any

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report.



ZAIRE: CIA'S REGIME TOTTERS

General Mobutu's CIA-backed military dictatorship in the vast African state of Zaire appears to be collapsing under the onslaught of a tiny guerilla army reportedly numbering less than 2,000.

The invading army of exiles from the province of Shaba (formerly Katanga) crossed the border from Angola a month ago. The war looks as if it will become a spark which may ignite huge convulsions not only in Africa but also world wide.

Mobutu's government, militarily backed by the United States, Belgium (its former colonial master) and France, has been one of the mainstays of imperialism in Africa since the crushing of the anti-imperialist regime of Patrice Lumumba in the early 1960s.

second most populous state of black Africa, the size of Zaire gives it a crucial strategic role (it shares a border with nine other states), and it contains half of the precious Copperbelt which straddles the border with Zambia and supplies 70% of Zaire's foreign earnings. Zaire was the imperialists' headquarters in the war of liberation in Angola.

ADVANCE

The invading forces have made a staggeringly fast advance and are already threatening to capture one of the main Copperbelt towns (Kolwesi) from which they could quickly advance to the even more important city of Lumumbashi (formerly Elizabethville).

The Zairian army is reportedly collapsing before them, due to disorganisation and lack of

Many desertions have been reported and the army commander has been replaced. According to one report, he was killed in the fighting.

Mobutu's government has been

Cont' Back Page Col. 3.

CONTENTS

Review of 'British Road to Socialism'	P6
French Revolution	P7
'Rank and File TUC' conference report	P5
Argentina one year after the coup	P3
TGWU preview of conference agenda	P11

INTERNATIONAL NEWS



IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN

Premier Bhutto is having no success in forcing the fraudulent results of the recent election down the throats of the people.

The opposition Pakistan National Alliance has boycotted the Assembly. And in any case Bhutto has imprisoned its major leaders and most of its MPs. A one-day general strike called by the PNA got massive support and numerous huge demonstrations have continued calling on Bhutto to resign and call new elections. The demonstrations have been ruthlessly suppressed by the police.

Bhutto's method of ruling is now through ruthless dictatorship. Over 100 demonstrators have been killed since the elections six weeks ago and 30,000 arrested.

SPAIN

The Spanish Communist Party has finally been legalised. This follows weeks of constitutional cat and mouse, the Supreme Court finally saying that it was not capable of deciding and throwing the problem back to Prime Minister Suarez.

His decision is no surprise since CP leader Carrillo is one of the few people who want Suarez to go on being Prime Minister after the elections due within six weeks (though the date has still not been announced).

IRELAND

British Leyland has taken out a High Court injunction to try to prevent the picketing of its Irish factory where 250 workers are on unofficial strike in support of a pay claim. Leyland has refused to implement the nationally negotiated wage deal on the grounds that it cannot afford to pay the increase.

Their attitude to the new government is moving increasingly from the traditional position of 'Yes, but . . . ' to one of 'No, unless . . . '

BEST FRIENDS

Its best friends remain the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies who fear precipitating anything which might smack of a social crisis.

But the pressure of the working class against the hated Barre plan for wage control and public spending cuts has become so intense that the main trade union federations have been forced to announce plans for new strike actions against it, though they continue to limit these to token strikes.

But in Paris the bourgeoisie is sleeping no sounder than it is in Rome.

AFRICA: DIPLOMATS SAFARI

In the last three years Southern Africa has become one of the centres of the world revolutionary struggle. Any such situation which contains revolutionary potential poses a threat both to imperialism and Stalinism.

This is because it threatens to shatter the Stalinists' counter-revolutionary agreement to divide the world between the capitalist ruling class and the Peking and Moscow bureaucracies.

But, at the same time, it offers an opportunity for each of them to redraw the lines of demarcation to their own advantage.

FLAGGING FORTUNES

This is why Southern Africa has become one of the hotbeds of international 'great power' diplomacy.

So it is not surprising that one of the first missions of Britain's boy Foreign Secretary David Owen was to set off in the footsteps of the United States UN Representative Andrew Young to try to repair the flagging fortunes of the imperialists in Africa.

Before he left Owen was forced to concede an (inevitably fruitless) inquiry into the sanctions-breaking activities of Shell and British government-owned BP in Rhodesia.

On several occasions he will find himself crossing the still warm tracks of his infinitely more successful Stalinist predecessors President Podgorny of the Soviet Union and Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.

The two of them have spent the last month on separate monster diplomatic tours and have between them taken in nine countries (Algeria, Libya, South Yemen, Ethiopia, Somalia, Tanzania, Zambia, Angola and Mozambique) before reuniting to compare notes in Moscow.

And even better, they were able to offer concrete economic, technical and military assistance not only to a range of left-talking bureaucratic regimes but also to the Southern African liberation movements.

Podgorny had more money to offer, but Castro was more demon-

strative about the role of the growing Stalinist presence in Africa. On his way to Moscow he said:

"There are Cubans in Africa and Asia . . . who make their modest contribution to the revolutionary struggle . . . We do not do that for reasons of national prestige nor to play a role in international life. We do it because we are internationalists".

The role of the Cuban forces in Angola seems to lend credence to



Alende and Castro

They have also spoken to the leaders of the South African African National Congress, the Zimbabwean Patriotic Front, and the South West Africa People's Organisation.

TRIUMPH

The tours were little short of a triumph. Castro and Podgorny got red-carpet treatment in places until recently long regarded as imperialist domains.

CP PROPS TORIES IN FRANCE & ITALY

In both Italy and France the crisis of the bourgeoisie has deepened in the last two weeks.

In both countries the bourgeoisie faces the problem of governing through parliamentary means without being able to command a majority of the electorate.

In neither country has the situation yet led to an open government crisis because of the position taken by the Stalinists and reformists.

In Italy, they have permitted the Christian Democrats (Tories) to rule by abstaining in parliament; in France, where the government still has a parliamentary majority, they refrain from any action which would precipitate a general election which the Gaullists and Giscardians would be bound to lose.

But in both countries this flagrant class collaboration by the workers' parties is meeting with



Marchais, French CP leader.

increasing resistance from the working class.

Workers can see that all they 'gain' from the powerful position

of their political parties is falling wages, growing unemployment and worsening social services.

In Italy this situation has provoked the recent bitter demonstrations by students and young unemployed workers against the leaders of the Communist Party trade union federation, the CGIL.

Sharp divisions have arisen in the leadership of the CP about how to deal with this.

The majority have decided against a 'left' turn into outright opposition, which would precipitate a general election and perhaps an uncontrollable government crisis.

Instead they have decided to try to get a clearer reward for their collaboration.

Party General Secretary Enrico Berlinguer would like the CP to be admitted to a broad political coalition with the bourgeois parties.

But this being for now impossible, he demands a 'political agree-

ment' with the Christian Democrats to replace the present 'arrangement on programme'.

So far the Christian Democrats have said they will have none of this. Meanwhile, Italy's IMF loan remains unratified and the climate of uncertainty becomes more intense.

In France, their shattering defeat in the local elections, has brought ruling class parties close to despair.

President Giscard has appointed a new "non-political" cabinet, which in practice means he has dropped only three members of the last one, including hated Interior Minister Poniatoski.

Among the replacements is veteran Gaullist Alain Peyrefitte who was de Gaulle's Minister of Education during the crisis of 1968.

Chirac's new-look Gaullists have come to see their involvement with the crumbling Giscard regime as a political liability.

TURKEY: EARLY ELECTION CALLED

Turkey is to have an early general election on June 5. This decision in Parliament followed an agreement between the two main bourgeois parties—the Justice Party of Prime Minister Demirel, and the Republican People's Party of former Prime Minister Ecevit.

The right-wing parties which form the ruling National Front coalition split over the vote—with the National Salvation Party trying to block the legislation for the election.

Ever since the general strike last October forced the defeat of legislation to set up special courts the Demirel government has faced a deepening crisis. As a result it

has come to rely more and more on fascist forces to help block the struggles of the working class.

But the coalition split publicly over the negotiations on Cyprus and the Aegean Sea, and the split was widened by the US imposing an economic and military embargo to force the Turkish government to make concessions on Cyprus.

At the same time the refusal of the IMF to give credit to the regime made it impossible even to buy necessary oil supplies. At present the Soviet Union is aiding the Demirel regime by supplying oil on credit.

Corruption has been exposed in the top echelons of the military and government. Prime Minister Demirel, defence minister Melen and chief of the general staff Savcar have all been named by the

special committee set up to probe Lockheed bribes.

But the election underlines the crucial question confronting Turkish workers and peasants—what must their attitude be towards Ecevit's party?

While the reactionary leadership of the biggest trade union confederation, the Confederation of Turkish Workers Unions maintains its stand of being "above political parties", the second biggest confederation has declared support for Ecevit's RPP.

This position is shared by the Turkish Communist Party. Their leadership claims that "socialism will be built in two stages; the first stage is to build a progressive, anti-fascist, democratic regime".

From this they concluded at their recent illegal congress that

they too should back the RPP.

Such support is simply a continuation of the Popular Front alliance with bourgeois parties which characterises Stalinism throughout Europe today.

But while the Stalinists mobilise workers on demands of bourgeois democracy, the bourgeoisie is mobilising fascists to destroy it.

In the last four months alone 50 workers have been killed, hundreds wounded and factories controlled by terror as fascists forced workers to join the fascist union confederation. Ecevit's party offers no alternative to this.

The reformist parties—the Turkish Labour Party and Turkish Socialist Labour Party—follow similar lines to the CP in seeing Ecevit's party as the main progressive force. The TLP failed in an

attempt to ally with Ecevit and has been forced to stand independently.

The TSLP and the Turkish Socialist Party both failed to qualify under the laws for the election—leaving the TLP as the only workers party at the polls.

The political independence of the working class from the bourgeoisie is the central issue in this election.

For this reason there must be no vote for the bourgeois RPP, but a demand that the TLP break all links with the RPP and put forward a socialist programme aimed at uniting the struggles of workers and peasants.

And one of the key demands in such a programme must be for united workers defence squads against fascist attack

Argentina: the dictators and their friends

It is now just over a year since General Videla's military dictatorship seized power from the corrupt and reactionary government of Peron's widow, Isabel.

The coup of last March 24 was undertaken on behalf of the capitalists—both those of Argentina itself and those of the imperialist powers which operate there.

Not that Peron's government was anti-capitalist or anti-imperialist—just the reverse.

The coup was needed because the Peronist leaders had become increasingly exposed in the eyes of Argentinian workers as ruthless agents of capital.

They could no longer successfully perform their role as policemen against the rising militancy of the workers.

"INTERVENED"

Yet at the same time those workers had still not succeeded in replacing the old Peronist leaders of the powerful trade unions with a principled leadership.

This is the main reason why the workers could not prevent the military from seizing power.

After the coup all except seven of the trade unions were "intervened"—that is, taken over completely by the military.

Their leaders were either arrested or else escaped to a comfortable exile, where some have collaborated openly with the military junta in the International Labour Organisation.

But the Junta has found that getting rid of the national leadership and making trade unions illegal does not amount to getting rid of the fighting strength of the labour movement.

The intense repression has not stopped major struggles breaking out.

Where outright strikes have appeared to be too dangerous, workers have resorted to other forms of struggle such as the sabotage of production and go-slows.

"SETTLEMENT"

The major areas of struggle have been the motor industry (with major disputes last summer in General Motors, Fords, Renault and Fiat), the docks (which were paralysed last autumn by a strike) and the electric power industry which has been continuously in a state of crisis for six months.

The electricity workers have been struggling for higher wages and against the regime's plans for speed-up and a longer working week in the catastrophically indebted public sector.

A month ago the regime claimed to have reached a "settlement" with the power workers.

The union, with which the military was forced against its will, to negotiate, agreed to some increase in the working week (though not the new shift system the regime wanted) as long as negotiations continued on other demands.

"SADNESS"

Despite this sudden retreat of the bureaucracy the workers are carrying on with a form of go-slow and sabotage which they call "working with sadness" or "working with anger".

Workers' protests have also forced the regime to postpone its

plans to sack 15,000 railway workers.

Even when they are not successful, the recent examples of resistance show an extraordinary will on the part of the Argentinian working class to fight the Junta and its policies.

The actions have taken place in an environment of murderous repression.

RUTHLESS

Both the licenced death squads, the unofficial arm of state repression which are justified as a "healthy and normal reaction" by the Foreign Minister and the official police and army have systematically imprisoned, kidnapped and murdered the militants of trade unions and workers' political parties.

They have waged a continuous ruthless war against the two urban guerilla groups, the Peronist Montoneros and the Castroite Peoples Revolutionary Army (ERP).

Repression has also extended to the Jewish community and to

The economic policies of the regime are also intensifying the tensions within the ruling class.

Savage wage control and rapid, though somewhat reduced inflation has, according to the government's own figures, cut real wages to less than a half of their level in 1975.

This has benefitted the exporting capitalists, especially in agriculture, but it is destroying the market for the smaller manufacturers.

And the wage cuts and growing unemployment everyday provoke more resistance among the working class.

The situation is one where active solidarity from the world labour movement would help Argentinian workers to put a rapid end to the dictatorship.

COSMETIC

But the scandalous fact is that, pursuing the tactical interests of American imperialism, President Jimmy Carter has taken more action against the regime than all



A workers' demonstration through Buenos Aires.

liberal Catholic opponents of the regime's methods.

A recent study by Amnesty International concludes that the number of political prisoners now known to be in custody without charges is around 6,000.

In addition it estimates that up to 5,000 have "disappeared" into the hands of the Junta.

Thousands of others have been charged with or convicted of trade union and political "offences".

NO COMFORT

Yet despite this, the workers continue to fight. And, though the regime keeps claiming complete victory over the guerrillas, they too have continued to stage spectacular, if politically fruitless, attacks including a near successful attempt to assassinate Videla in February.

There is no political comfort in all this for Videla's junta. And, as a result, the tactical divisions in it are widening.

There are two camps. One consists of generals who want to try to get more civilian politicians (especially of the right wing Radical Party and the Social Democrats) into the government and even perhaps do a deal with some of the union leaders.

The other is made up of those who want to rely exclusively on military rule.

the reformist and Stalinist leaders of the labour movement put together!

Of course, Carter's recent reduction of military aid to Argentina from \$47 million to \$15 million is a purely cosmetic move designed to support the new hypocritical "human rights" tactic of American imperialism.

It will do little harm to Videla and he could dismiss the move with contempt.

But he has not even needed to react to actions from labour movement leaders because *nothing* has been done.

The torrent of harmless words which has come from the reformists of the so-called "Socialist International" is not enough to drown a fly let alone overthrow a dictatorship.

RED-CARPET

No reformist leader has proposed any action in solidarity with Argentinian workers.

Last year Callaghan's Labour government gave a red-carpet welcome to the dictatorship's Finance Minister Martinez de Hoz and helped him to borrow from British banks.

From world Stalinism, however, there have not even been any words against the dictatorship.

The Argentinian Communist



General Videla

Party did a deal with the junta soon after it seized power: the CP offered critical support if the junta would allow it to continue to exist.

The CP has continued to support Videla, as representing the "progressive" wing of the military, even though its own militants have suffered increasing repression; some of them have been murdered by the regime and many others imprisoned.

The vice-president of the CP youth movement recently said:

"The attacks on the government carried out by the ultras are attacks on the people. In spite of its heterogeneous views, the military government agrees on one point: the sensible and democratic policies that it carries out".

This obscene treachery is followed by world Stalinism. Chilean CP leader Luis Corvalan (recently swapped by the USSR for Vladimir Bukovsky) has ostentatiously omitted Argentina from recent appeals for international solidarity against dictatorships in Latin America.

And the Soviet government which welcomed Videla's coup, is now actively trying to block any consideration of Argentina by the United Nations Committee on Human Rights.

Since the Junta came to power the Soviet Union has become one of Argentina's major trading partners, purchasing large amounts of wheat and beef.

After Carter's cut in aid, the dictatorship is now reported to have sent a delegation to the Soviet Union looking for new supplies of arms.

There is no reason to think that the Soviet Union will deny this request since it already supplies arms to other anti-working class military dictatorships such as that of Peru.

The labour movement in Britain must contribute to the building of a world-wide campaign to replace the hypocritical words of the reformists with real actions.

These must include a total economic embargo against Argentina, and forcing the Stalinists to end their obscene support for Videla's dictatorship.

No arms for the Junta!

For a boycott of all economic relations with Argentina!

Release all political prisoners!

Restore trade union and political rights!

Down with the military dictatorship!

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist organisation fighting to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class to lead the mounting opposition to the betrayals of both 'left' and right wing Labour and trade union leaders and the Communist Party, as they attempt to enforce wage control, sackings, speed-up and public service cuts.

As workers take up the struggle against these policies they are forced by the sheer weight of forces opposing them to confront *political* questions. Only with an understanding of the role of the labour bureaucracy and a programme to unite the broadest sections of workers in struggle can a way forward be found.

The Workers Socialist League is the only movement that sets out to do this, fighting consistently in the working class for *transitional* demands, which go beyond simply trade union militancy to raise the political questions to workers and prepare the forms of organisation and the knowledge necessary for the struggle for socialism.

As a result we have been at the forefront of struggles against the cuts, against wage control, for unionisation, and against redundancy. We have done more than any other tendency to fight the introduction of 'workers' participation' in industry. And we have strongly supported the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, which has set out to show the link between the reactionary policies of the Social Contract and bureaucratic dictatorship in both the unions and the Labour Party.

But our practical struggle for the continuity of the principles and method of Trotsky's Transitional Programme is in no way a task confined to Britain. It requires an attention and involvement in the struggles of the working class internationally, and the fight to reconstruct the Trotskyist Fourth International.

So there has been a consistent drive within the WSL to deepen and enrich the movement's understanding of the history and the present crisis of the Fourth International as an essential part of our initiative towards its reconstruction.

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

TORIES HELP BROAD LEFT AGAINST LEFT

Through their ever-closer alliance with the Federation of Conservative Students the Broad Left succeeded in maintaining their bureaucratic control of NUS at the Blackpool Easter Conference.

The Communist Party-dominated electoral machine used Tory support to help them defeat all opposition calling for a militant campaign on grants and cuts.

And they went on to carry an unprincipled and defeatist formula on the present campaign against tuition fee increases.

The only significant setback to the bureaucracy was the narrow failure of their joint move with the Tories to rescind the Union's position of no platform for fascists.

For the second consecutive conference this craven capitulation to the right wing was defeated by

the revolt of large sections of Broad Left supporters—despite the CP's last-ditch attempts to bring their membership behind the Broad Left policy.

Nevertheless the Broad Left—supported by second choice votes transferred from the Tories—were able to win the majority of positions on the new Executive including the election of Stalinist Sue Slipman as President.

TWO GROUPS

Opposition to the Broad Left at Conference came from two groups posing as principled socialist alternatives—the SWP's NOISS and the IMG-orchestrated Socialist Students Alliance (SSA).

Both stood a slate of candidates in the elections and both had the support of around 110 of the 760 delegates.

The policies they put forward

however were barely distinguishable—the SSA put forward no positions which went beyond NOISS's calls for 'more militancy' etc.

NEW FACTOR

The intervention of the SSA was a new factor at conference. Consisting of a newly formed combination of 'credible' left bureaucrats, professional centrists and some genuinely confused students looking for an alternative, the 'catch all the militants' platform of the group is designed to substitute for the building of a genuine revolutionary alternative.

The SSA pushed careerist ex-National Treasurer Hugh Lanning as its Presidential candidate.

Even the Broad Left were able to expose his opportunist manoeuvres two years ago in breaking from NOISS in order to further his own electoral ambitions.

Yet the IMG argued that Lanning was a 'credible' candidate. Indeed he was—to those whose perspectives are limited to winning elections.

AMAZING CONTORTIONS

The IMG/SSA have already been forced into amazing contortions in order to explain the 'political' basis of the alliance. A quote from one of their leaflets refers to their:

... programme of left unity reflecting the central lines of divide between the far left, the Broad Left and the right wing in this Union ... [!]

How's that for a catch-all!—Not a programme based on the objective requirements of students and workers but a programme to "unite" already existing political forces—the classical starting point of all bureaucratic electoral machines.

As compared with the SSA the politics of NOISS are at least more open and clear. Whilst the demands they put forward are every bit as limited to minimum and partial demands as are those of the SSA they are not as hampered by careerist elements whose political concerns lie only partially within the field of student problems.

CRITICAL SUPPORT

Whilst their politics are every bit as obstructive, NOISS continues to present a marginally more serious alternative to the Broad Left.

For this reason the WSL gave highly critical support to the NOISS slate in the elections.

A principled alternative in NUS can only be built in the fight for a programme of transitional demands to mobilise students alongside workers under new leadership in struggle against both the right wing and Stalinism.

The SSA and NOISS have rejected this fight. But there are no short cuts.



Newly elected Stalinist NUS leaders: Sue Slipman (President) Penny Cooper (Treasurer) applauded by ex-President Charles Clarke.

students sit-in over fees rise

Students at Birmingham Polytechnic voted to occupy the administration of the Art and Design block on Tuesday 22 March as part of their "Freeze the Fees Campaign".

The students' basic demands are that—on a national level—the DES circular 1/77 (which advocates increased tuition fees and quota restrictions on overseas students) be withdrawn and—on a local level—that the LEA's and college authorities refuse to implement the proposals of the circular.

The students state that: "Circular 1/77 is detrimental not only on the grounds of its political philosophy and its racist content, but also on grounds of academic standards and values".

They are resolved to stay in occupation until they get a positive assurance from the authorities that there will be no fee increases, no quota restrictions and no reductions in available places for students.

WIDEST SUPPORT

The aim of the Occupation Committee has been to get the widest possible student support for the largely propaganda action of the actual occupation.

However, by restricting themselves to the issue of circular 1/77 in order to get the widest possible spectrum of student support, they are divorcing themselves from the mass of working class opposition to the public expenditure cuts.

Apart from merely voicing opposition to the cuts they should be demanding a sliding scale of public expenditure to maintain all jobs and services and a sliding scale of grants—demands which would link them to the other struggles of the working class.

Their occupations must be linked to a systematic campaign for working class support. This is the only way in which the struggle against these cuts can be won.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Students from the School of Oriental and African Studies march on Law Courts for trial on last year's occupation

TOP CLASS JUDGE

The man who "had a go" and helped capture Major Thomas Montague Hickman was asked on television what his reaction was to the suspended sentence passed on the Major. He said he was "disgusted".

Considering that he had had a sawn off shotgun stuck into his stomach with the threat of being blown apart, one can understand his feelings.

The feelings of the bank manager who was continuously beaten over the head with the same shotgun by the Major, and who was threatened with what he was told was a bomb, would also be interesting.

HABIT

Hickman had also successfully robbed a bank of £17,500 two years earlier. It is clearly something of a habit. But Judge Mervyn Griffith-Jones, rebuffing any idea that Hickman was given special treatment because he had, like the Judge, gone to Eton and was an ex-Guards officer, assured the press that:

"I should have acted precisely the same way whoever and whatever the defendant might be. He would have got the same treatment".

He described Hickman as a mentally ill man and went on:

"I took this view because the evidence showed that what he did was wholly out of keeping with his known character, his normal behaviour and his military record".

While it would be unmannerly to suggest that Judge Griffith-Jones was influenced by the Major's impeccable bourgeois credentials in his astonishingly lenient two year suspended sentence, we would advise any reader who sees a bank employee clubbed with a shotgun to check on what school the assailant went to, and what his military record is, before rushing to assist!

This blatant case has exposed sharply the real nature of the law. Compare the Major's treatment with that meted out to Shrewsbury pickets Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson.

"CONSPIRACY"

Neither of these men went to Eton. Neither served in the Guards. Therefore they had no "character" to act "out of".

As a result they were given savage sentences of 3 years and 2 years respectively for 'conspiracy'—on the basis that they organised a mass picket in which it was alleged damage was done and scabs "intimidated".

No shotguns were used. Nobody was beaten over the head. No evidence was brought that either man himself did any damage. Nobody was interested in their past record of behaviour. They were simply sentenced and jailed.

Now we hear that Labour MP Walter Johnson has put forward a policy to deal with those he terms as "soccer hooligans".

Johnson calls for them to be sent to a special tough-discipline army unit, to avoid overcrowding in jails.

Of course his proposal reveals only his hostility to the frustrations building up in working class youth betrayed by the Callaghan government.

But if he really wants to empty the jails why does he not advocate that every convicted criminal be sentenced first of all to a spell and Eton and service in the Guards?

That way nobody would ever go to jail!

BOOKS

TROTSKY

- In Defence of Marxism £1.75 plus 20p p&p
- Writings on Britain (3 vols) £1.65 each plus 20p p&p
- On the Trade Unions 90p plus 20p p&p
- Transitional Programme 30p plus 10p p&p
- Revolution Betrayed £2.05 plus 25p p&p
- Permanent Revolution £1.75 plus 20p p&p
- The Spanish Revolution £2.50 plus 25p p&p
- Problems of Everyday Life £2.20 plus 25p p&p

LENIN

- Left Wing Communism 20p plus 15p p&p
- What is to be Done? 25p plus 15p p&p
- State and Revolution 25p plus 15p p&p
- Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism 25p plus 15p p&p
- The April Theses 15p plus 10p p&p
- The Three Sources and Component Parts of Marxism 25p plus 10p p&p

TROTSKYISM TODAY

- Fourth International: Problems and Tasks 15p plus 7p p&p
- Significance of the Transition Programme 5p plus 7p p&p
- The Fight for Revolutionary Leadership 15p plus 7p p&p
- Perspectives for Work Among Women 5p plus 7p p&p

All available from Folrose Books, 31 Dartmouth Park Hill London NW5 1HR



LEYLAND CONFERENCE ENDORSES PHASE 2

"RANK AND FILE TUC"—LITTLE BETTER THAN THE REAL THING



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report.

Implacable opposition to any group of workers who take strike action against Stage II of the Social Contract—that was the message spelled out time and time again by the organisers of the so-called "Rank and file TUC" held in Birmingham Town Hall last Sunday April 3.

The conference had been called by the Communist Party-led Leyland Joint Shop Stewards Committee, and was a part of the campaign developed by the Communist Party for a vote within the TUC for a return to free collective bargaining after Stage II of the Social Contract runs out on July 31.

The clear effect of such a campaign is to divert the working class away from action now against Stage II under conditions where the first and foremost requirement of the Government and TUC to get Stage III is the successful completion of Stage II.

The conference chairman, CP member Derek Robinson, made this clear in his opening address.

"We don't want any breakaway movements", he told the conference, and he later went on to attack the Leyland toolmakers who he said were "conspicuous by their absence here today".

Their absence was hardly surprising since the organisers of the conference had been bitterly opposed to the toolmakers' four week strike—a strike which shook the Social Contract, the trade union leaders and the government to the foundations.

JOINT LETTER

Robinson and the conference secretary (fellow CP member Peter Nicholas) went further than verbal opposition to the toolmakers. They signed a joint letter with British Leyland management, sent to all BL Cars Division workers supporting the sacking of the toolmakers!

The letter says:

"The company has decided to open all its plants for production on Monday 21 March. [This was the day the toolmakers were to be sacked] It is imperative that all employees report for normal work and do their utmost to achieve targets".

In other words Robinson and Nicholas signed a letter calling for full-scale scabbing!

BREAKING POINT

If the toolmakers had attended, (and they would have been right to do so), the clear contradictions would have sharpened the conference to breaking point.

The hypocrisy of people who

can sign such a statement and then pose as the leaders of a fight against the Social Contract is breathtaking.

The need in the conference was for this hypocrisy of the platform to be confronted and the cynical CP manoeuvres designed to divert the working class, exposed.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report.

Wyn Bevan

Unfortunately, this was not done. The platform survived by a combination of a refusal of the left wingers who got to the microphone to challenge them on these issues, and the platform's decision to exclude from the discussion any delegate known to be likely to attack their record.

The polar opposite to the plat-

form, and representing those workers now in active struggle against Stage II was Wyn Bevan, convener of the electricians at the massive British Steel Corporation plant at Port Talbot.

These workers were already in their second week of strike action on a pay claim and have shut the plant down.

Bevan's speech reflected the mood of the whole working class. He admitted that the odds they face are formidable. The strikers had been "isolated and disowned by our own union".

They recognise that they are up against "the TUC, the government and the Social Contract".

DETERMINATION

But Bevan expressed the determination of his members. "We will stay out because our cause is just, and we intend to win".

Bevan's contribution was received in stony silence by the section of the conference which backed the Communist Party.

But its impact was felt throughout the conference. CP speakers stepped up their attacks on "breakaway groups" and from the other side demands were shouted from the floor for an emergency resolution in support of the Port Talbot men.

The platform was adamant. It

would accept no other motion or amendment to its "Declaration"—so much for the democracy in this "rank and file TUC".

The main blame for letting the CP off the hook must be pinned firmly on the International Marxist Group. Three IMG members were allowed to speak during the morning, and none challenged the record of the platform even once.

This was not so much the fault of the speakers themselves but of the confusion created by IMG policy. *Red Weekly* and IMG leaders regarded the conference as a "limited step in the right direction" which simply had to be built and extended.

The nearest thing to a challenge to the Stalinists was made by John Deason of the SWP. He defended the toolmakers and attacked Scaron for supporting British Leyland's threat to sack them.

STRONG SUPPORT

His contribution received strong support from a section of the conference and an embarrassing rebuke from Robinson, who said that the organisers had agreed for Deason to speak but that his contribution "abused the privilege".

The only other 'left' speaker was the WRP's Tom White, who provided simply a more militant version of the Stalinist policy—calling for an all out stoppage in August for a 23% wage increase!

In the afternoon session Eddie McGarry mounted the rostrum. McGarry has been a supporter of the Social Contract from the outset and was a key speaker in support of Jones at the 1975 TGWU conference which brought in wage control.

McGarry began by attacking the toolmakers and went on to call for free collective bargaining in August. Replying to the hostile reception he received, he declared he was "here to do penance" for his past actions.



Wright

He was followed by Stalinist Kevin Halpin, chairman of the CP's front, the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions.

Halpin stepped up the attack on "sectional strikes", and said it was "too late to stop Stage 2". He called instead for the "unity" of the working class.

Final speaker in the Conference was right winger Bob Wright, masquerading this time as a "Broad Left". He made an election speech for the forthcoming ballot for Presidency of the AUEW.

Wright stoutly defended the reactionary nationalist policy of import controls, and called for the Labour government to "change direction".

The "declaration" eventually moved by the platform was considerably worse than the original draft agreed at the Leyland Combining Stewards Conference.

IMPORT CONTROLS

The demand for import controls had been inserted and the original diversionary call for a one day token strike was watered down to "lobby of Parliament" and a "day of action", to ensure that strike action on that day would be minimised.

The vote at the end was overwhelmingly for the "declaration". Delegates supporting the Workers Socialist League vote against this, along with the IC.

IMG supporters were split between votes in favour and abstention, despite the fact that the conference had shown clearly that the fight against wage control was not just a fight against the reformist bureaucracy but against the CP.

It is the Stalinists who provide the crucial left cover and organisational diversions behind which the right wing can do their work.

Who wrote the budget?

Who wrote the budget? Perhaps it was Denis Healey's hand—but it was guided from elsewhere.

First, it was the IMF's Budget. The overall changes in taxes and the expected government cash deficit (the so-called "borrowing requirement") had been dictated from IMF headquarters in Washington last December.

Second, it was the CBI's Budget. CBI spokesmen naturally lamented that there were not more hand-outs to the starving semi-destitute top and middle managers.

"RIGHT DIRECTION"

But they welcomed it as "a step in the right direction" and were pleased it had not gone too far in stimulating the economy.

Third, it was the Liberal Party's Budget. John Pardoe, the Liberals' economic spokesman, said it was the sort of budget he would have

budget?

written himself.

In particular it fits in with the Liberals' reactionary policy of shifting from direct to indirect taxation, though they hypocritically baulked at the way this was done.

Fourth, to a lesser extent it was the TUC's Budget. The bureaucrats claim not to like having their arms twisted by the provisional tax cuts but Len Murray found it a satisfactory basis for discussing Phase 3.

MORE MODEST

The TUC's pathetic proposals about the extent of justified tax "cuts" proved in the event to be



Healey

even more modest than those of the IMF but they were thinking along more or less the same lines.

The one thing the Budget was not was a workers' Budget. In return for a negligible unconditional cut in taxes it will further increase the cost of living.

And through his conditional tax cuts Healey says to workers: I will give you a tax cut as long as you agree to take away an even larger amount in lost wages through another year of wage control.



Murray

While the well-trained TUC bureaucrats show every sign of lining up to jump through the hoop which Healey, the IMF, the CBI and the Liberal Party have manufactured, workers are already showing through the growing resistance to Phase 2 that they completely reject the anti-working class economic strategies of this government, Budget and all.

"The broad democratic alliance not only needs to be an association of class forces—the working class, parts of the capitalist class [!], the intermediate strata) but of other important forces in society".

These and many other abstract phrases which make up the new draft programme of the Communist Party of Great Britain, *The British Road to Socialism Draft*, may seem hard to visualise in practice.

But there are clear examples throughout the world of the impact of such policies.

In Italy, a conscious policy of Communist parliamentary abstentions preserves the reactionary wage-cutting Christian Democrat (Tory) Government of Andreotti in office—while the Italian CP itself seeks an alliance not with the Socialist Party, but with this, the main Italian capitalist party.

"DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE"

In Chile, the 'Popular Unity' policy implemented by the late President Allende attempted to draw the army into its 'broad democratic alliance', appointing left-wing generals to the government—with the result being the vicious 1973 coup and continued military dictatorship in Chile.

In Spain, Communist Party leader Santiago Carrillo has announced that he is not only not against 'liberal' fascist prime minister Suarez, but is 'pro-Suarez'—having the process of "democratisation" of the fascist state in the hands of Franco's heirs, and restricting working class action to protest level.

And in Britain the CP proudly offers platform positions to local Tories in their protest campaigns against racism, while slandering killed workers striking for wage increases outside of the Phase 2 limits as "divisive" elements backed by the Tory press", and supporting British Leyland management's threats to sack 3,000 striking toolmakers (See article on the CP and wage controls, page 5).



Stalin

industry necessary to build socialism, conservative sections of Russian society became increasingly hostile to any further attempt to support and develop international revolution, wishing instead to concentrate on rebuilding the Russian economy, ('socialism in one country').

The most widespread base of support for these views was among the peasantry and the bureaucracy that emerged in the post-revolutionary crisis, led by Stalin.

DESTROYED

In a capitalist world hostile to socialism, the best conditions for such reconstruction were, in the view of the bureaucracy, "peaceful coexistence" with the Imperialist powers, irrespective of the impact of such a policy on the workers' movement internationally.

To achieve this the Third International had to be completely destroyed as the international

working class, as their contribution to the establishment of "peaceful coexistence" on an international scale.

In the 25 years since *The British Road to Socialism* was first published, every hint of Marxism has been expunged from the programme of the CPGB.

Lenin's concept of the vanguard party; the united front; the dictatorship of the proletariat; the role of social democracy and the class nature of the state are all either completely missing or distorted to such an extent that they are turned into their opposite.

The Marxist conception of the revolutionary party as an instrument for the recruitment and training of cadres able to provide leadership for the working class in the struggle for power is rejected.

Instead the CP offers a reformist schema for the evolution from

STALIN'S ROAD TO SOCIALISM

will, the Stalinists hope, take Britain to the point where, with the democratisation of the State (the Civil Service, the judiciary and the police and armed forces), the power



Berlinguer

of the capitalist class can be challenged once and for all, and Parliament [not Soviets!] turned into the real sovereign body of the land.

And all this will supposedly be achieved by left Labour governments combined with the "democratic mass struggles" of the people.

The role of the Communist Party in this schema is seen basically as a pressure group on the left Labour MPs who will presumably form the basis for these Labour governments.

ANTITHESIS

Left reformists will, they say, gradually be replaced by Marxists as the working class, in breaking from reformism, lends its support to Labour leaders who are further and further to the left.

Under these conditions, according to the draft, Labour-Communist unity can be built which will enable the government to move forward to socialism.

As the draft programme sets about developing this schema it becomes absolutely clear that in every respect it is the complete antithesis of Marxism.

Firstly there is no attempt to go beyond an assertion of the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism.

No evidence is offered in support of this argument although on a world scale there are numerous examples in the 1970s alone of the determination of the imperialists to defeat every revolutionary upsurge by force of arms.

VAST MAJORITY

Indo-China, Angola and Chile, to mention only three, all represent desperate attempts by the bourgeoisie to preserve their power, while the relatively peaceful revolutions which overthrew the Greek dictatorship and Portuguese fascism did not in fact successfully challenge capitalist rule and have therefore not been confronted with mass repression and civil war by the ruling class.

But, the Stalinists argue, the working class is the vast majority of the population and the ruling class a small minority.

This numerical strength of the working class in Britain relative to the ruling class has always existed. But it did not lead Lenin or Trotsky to the conclusion that the socialist revolution in Britain would be a peaceful affair.

They both recognised that the

ruling class would never give up its power and privileges without a fight and that the control of the state apparatus, including the armed forces, by the ruling class meant that civil war would be an almost inevitable consequence of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism.

In reply to this the CP argue that it would be possible to "democratisate" the state apparatus in order to prevent such violence. This is dangerous nonsense.

The Chilean "Marxist" President Allende, supported by the Communist Party, argued to the last that the army was democratic and respected the "will of the people" above the will of any individual class.

But of course the army acted in the interests of the ruling class and overthrew the Allende regime, regardless of his illusions.

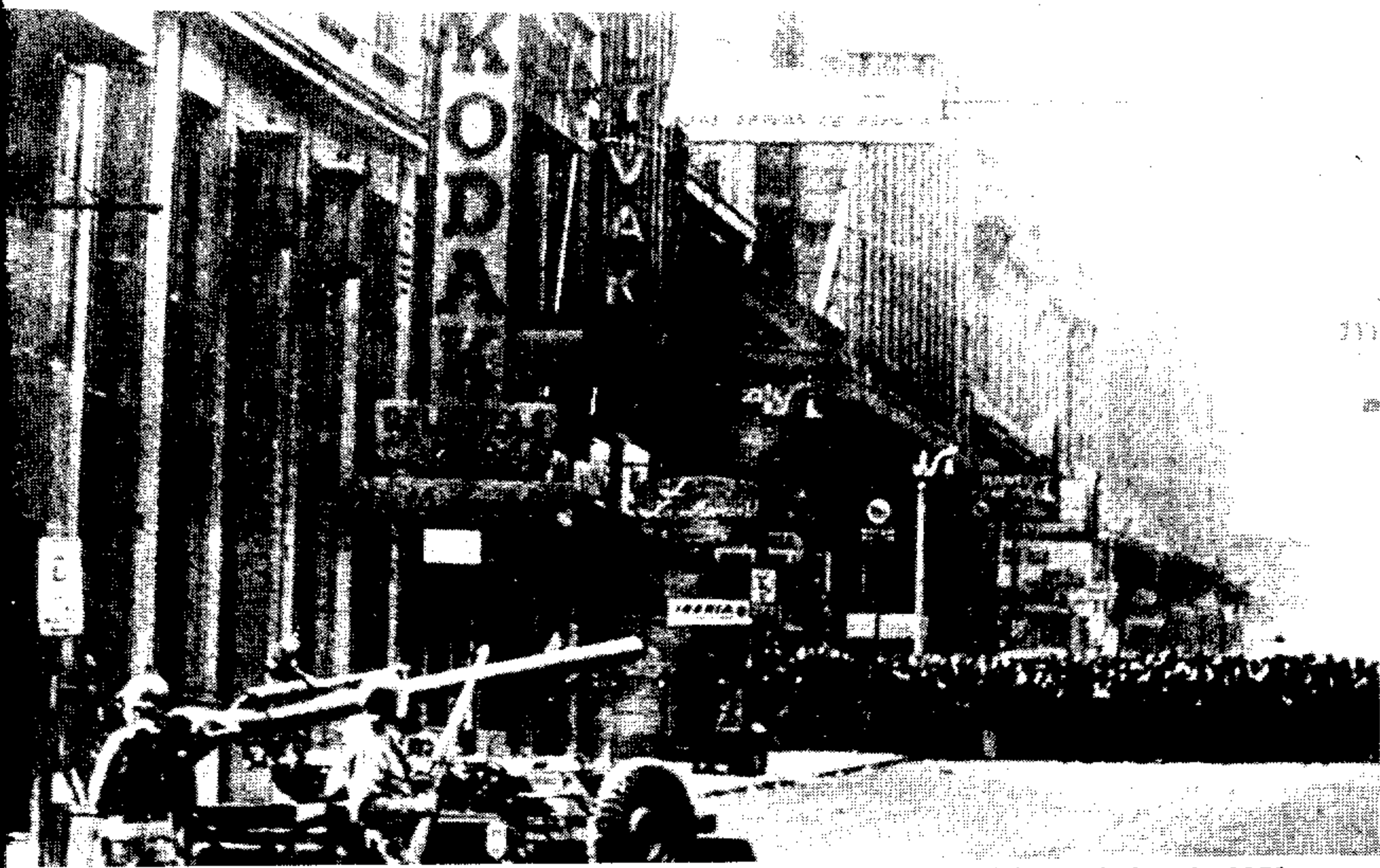
For a hundred years now Marxists have understood that the capitalist state in an instrument for the rule of the capitalist class and cannot be reformed but must be smashed and replaced by a workers state.



Robinson

This lesson was written in the blood of the workers who established the Paris Commune and was confirmed in a positive way by the Russian Revolution.

It is a lesson which the Stalinists chose to forget in their attempts to establish "peaceful coexistence" with the major imperialist powers—and the result can be counted in the



Santiago, Chile, just before the 1973 coup.

At the same time CP Executive member Derek Robinson, "union-baiter" joint chairman of the highest British Leyland participation body, the Cars Council, has by taking this, cemented an alliance with one of Britain's largest monopolies against the interests of Leyland's top floor workforce, and undertaken to assist management in the production of speed-up and rationalisation.

This is the reality behind the 'broad democratic alliance'.

The nationalist and essentially reformist content of the whole of *The British Road to Socialism* both in its political starting point and in its revision of Marxism by the Stalinist bureaucracy and in particular their nationalist theory of Socialism in One Country.

ISOLATED

This theory of Stalin's arose in specific conditions confronting the first workers' state in the early 1920s.

Isolated in a capitalist world, emerging from the effects of some years of war and civil war, and the lack of technology and

organiser of proletarian revolution and the Communist Parties transformed into counter-revolutionary agencies of the Soviet bureaucracy whose job was to mediate the class struggle.



Allende

By the time Stalin wrote the first draft of *The British Road to Socialism* (published in 1952) Communist Parties in Greece, Italy France and Indo-China had already betrayed post-war struggles of the

capitalism to socialism in which the role of the Communist Party is that of a left "pressure group" on the Labour Party, and in particular, the Labour Party 'lefts'.

The Stalinist schema runs basically as follows: the sheer size and potential of the British working class, combined with the new balance of world forces in which the ability of the imperialists to roll back revolutionary movements is now greatly hampered, means that socialism can be achieved in Britain without violent revolution and civil war.

FIRST STEP

The forces exist, they say, which can put Britain on the road to socialism and what is needed is to unite them in a "broad democratic alliance".

Since the winning of political power by this broad democratic alliance will be a process, the first step according to the CP must be the election of a left Labour government which will begin to tackle the economic crisis.

A succession of progressively more left wing Labour governments

breaking the working class from reformism.

And this cannot be done simply by waiting for forces to emerge from the reformist party itself - a party which while it draws on the support of the working class, serves the interests of capitalism.

The working class has to be mobilised *independently* of the other classes, under the leadership of a revolutionary party. Only on such a basis can alliances be made with other classes - clearly recognising the leading role of the working class in socialist revolution.

None of this process can begin unless a fight begins to break the illusions workers have in the reformists and in particular the 'left' reformists.

BREAK

This is why we put demands on these leaders that they wage a fight within the Labour Party and the PLP for a break with the coalition deal with the Liberals and for alternative socialist policies. And to stress the sharpness of this call, we demand they begin this fight by voting in Parliament against the policies of the Callaghan/Steel leadership, thus ending the deal.

Under conditions where the mass of workers reject the coalition deal, the failure of the 'lefts' to carry out these demands will serve to discredit them in the eyes of their followers.

But of course the CP is poorly equipped to demand the 'lefts' adopt a socialist programme, since the CP itself is tied to exactly the same combination of calls for the nationalist policy of import controls and stimulus to private industry which serves the 'lefts' as a "programme".

Of course, like the 'left' Labourites, the CP not only restricts itself to a series of reformist demands, but even pulls back from a fight for them. So while claiming to oppose wage controls, the Stalinists now argue that sectional disputes against Phase 2, like that of the toolmakers are *harmful* to the "unity" of the working class.

This argument about "unity" is a superficially attractive one which appeals to many militants who simply want to 'get everyone together'.

But the question remains: Unity on what basis?

"SECTIONAL"

The greatest possible unity is obviously needed for the overthrow of capitalism. But the CP's notion of unity is unity on the lowest possible level - in the case of wage control, this means in fact unity behind the TUC's bureaucratically-imposed wage limits.

The fact is that *every* struggle by the working class is "sectional" in the sense that only a minority of the class is involved at any given moment. The day this ceases to be true, revolution will be on the immediate agenda!

Refusing to support sectional struggles now means that the working class is "united" - in having its wages slashed!

Anyone seriously fighting wage control *must* begin today by supporting those workers prepared to confront employers, government and their own union leaders to fight for wages.

PROTESTS

Instead of this, every one of the "initiatives" taken by the CP over wage controls has been consciously restricted to empty, stage-managed protests aimed at preserving the Stalinists' opportunist coexistence with the trade union bureaucracy, and "pressuring" them to the left.

We have not set out in this article to wade through every aspect of the "new" draft of the *British Road to Socialism*. Much of it is simply a rehash of the 1952 original.

And for this reason also we have not gone into detailed quotes from Marx and Lenin refuting its many blatant revisions of Marxism.

In our view any class conscious CP members will move now into opposition to their leadership *not* through lengthy theoretical debates but on the strength of hostility to the reactionary stand in *practice* of the CP in today's class struggle.

A glimpse of Derek Robinson's strikebreaking role as a 'left' face of Leyland management is worth a thousand quotations in exposing the bankruptcy of the CP's *British Road to Socialism*.



Napoleon III

FRENCH REVOLUTION

This article continues our series on the revolutionary history of France. The first two parts dealt with the 1789 Revolution and the period after the Thermidor reaction (1794). The third part outlined the social forces which combined to produce the revolutionary upheaval of 1848. This article shows how the defeat of the 1848 struggles led to a new kind of dictatorship in 1851. The next article will deal with the Paris Commune of 1871.

1851: THE NEW BONAPARTISM

As Bonaparte began to finalise preparations for the military coup which was to place him in complete control of France, he carried out a series of moves to discredit and to isolate the elected Assembly. In April 1851 he removed the existing extra-parliamentary government and replaced it by the government which had resigned three months earlier. This toying around with the government was done simply to hasten the death of the Assembly.

From April to October the Assembly made feverish efforts to postpone the day of reckoning. A motion proposed by the Party of Order on July 19 to revise the constitution failed to attain the requisite 75% of the votes cast.

Attempts to effect an alliance with republicans and democrats

vote to present himself as 'defender of the people', who would safeguard them against "demagogues on one side and monarchical hallucinations on the other". (Speech of November 25, 1851).

BREACH

This speech, made to members of the industrial bourgeoisie, was met with cries of bravo and other stormy acclamations, and this merely confirmed the breach between the bourgeoisie within parliament and the bourgeoisie without.

The coup d'etat soon followed. In the early hours of December 2, Bonaparte's lumpen-proletarian followers in the "Society of December 10" dragged the leaders of the Assembly unceremoniously from their beds.

Sections of the military occupied the main squares of Paris, and placards were put up proclaiming the dissolution of the National Assembly and the Council of State, the restoration of universal suffrage

sentenced to imprisonment in a show-trial.

The Communist League, which had split in September 1850 on the question of revolutionary prospects, was formally wound up in November 1852. This date marks the close of the first phase of generalised international working class activity the world had seen.

Marx's analysis of the French revolution of 1848 is contained essentially in two works—the *Class Struggles in France* and the magnificent *18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Here he develops, by means of concrete analysis, his materialist conception of history, and shows how the class struggle in France gave rise to that peculiar political formation, Bonapartism, wherein the bourgeoisie entrusted political power to a power other than itself.

STALEMATE

For Marx, the Second Empire was only possible because of a peculiar stalemate in the class struggle, when the bourgeoisie found itself unable to rule in its own name just when the proletariat were too weak to overthrow them.

In this situation, when neither class could hold the historical ring, Bonapartism arose and, pretending to stand above all classes, dominated French society.

This analysis of Bonapartism was later developed by Trotsky, particularly in his analyses of Hitler's rise to power, and of the degeneration of the Soviet Union.

Needless to say, Trotsky always insisted that the Bonapartism of capitalism in decay was very different from that of pre-monopoly capitalism, and that both were qualitatively different from the bureaucratic usurpation of political power in a workers' state.

NEW FORMS

The 1850s and 1860s were a period of unprecedented capitalist expansion; the political energies of the working class lay dormant for some time but revived to form the First International in 1864.

The class antagonisms which Bonaparte tried to suppress resurfaced in new, more violent forms and proved to be the undoing of his rule.

Just as Bonaparte came to power with the farcical coup of 1851, so he was to fall in the farcical capitulation to Bismark in 1870.

1851 had followed the tragedy of 1848; a similar tragedy was to follow September 1870. But this time the working class were to hold power before being defeated, and were to give the world the first workers' state—the Paris Commune of 1871.

1871 is thus the direct continuation of the struggles of June 1848.

By James Short.



collapsed, and this failure merely hastened the final dissolution of the Party of Order into its component parts. From August 10 to November 4 1851, the Legislative Assembly was again in recess, and once again this allowed Bonaparte to draw up his plans for the coup without any disturbance whatever.

On October 10, he announced to his ministers his decision to restore universal suffrage; on October 16, they resigned and on October 26, the Thoringy Ministry came to power.

At the opening session of the Assembly on November 4, a Bill to restore universal suffrage was introduced. On November 13, this Bill was rejected by 355 votes to 348.

With this act, the Assembly proved itself not a representative body, but the usurping parliament of a single class.

Bonaparte eagerly seized on this

and the imposition of a state of siege in the Seine department. Thus ended the February revolution, the Legislative Assembly and the Party of order. The Second Republic was now supplanted by the Second Empire. The age of bourgeois revolution had given way to the age of capital.

PLEBISCITE

Shortly afterwards the question of the restoration of the empire was put to a plebiscite. 250,000 voted in favour. On the first anniversary of the coup, Bonaparte entered Paris as Napoleon III; his empire was to last twice as long as that of his uncle. By then the revolutions of 1848 were well and truly dead. The Chartist movement had suffered a serious setback in early 1848, while in Cologne a number of Communists were tried and

M

lives of millions of workers.

While the "peaceful road to socialism" is a central revision of Marxism by the Stalinists there are other major revisions in the draft programme which need to be answered.

There is for example the assertion that under mass pressure a succession of increasingly left Labour governments will begin to tackle the crisis in the interests of the working class. Parallel to this, argue the Stalinists, will be a leftward shift in the trade unions.

SPINELESS

Again no evidence is offered, and the draft programme studiously avoids the spineless role in *practice* of the Labour Party "lefts".

Instead, drawing a bogus distinction between the "Marxists" and "reformists" within the Labour Party 'left' but not informing us who the "Marxists" are, the CP argues that the failure of the lefts to challenge the right wing lies in the fact that the majority of the lefts are still "reformists" while the "Marxists" are still in a minority.

But the fact of the matter is that not a single 'left' Labour MP has been prepared to stand up and fight the right wing policies of the Callaghan government.

All of them, including the likes of Heffer, have now accepted a coalition between Callaghan and Steel in which the Liberal Party is given greater rights to consultation on government policy than the Labour Party NEC.

For two years of wage cutting, rising unemployment, and social service cut backs, the 'lefts' have merely uttered verbal opposition, while refusing to take a stand on alternative policies in an attempt to mobilise the working class against the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

COVER UP

And the Communist Party, instead of ruthlessly exposing the cowardly bleatings of these 'lefts', covers up for them, attempting to create the illusion that these same 'lefts' are actually the basis of an alliance between Labour and the CP which could lead to socialism!

Marxists understand that socialism cannot come like this through a reformist party, but only through



at the time of the Stalin-Hitler pact.

DEVOLUTION

Were We Right?

The publication of this letter and reply has been delayed for shortage of space. However we feel that the issue of devolution is an important one, and that letters expressing serious differences should be properly dealt with. The article referred to, "No Scottish Road to Socialism" appeared in the January 19 issue of 'Socialist Press'.

LETTER



Leaderships north and south: "English" reformist Foot...

Lenin, again, has anticipated comrade Lister:

"The old polemic conducted by the Polish Social Democrats against the self-determination of nations is based entirely on the argument that it is 'impracticable' under capitalism. As long ago as 1903 we *Iskra* supporters laughed at this argument . . . In general political democracy is merely one of the possible forms of superstructure above capitalism . . . the facts show that both capitalism and imperialism develop within the framework of any political form and subordinate them all. It is therefore a basic theoretical error to speak of the 'impracticability' of one of the forms and one of the demands of democracy."

(*The Discussion on Self-determination Summed Up*).

DEMOCRATIC DEMAND

The demand for a Scottish Assembly, with a genuine degree of legislative autonomy, is a democratic demand which is quite distinct from the demand for separation.

It is a demand with an impressive pedigree; Lenin, in the very article quoted by Comrade Lister,

said:

"Far from precluding local self-government, with *autonomy* for regions having special economic and social conditions a distinct national composition of the population and so forth, democratic centralism necessarily demands both."

(*Critical Remarks on the National Question*).

And in *State and Revolution* he quotes Engels as saying that a federal republic:

"... would be a step forward in Britain where the two islands are peopled by four nations and in spite of a single parliament three different systems of legislation already exist side by side".

NOT OPPOSED

This demand is a means of extending democracy and preventing the national question from obstructing working class unity.

Comrade Lister's most bizarre argument is that the line of the IMG is to 'separate the political struggles in Scotland from those of the British working class as a whole'.

The IMG has not opposed the strong organic links between the Scottish and the Welsh and English workers, and to date these have not

government has proposed a Scottish Assembly, and this is supported by the overwhelming majority of the Scottish Labour Movement, although sections want a far greater degree of legislative power than is presently proposed at Westminster.

In the past the majority of the Scottish people have believed their interests were best served within the existing London-centred institutions of bourgeois democracy but they have nevertheless always considered Scotland to be a nation, (even their irritation at insular philistines like comrade Lister, who thought of their nation as just another region of England did not shake their faith in the Union).

Because of this national consciousness, in the course of the sixties and early seventies they came to believe that their interests were not best served by the existing structures. Comrade Lister and I would prefer them to select capitalism as the main source of their problems, but that does not alter the facts of what happened.

Comrade Lister is right in saying that Marxists should oppose separation in the current situation, Scot-

land does not suffer from imperialist domination.

However, that does not finish the story; what should be the attitude of Marxists, if, despite our best efforts, the vast majority of the Scottish people (and in Scotland that means the vast majority of workers as well), were to demand separation?

Lenin has given us a very concrete answer. He said of the separation of Norway from Sweden that the Norwegian workers ought to oppose separation, and preach closer unity with the Swedish working class, but that:

"Swedish Social Democrats would have betrayed the cause of Socialism and democracy if they had not fought with all their might to . . . demand, not only equality of nations in general . . . but also the right of nations to self-determination, Norway's right to secede".

(*The Right of Nations to Self-determination*).

Comrade Lister on the other hand says that only in a situation where it is possible to set up a soviet system, would Scotland and Wales have the right to secede.

Dear comrade editor,

My respect for *Socialist Press* took a sharp nosedive when I read John Lister's article on Scotland. (January 19).

Comrade Lister's confusion, and ultra-left posturing, stem from one central misconception, i.e. that the political situation in Scotland is the same as in Newcastle, Liverpool or the West Country.

These areas share similar economic problems with Scotland, but Scotland is not a city or a region of England—it is a nation; a rather complex nation which shares many common features with England, but which also displays important differences.

LARGEST PARTY

Right now there is a difference in the way in which many Scottish people, (ie sections of the working class and the petit-bourgeoisie) have responded to the crisis of British capitalism; the Scottish National Party has carved out at least a third of the votes at recent elections, and has become the largest political party in Scotland.

In response to this the Labour

WE REPLY:

Comrade Purdie's letter combines two useful correctives to the original *Socialist Press* article with what we would regard as a wrong method of approach to the question of working class leadership in Scotland.

First of all, comrade Purdie is right to say that we should have stated clearly that Scotland is not simply an area of England, but is a nation.

This does not mean in our view, however, that the problems which have prompted the flow of support towards the Scottish National Party are "national" problems in anything like the Marxist sense.

Rather they are problems which Scottish workers and middle class people face in common with their counterparts in England, and which flow from the crisis of British capitalism as a whole.

DEMAGOGUES

It is the reactionary demagogues of the SNP, assisted by their "left" counterparts in the Scottish Labour Party and objectively helped by the trail of carnage left by the Callaghan and Wilson governments who have been able to build from these problems the illusion that there is a "Scottish answer".

Secondly, comrade Purdie is right to take issue with our article's statement that the Scottish people should have the right to secede only after a Soviet system had been established. This is certainly wrong.

Its incorrectness flows from an extension of one of the main themes of the original article—the defence of the political independence of the working class in Scotland from the nationalist petty bourgeoisie.

In pushing the argument too far the article ended up with what comrade Purdie aptly describes as

an "ultra-left posture".

However we feel that this error must be set against the wholesale concessions to nationalism made by the IMG and all those on the left who want to take opinion polls, statements by nationalist leaders and the current mood of Scottish workers as their starting point.

"NATIONAL FEELING"

The concluding paragraph drew the line between the free choice of the Scottish people and today's conditions:

"Until such time as the workers themselves are free to express their opinions on the matter [of devolution] without the dominant influence of the bourgeois media and capitalist exploitation, we can only call on Scottish and Welsh workers alike to reject the fraudulent moves of the Labour government towards "Devolution", and to join the common struggle for revolutionary leadership in the labour movement."

Nobody can dispute that the tub-thumping petty-bourgeois demagogues of the SNP want us to believe workers in Scotland want devolution as part of the growth of "national feeling".

But it is up to us as Marxists not simply to latch on to what workers may or may not feel, but critically to examine those sentiments. And where wrong positions are held, we must expose them and oppose them.

NO SOLUTION

It is indisputable that devolution will solve absolutely none of the problems now faced by Scottish workers. Any "revolutionary" leadership that seeks to soften or avoid this harsh reality can only stoke up massive problems for itself in the coming period.

Comrade Purdie concedes we



The 3rd International, formed to fight the betrayals of the 2nd International.

were right to state that imperialist domination is not a factor in Scotland. The economic oppression of Scotland is not a national question but the impact of the crisis of British capitalism.

It is for this reason we said that the issues at stake in Scotland (jobs, wages, cuts, etc) are not fundamentally different from those in depressed areas in England.

And just as we would rigorously oppose any grouping that attempted to tell workers in Cornwall or Newcastle that setting up a regional government in those areas would ease the problems they face, branding such ideas as a diversion, so we think that to give the slightest credibility to the concept of devolution or the Bill itself is absolutely wrong.

Indeed, contrary to comrade Purdie's claim, we have never said

that devolution is "impracticable" under capitalism. His second quotation is a long way wide of the mark.

What we said was that the Labour leaders had brought forward the Devolution Bill as part of their attempts to preserve capitalism and to help divert the legitimate hostility of Scottish workers to their own economic policies.

Comrade Purdie offers no evidence for his assertion that the IMG's line does not separate the political struggles in Scotland from those of the British working class as a whole.

NO CHALLENGE

He does not challenge any of our assessment of the IMG's adventure in the Scottish Labour Party, or question the accuracy of the quotations from *Red Weekly* which substantiated our position.

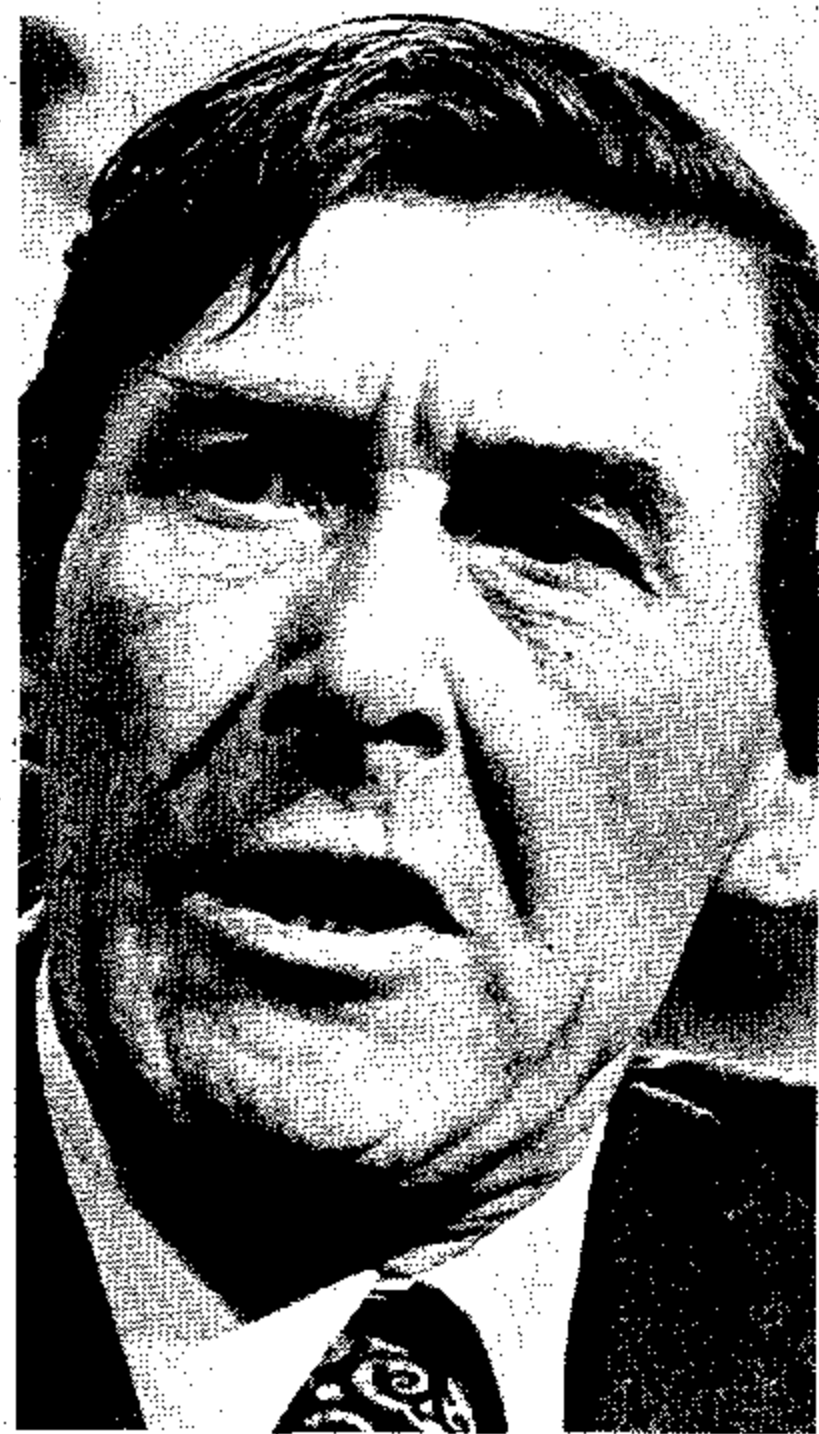
Instead he merely informs us, again without any real evidence that the growth of support for the SNP is not "in the same order of things as the 'Tory vote by former Labour voters in Workington'".

There could be two reasons for such a statement.

Either the SNP is being credited as not such a reactionary party—not so bourgeois—as the Tory Party, and that therefore adopting some of its line of argument in order to win away its supporters is permissible. We hope that this is not comrade Purdie's position.

Or comrade Purdie is referring to the scale of the problem: Workington was only one seat, whereas in Scotland the Labour Party faces annihilation in the next election.

We do not think either view is valid. In particular the loss of the Stechford by-election—with Tories



...and "Scottish" Stalinist McGahey

been threatened. But that does not alter the fact that the SNP threatens to engulf the strongholds of the Labour Party in the main industrial cities of Scotland, and to eliminate that Party as a future British government.

To state that this is in the same order of things as the 'Tory vote by former Labour voters in Workington' is, to say the least, myopic.

The disaffection reflected in the SNP vote can be met by a degree of legislative autonomy for Scotland, and an Assembly could provide a focus of struggle for socialist policies geared to the particular problems of the Scottish working class; without such an extension of bourgeois democracy, and especially if the right wing Tories and 'left-wing' Labour Unionists scuttle it, the Scottish workers will be swept into the maw of the SNP.

It is only in this context that separation, and a division of the working class, would become a real danger, and it is comrade Lister, not the IMG, who wants to increase that danger.

Yours fraternally,
Bob Purdie.

knocking down a 12,000 majority—shows that *nowhere* is the Labour Party safe.

And we do not think its lost support can be won back by opportunist adaptations along the lines of the IMG's Scottish policy.

SAME METHOD

Finally we should note that though comrade Purdie is not in the IMG both he and they display the same characteristic method of approach.

They start with hard "facts"—opinion polls, by-elections, the mood of the working class—and leave aside the *source* of these phenomena in the political leadership of the working class.

When the mass of workers in 1914 were won over to support their 'own' bourgeoisie in World War I Lenin did not start from their moods, illusions and prejudices. He began his attack and fixed his attack on the social patriotic leaders of the Second International—their chauvinism and class collaboration, abandonment of every socialist principle.

We think any view of Scotland which does not take into account the question of revolutionary leadership in the British labour movement as a whole as the central issue must be empirical and must end up on the wrong road.

So the IMG end up supporting devolution but not even posing any workers' alternative to a bourgeois Assembly for Scotland. In this way they tacitly foster all the worst illusions that there is somehow a "Scottish road to Socialism".

Copies of Socialist Press 51, containing the article "No Scottish Road to Socialism" can be obtained, price 10p plus 6½p p&p from:
31, Dartmouth Park Hill
London NW5 1HR

'MILITANT' DAYDREAMS AS STEEL SETTLES IN

'Business as usual' signs have apparently gone up in the editorial office of the Militant group.

The coalition deal between the Healey-Callaghan Labour leadership and the failed second string businessmen who head the Liberal Party is now several weeks old.

And as the dust settles the Militant group leadership obviously feel that they can revert to their customary stand of aiming abstract demands at the world in general while avoiding any conflict with rightwing or 'left' bureaucrats.

WRONG STATEMENT

Only in the edition immediately after the Lib-Lab coalition deal did the Militant rouse itself from its usual lethargy to headline the demand "NO DISGUISED COALITION".

The article began with a wrong statement:

"The attempted overthrow of the Labour government by Mrs Thatcher and her sorry crew of Tory "extremists" has failed".

Of course this is only partially true. The Tories did not obtain a general election. But on Wednesday March 23 the Labour government fell.

While Callaghan and Steel both had their reasons for not openly declaring this a coalition—Callaghan wanted to avoid splitting the Labour Party, and Steel did not want to be too closely tied to the election jinx carried by the Labour Party—it is a coalition in all but name.

LAME

Militant only half concedes this, telling readers it is "half way to an open coalition".

But the writer continues throughout the article to refer to "the Labour government", and never anywhere calls for the pact to be broken. As a result he blithely informs us that:

"Only socialist policies can save the Labour government".

But he never tells us *how* socialist policies can be adopted without a break from the Liberals. And he concludes with one of the laziest remarks that could be made on the issue:

"... capitulation to the Liberals shows no way forward for the Labour movement".

While we can easily see the gross inadequacies of this line, at least we can concede that the Militant saw the issue as important.

But a mere *one week* later they

demand for a break from the Liberals in its pious "programme" of reformist and utopian demands.

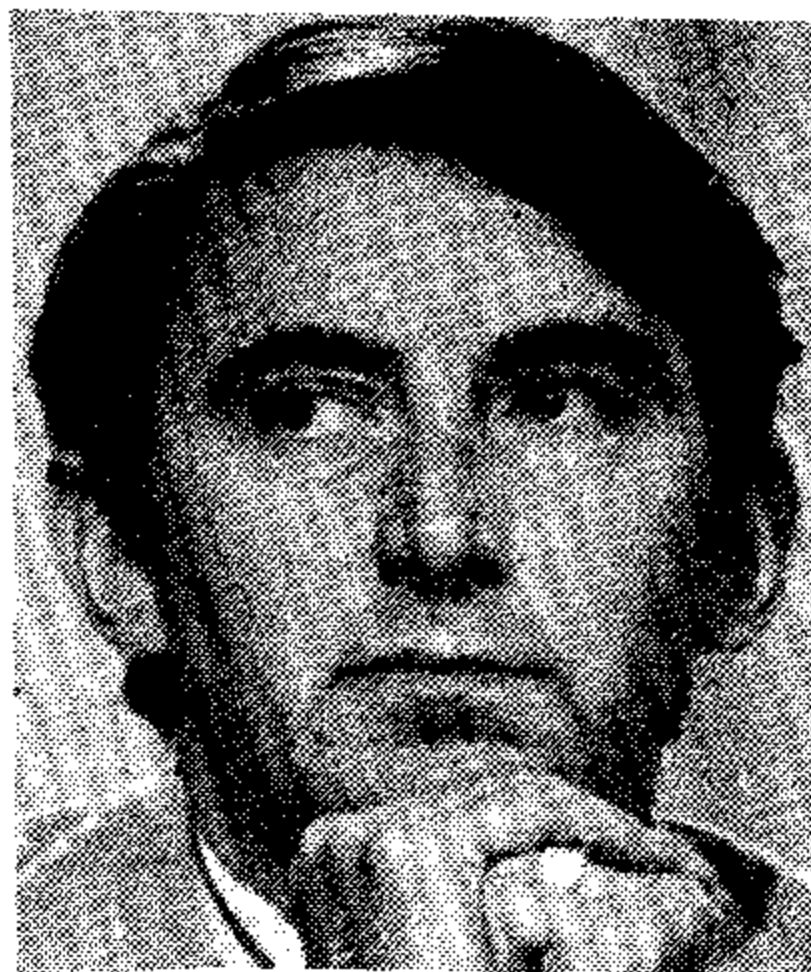


PHOTO: Labour Weekly

Steel

Only in their editorial column did Militant speak out on the Lib-Lab deal, making the correct call for an emergency recall Labour Party conference to "discuss the pact"—but omitting to tell readers what policy this conference should adopt!

There was certainly no hint of a call on 'left' Labour leaders to take any action to break the coalition.

By April 4, the Militant group was drawing back even further from a fight.

At a news conference announcing the final agenda for the Labour Party Young Socialists conference at Blackpool, well-known Militant supporters reiterated over and over again their support for the "Labour government" and their reluctance to see it brought down.

DAYDREAMING

And in the April 8 edition of Militant the editorial line reverts to the age-old daydreaming that always decorates the group's abject opportunism.

"The introduction of an Enabling Bill to nationalise the monopolies with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need—backed up by a mass campaign involving the whole of the labour movement... would transform the position of the Labour government".

So it might! But *who* is going to

draft and introduce this "Enabling Bill"? Militant is silent.

Do the Militant leaders retain illusions in 'left' cabinet minister Wedgewood Benn, now a devoted hireling of the Callaghan-Steel gang show?

LIMP

Or do they cherish hopes that the limp and wretched Eric Heffer will at long last turn up trumps and arrive at Parliament one morning with a draft Bill in his pocket? Heffer's attitude to the coalition was "as long as we haven't given too much away, maybe this is a temporary expedient".

More than likely the Militant leaders have not begun to consider who is supposed to carry out the policy they proclaim as the answer.

Because for them the central point is simply to equip themselves with *phrases*, while Marxists look for a road to practical intervention.

And an armoury of phrases is vital for a grouping like Militant, determined to cling on doggedly within the Labour Party whatever principles have to be swallowed in the process.



Benn

This is why as the LPYS conference meets this weekend Militant supporters will be airing all kinds of "left" sounding demands and phrases—but *not* calling on the 'left' MPs to vote against the coalition in Parliament, *not* calling on the 'left' ministers to resign from the coalition cabinet and *not* challenging their grovelling capitulation to Callaghan.

If Militant has a conveniently short memory in relation to the coalition deal, then so, more surprisingly, has the International Marxist Group.

After two articles in the March 31 *Red Weekly* had clearly called for a break from the deal, the April 6 edition does not even manage to find room to *mention* the coalition!

As a result, the IMG regale us with articles on wages, on the LPYS conference and Stechford, all discussed without a single call for the breaking of the Lib-Lab deal!

PECULIAR

We can only speculate as to whether this peculiar silence is the prelude to another of those spectacular about faces in policy which so characterise the IMG.

More likely it is just the absent-minded product of the IMG's aimless, abstract approach to the real political problems confronting the working class.

A new reader might even be excused for thinking that they feel their 490 votes at Stechford have resolved the problem.

One thing is certain. The Liberal Labour coalition will not improve with age.

It remains the cardinal issue of principle confronting Labour Party members and trade unionists in the next period.

And their attitude towards it will test out left groups as well.



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Callaghan with Tribune Sedgemoor

It was replaced by a coalition deal between the Labour and Liberal leaderships in which the independence of the Labour Party is *subordinated* to the Liberals.

had apparently almost forgotten the whole business. The front page article on Healey's budget gave only *one* fleeting reference to the coalition deal. And it included no

HEALEY SINKS TEETH INTO NHS

£17 million is to be cut from the government's NHS dental budget of £200 million by making people pay increased dental charges.

The British Dental Association has said that "These charges for dental treatment could mean the end of NHS dentistry for many adult patients".

These cuts are even more unacceptable when government surveys have shown that already less than 38% of adults in this country attend their dentist in any year.

MANY PAY

Many already have to pay privately for treatment, usually for relief of pain, which they are entitled to through the NHS.

Unlike medicine, it is predominantly working class people who have to pay privately for dental treatment as dentists are under no

obligation to treat a patient and often will only do so if the patient agrees to pay as a private patient.

The new charges, with their complex new regulations and system of exemptions will confuse people even more.

CYNICISM

There is already abundant evidence from the government's own agencies, the Community Health Councils, that people are being overcharged as private patients when they thought they were receiving NHS treatment.

The cynicism of this government to the welfare of all sections of the working class is further shown by the effect of such charges on pensioners, who already pay a disproportionate share of the dental charges.

Overall in 1975-6 patients provided 17% of the total cost of services through the payment of charges. Services to OAP's cost £11.8 million but they paid £3.4

million in charges—28% of the cost.

The charges introduced on April 1, 1977 will hit OAPs even harder as most of them wear dentures.

A set of upper and lower dentures will now cost £20—a rise of 66%—while a metal denture, replacing up to three teeth, will cost £15—a rise of 77%!

These charges are part of a package in which people over 21 (excluding pregnant women and women with children less than one year old) will have to pay the *full* cost of each item of treatment to a maximum of £5. But if crowns or dentures are provided, they will be charged up to a maximum of £30.

The working class who have historically benefitted least from the dental services, will now be prohibited even from maintaining their limited gains in the face of these astronomical price rises.



INDUSTRIAL NEWS

HOSPITALS SIT-IN CALL

EPSOM JOBS FIGHT

Thirty-two sacked ancillary workers at the Manor Hospital Epsom were reinstated on March 31, after a two week picket of five hospitals in the area.

The workers, members of the TGWU, had been in dispute since January against the introduction of new duty rotas which made the care of the children of married couples working at the hospital virtually impossible.

The workers went on strike in the middle of March after weeks of high-handed inaction by the Mid-Surrey Health Authority, which, after one week of the strike, dismissed them.

But the workers faced more problems than their bosses.

Though they got a good response from fellow TGWU members to their picket, the local branches of COHSE and NALGO are reported to have opposed the strike.

While the strike was made official by the TGWU Jack Jones and local officials threw their weight into preventing the spread of picketing to other hospitals in the area.

The officials were responding to the vile witch-hunt to which the strikers were subjected—from Health Minister David Ennals, the BBC and the capitalist press, especially the *Daily Mail*.

The slanderous campaign was given an additional chauvinistic tone by the fact, which the press did not neglect to mention, that many of the strikers were Spanish.

ASTMS STRIKE SOLD OUT

The strike of ASTMS technicians at Birmingham University ended last week.

The technicians voted to return after a recommendation from their negotiating committee that they accept one extra day's holiday and further discussions at a mediation meeting in six weeks time.

This falls far short of the demand for an extra week and despite the claims of the ASTMS leadership to the contrary, it is seen by most of the technicians as a defeat.

UNDERMINED

It was surprising that the settlement came shortly after the decision of the Vice Chancellors nationally to withdraw support from Birmingham.

This had undermined the position of the university administration.

Concerted action by ASTMS against other universities would without doubt have brought sufficient pressure to crack the Birmingham administration.

But six months of struggle without effective support had sapped the morale of some of the strikers.

While workers at two more small London hospitals now threatened with closure have taken the decision to occupy, Monday 18 April is likely to be the date of the first real test of labour movement support for the first ever hospital occupation.

Workers at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, Euston Road, London, have been told by management that patients will be moved out on that date.

The EGA shop stewards have called for a mass picket and supporting official strike action by the health service trade unions on the day of the proposed move.

The latest situation at the EGA was reported by NUPE shop steward Arthur Churchly, at a meeting of the Committee of London Area Stewards in the Health Service, (CLASH) on 6 April.

Delegates at the CLASH meeting also received a first hand report of the work-in started at the Hounslow hospital on 21 March.

WORK IN

At the West London hospital, also threatened with imminent closure, a mass meeting had voted to start a work-in although this had not yet begun.

Since the EGA occupation began on 15 November 1976 the closure

date has twice been postponed. A confrontation with EGA workers and their supporters has thus been avoided so far by management.

But there is no room for complacency. The occupation and 24-hour picket has remained a token protest throughout its existence, no attempt being made by the EGA workers to take control of the day to day running of the hospital.

The day that management moves to take out patients and equipment will therefore be the first real test of the occupation itself and particularly of the support of the doctors and nurses, most of whom do not belong to a union.

Despite its weaknesses the EGA has become a symbol of the fight against the cuts. Defeat would be a blow against the whole movement.

On the other hand, while the hospital remains open it provides an important example to workers in other small hospitals facing closure.

If the EGA is to survive many more days it is essential that the 24-hour picket is immediately strengthened and that the maximum possible support is mobilised for the mass picket on 18 April.

The management must be prevented from moving out patients and equipment. At the same time, no opportunity should be lost to expose the treachery of the trade union bureaucrats who have refused to call for official supporting strike action.

TGWU BLOCK ON HOTELS BLACK

The strike breaking which has become a regular feature of the Transport and General Workers Union's activity over the past few months is not confined to action against other unions.

The strikes for union recognition in the catering industry at

Oxford and Sheffield hotels and in Birmingham were said last week by Jack Jones to be receiving "constant attention at a high level" in the union.

The continued sabotage of effective action with which the strikers have had to contend confirms this completely.

As Jones and the senior bureaucrats who surround him well know,

it is entirely their refusal to organise effective national action which has prevented the strikes from being won long ago.

The union's 'blacking' of Trust Houses Forte, the largest employer concerned is a sham. And when the Grosvenor Strike Committee in Sheffield contacted their Regional Secretary to find out why it was not being done they were told it was none of their business!

It is no wonder Trust Houses Forte have the confidence to hold out, and the nerve to offer the Randolph Hotel workers in Oxford, on strike for four months, their latest terms for a settlement—no reinstatement and four weeks pay.

But in sharp contrast to the bureaucracy's betrayals, support for

temporary basis to replace someone off sick is now being sacked despite the fact that the sick person has now been retired.

Thus what was once a permanent post is now temporary and unless there is resistance, will very soon be a non-existent post.

FURTHER CUTS

Kitchen workers at Manor Park should refuse to cover the work done by the woman who has been sacked.

This example is just the thin end of the wedge. In September when school meals prices rise there will be a further cut in staff. The only way to prevent this is all out strike action.

Nuneaton Trades Council Executive has taken the initiative in attempting to co-ordinate the anti-cuts campaigns of the public sector unions.

The first step of this cuts committee must be the establishment of a Joint Shop Stewards Committee for the public sector unions.

BUILDERS WIN IN SANDWELL

The strike by 2,000 Sandwell Council direct labour building workers ended after 14 days in total victory.

Wage cuts were withdrawn, lump labour was removed from the site and unacceptable parts of the bonus scheme were referred to arbitration.

The last meeting of Warley East GMC congratulated the building

workers on their success but concern was expressed that some councillors and members of the council administration were trying to get round the ban on lump labour.

They were advising self-employed building workers to register as companies at a cost of £250 each.

Building workers' leaders have threatened a further strike if any of the lumpers reappear on the site on this basis.

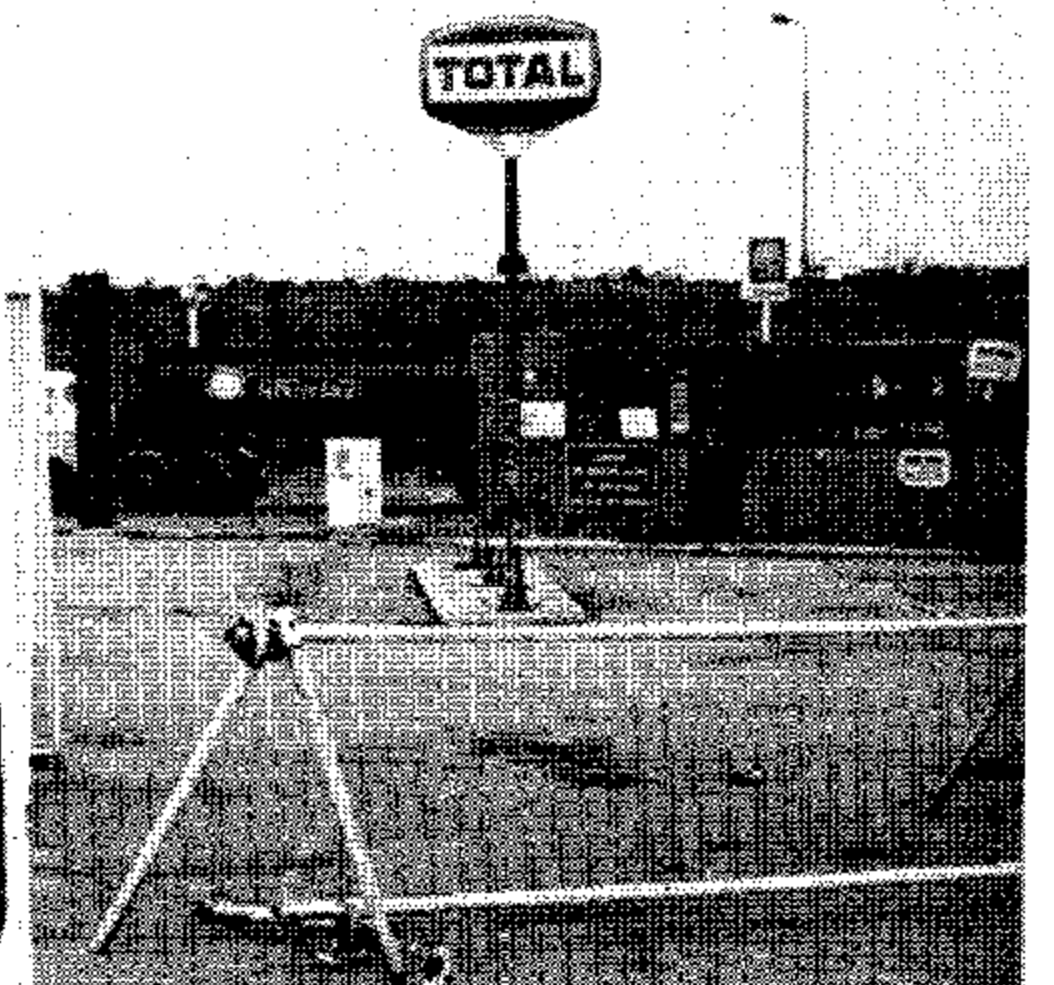


Jenkins

return to work convinced the negotiating committee that a speedy settlement was essential.

The result is a setback for organisation throughout the university.

Donations to:
Grosvenor House Strike Committee, Transport House, Heartshead, Sheffield.
Randolph Strike Committee, c/o 41, Bridge St., Osney Oxford.
Linton Lodge Strike Committee, c/o 127, Botley Road, Oxford.
Night Out Strike Committee, c/o Transport House, Broad St., Birmingham.



Corley Service Station on M6—the sole example of serious blacking by TGWU bureaucrats.

JONES PUSHING FOR

PHASE 3 VOTE



Jack Jones, TGWU General Secretary

Battle lines on a third stage of wage control have now been drawn with the publication of the agenda for the TGWU Biennial Delegate Conference to be held in July.

The position of Jack Jones and the TUC leadership is spelled out in the motion on Future Pay Policy submitted by the General Executive Committee:

"That this Conference considers that the trade union movement collectively has made a constructive contribution to the fight against inflation and recognising the sacrifice and restraint shown by all workers during the economic crisis of the last two years, supports the view that an orderly return to voluntary collective bargaining should begin to take place this year.

Conference believes that in order to avoid a wages free-for-all which would be injurious to weaker members of the community and which could destroy or jeopardise our long-term objectives, in a return to voluntary collective bargaining the following matters should receive priority:

- (a) the recognition and payment of satisfactory differentials to reward ability, effort, skill and responsibility and the correction of other anomalies and inequities;
- (b) a continued and developing emphasis on improvements in basic rates and other special measures in order to assist workers on low pay and implement a Trades Union Congress minimum wages policy;
- (c) measures to ensure that the flat-rate supplements paid under the Social Contract are incorporated on a phased basis into basic rates for the purpose of calculating overtime, payments by results, shift payments, etc;
- (d) an expansion of sound mutually agreed incentive and payment by result schemes and genuine productivity agreements;
- (e) measures to offset unemployment including shorter working hours and/or earlier retirement."

IMPOSSIBLE

Of course an "orderly return" to free collective bargaining is impossible. Wage restraint either exists or it does not. This motion is simply an attempt to establish a Stage 3 of controls, whatever the exact terms of that policy may be.

About six branch resolutions support this line. But about 100 branches have called in one way or another for a return to free collective bargaining.

And in the same section of the agenda (Future Pay Policy) there are five motions which point the way forward beyond simply an end to wage control—calling for defence of living standards against inflation.

SLIDING SCALE

These motions call for a sliding scale of wages, and provide the basis for a fight for an alternative programme.

Also in this section is a motion from the 4/159 branch.

"That this Conference demands the immediate resignation of the General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary and all Members of the General Executive Council because of their neglect of and failure to maintain and improve existing agreements, the standard of living,

holidays, wages and conditions of every member in the TGWU."

This is accompanied by a motion from the Cowley 5/293 branch condemning the Executive Council for committing the TGWU to Stage II of the Social Contract against the decisions of the 1975 BDC.

This theme is continued in section 1 (b) of the agenda, which contains a number of motions which have come forward in response to the bureaucratic acceptance of Stage II by the Executive.

In one way or another they criticise the GEC's acceptance of wage control without consultation with the membership. They propose various ways that this should be done in the future.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Only one motion on unemployment gives any lead on programme. This is from the 5/293 branch:

"That this Conference declares its intention to protect jobs and

inquiry and nine other motions support this to some degree.

APPENDAGE

On the other hand, motions from the 1/1946 branch correctly condemn worker participation in Leyland where it points out:

"... the trade unions have become a mere appendage to corporation policy".

Another motion from the Export Packing Services branch in Banbury (a factory threatened with closure by a decision within the Leyland participation scheme) demands:

"That this Conference deplores undemocratic decisions taken within the participation committees and withdraws any support for the continuation of these committees."

Six motions in Section 2 (a) call for import controls—but there is not one motion against.

But incongruously we find a later section on International Trade

motions calls for the recognition of the right of self-determination for the Irish people.

Most of the motions support the Irish Congress of Trades Unions campaign for 'A Better Life For All' and support for peace organisations.

One motion, from the 1/1881 branch in London calls for the "withdrawal of our [!] troops from Northern Ireland".

SUPPORT

There are four motions on South Africa. One from the 5/293 branch calls for a total black to be imposed on all trade with South Africa, support for the national liberation struggles of African workers and their right to independent trade union organisation.

Almost at the end of the agenda come two more motions from the 1/6 and 10/75 branches which reflect the problems of democracy and corruption within the trade



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report.

Yardley equal pay strike by TGWU members—only five motions in Conference agenda section on women's rights.

reduce unemployment and demands the books of any employer who declares redundancy or closure be opened to a committee of Union members at the workplace; that the available work is shared between the labour force and the full weekly wage is maintained; that any employer who refuses this is nationalised and the Government provide public works to maintain production and that this Union will support members who occupy their plant in defence of jobs."

A motion in a later section of the agenda on Economic Policy calls for "a giant programme of public works, roads, housing etc".

Surprisingly the section dealing with Equal Pay and Equal Opportunities for Women contains only five motions. Most of these are critical of existing legislation and the role of tribunals, and call for a vigorous campaign by the union on job opportunities.

DEMOCRACY

There are 13 motions on Industrial Democracy. A motion from the Executive Council supports the Bullock Committee

Union Links includes six motions calling for the strengthening of ties with other sections of the trade union movement throughout the world.

STRIKE ACTION

Seventeen motions in Section 2 (b) attack government policy on the cuts in Social Service spending. Several call for support for strike action and one, the 5/293 branch calls for:

"a sliding scale of public service expenditure to offset further erosion by inflation".

Section 4 (a) of the agenda deals with the general objectives of the Social Contract rather than specific aspects such as pay policy.

An Executive Council motion calls for "continued cooperation between the industrial and political wings of the labour movement".

Motion 360 from the 1/1383 branch (the closing date for motions was in February) demands that:

"This Conference is totally opposed to the formation of a Coalition Government or Government of National Unity".

On Ireland not one of the ten

union movement.

They call for the ending of QUANGO jobs—government committees with fat fees which are handed out to trade union officials.

But the best commentary on the state of democracy within the TGWU is motion 538, third from last, calling upon the decisions of the conference to be upheld:

"That this Conference ensures that the 1977 BDC policies are upheld and pursued to the benefit of the members of the Transport and General Workers' Union."

Under rule, the conference is the highest body of the union, while the Executive Council is in theory entirely bound by conference decisions!

There is no doubt, however, that the size of the TGWU, with 1.8 million members, the scope of the agenda and the timing of the conference, two weeks before the expiry of Stage 2 of wage controls makes it a conference of enormous importance to the working class.

It is essential that a developed and coordinated fight on policies to defend the working class takes place at the conference, and wherever possible delegates are mandated to vote for a principled line on the central issues raised.

PRINT PLAN THROWN OUT

The redundancy proposals designed by union officials and employers to usher in new technology to Fleet Street newspapers have been resoundingly thrown out.

Members of the National Union of Journalists did not even have a chance to complete their ballot on the package (entitled *Programmes for Action*).

This was because while the NUJ ballot was still in progress it was announced that members of the three major print unions—NGA, NATSOPA and SOGAT—had voted to reject the package, killing it outright.

Another print union, SLADE, had refused from the outset to take part in the collaborationist union-management talks which led up to the drafting of the proposals.

The scale of opposition from the rank and file can be gauged from the fact that in the NGA only 889 voted to accept the deal as against 3,778 against.

Fleet Street electricians also voted down the package.

Such a growth of feeling from the rank and file seriously challenges the authority of the print union bureaucrats. They had strongly recommended acceptance of the proposals, threatening that compulsory redundancies were the only alternative—but workers clearly do not agree with this.

It is the emergence of such militancy that underlies the recent high-handed bureaucratic dictatorship over his members at the *Times* by NATSOPA General Secretary Owen O'Brien.

He expelled from the union 120 workers who dared to stand their ground and defy his instruction to return to work while their pay dispute still remained unresolved.

The fight on jobs and wages on Fleet Street is now combined completely with the fight for new leadership and for democracy within the print unions.

PICKET

John Deason, National Organiser of the Right to Work Campaign faces serious charges arising out of the police attack on the Right to Work March at Hendon last year.

There will be a national picket of the Old Bailey, in London on Wednesday 4 May at 9.30 am.

APOLOGY

In our report of the CDLM conference in our last issue we wrongly captioned a picture of Roland Sherritt as Stewart McClellan.

Our apologies to both comrades.

MORE DETAILS

I would like more information about the Workers Socialist League.

Name.....
Address.....
.....
.....

Post to WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

RED CARPET FOR THATCHER

Last Wednesday Reg Birch Maoist member of the AUEW Executive, went to Heathrow to instruct maintenance men to end their pay strike and got howled at by a hostile mass meeting.

On the very same day Tory leader Margaret Thatcher, universally reviled throughout the workers' movement, was greeted with full honours at a state banquet in Peking's Great Hall of the People.

There is no coincidence in this grotesque combination of events. Rather they reflect the complete corruption both of the Stalinist bureaucratic clique which holds political power in China and of those who ape their reactionary policies internationally.

VICIOUS

The Chinese bureaucrats have gone so far along the nationalist road of attempting to build "socialism in a single country" that they now prefer to ally with the most vicious and sickening agencies of imperialism than to demand assistance from the Soviet Union and the other bureaucratically controlled workers' states.

Indeed they now see precisely these workers' states as their main enemy. So Thatcher's chief credential for the Peking trip is her much-publicised hostility to the Soviet Union—which of course is inseparable from her bitter hatred of the working class internationally.

GORGING

While this leading political representative of British imperialism sat gorging herself on sea slugs, quails eggs and fish bellies,



Thatcher tucks in to sea slugs

Vice Premier Li Hsien-nien described her as "our new friend" and expressed agreement with many of her "firm views"!

And world capitalist leaders would have been even more delighted by his Wednesday speech attacking alleged Russian "aggression" in Zaire.

But while the Chinese bureaucracy seek capitalist allies against the Soviet Union on a world scale, their followers are obviously forced along parallel paths in every country.

And in Britain the minuscule, faction-ridden Maoist movement is no exception.

This is why Birch like any bureaucrat seeks to preserve his

position by balancing between the strength of the union membership on the one hand and the requirements of capital on the other.

And when the chips are down, like any bureaucrat, he takes the side of capital. And in his spare time he studies Mao Tse-tung and the latest whims of Chinese foreign policy.

Presumably "Chairman Birch" is now working out how the finances of the British Maoists could be stretched to provide Thatcher with a welcoming fish and chip supper on her return from Peking.

AGM "illegal"

THE RULING OF A HIGH Court judge that the AGM of the Newham North East Labour Party was not properly constituted and was "illegal" shows the deepening involvement of the courts in the labour movement.

The injunction to stop the meeting was obtained by right-wing supporters of Reg Prentice.

There must be a campaign in the Labour Party for the expulsion of those people who bring High Court judges into the running of the Labour Party, and who subordinate it to Britain's second capitalist party.

ZAIRE . . . Continued from front page.

making a panic stricken search for international aid. France and Belgium have sent extra military supplies and so, it is reliably reported, has General Amin of Uganda.

On March 9 1,500 troops arrived from Morocco where they have had experience fighting the Polisario liberation movement in the ex-Spanish colony of Sahara and Egypt is also sending help.

Mobutu has denied rumours that he is on the point of resigning and going into exile. "I will always live in Zaire" he told a press conference.

But in that case it is something of a mystery why he maintains luxury mansions in Switzerland, Belgium and France.

NOT WELCOME

He cannot feel very welcome at home where the local peasants have apparently given full support to the invaders. And what was supposed to be a mass rally last week, organised by the one legal "political party" the Popular Revolutionary Movement, attracted a mere 20,000 strikingly unenthusiastic people.

April 20— all out to support pay strikes

As we go to press it seems likely that thousands of workers will take strike action on April 20 as part of the 'Day of Action' called by the 'Rank and File TUC', convened last week by the Leyland stewards.

Every one of those workers will be striking for an end to wage controls and in doing so expressing their willingness to struggle for immediate wage increases, against speed-up and against the cuts in public spending.

RESISTANCE

The more massive the show of resistance, the more weight can be brought to bear to force conveners and union officials to lead all-out strike action now to break the existing stage of wage controls, and to give maximum support to those sections—such as the airport maintenance workers and the Port Talbot electricians—who have already taken up this fight.

For this reason we call for the maximum mobilisation of strike action on April 20th.

But this is completely the opposite of the position of those Leyland stewards—dominated by the Communist Party—who have called vaguely for the 'Day of Action', after watering down a call for a one-day strike.

AFTER JULY

For those 'leaders' the 'Day of Action' with its call for 'free

collective bargaining after July' is a conscious move to divert workers away from all-out strike action in support of those already fighting Phase 2.

NOT THE START

For them the one-day strike is not the start of any mobilisation, but simply the highest point of a campaign to pressurise the TUC leaders to reject a Phase 3.

This is why those conveners who played the leading role in scabbing on the Leyland tool-makers strike have put their names to the April 20 'Day of Action'—intending to appear as if they are actively fighting wage control in order to placate their members on the shop floor.

Workers must reject this sham fight. The strikes on April 20th must go forward to:

*Strikes in support of Port Talbot and airport workers.

*Break Phase-2 now.

*Full catching up increases to compensate for wages lost through the Social Contract.

*A sliding scale of wages in every agreement to compensate automatically for increases in the cost of living as assessed by trade union committees.

SUPPORT PORT TALBOT ELECTRICIANS!

Donations and messages to: Wyn Bevan, 43, Hebron Road, Clydach, Swansea.

STRIKES NEEDED . . . Cont'd from front page.

section that fights faces the massive pressure of the TUC, government, employers and the press. And if, as happened with the toolmakers, the stewards collapse, workers are again left leaderless.

Militancy is not enough. Leaders today need to be based on a political understanding of the nature of the period, the role of the union leaders, and the coalition politics of the Callaghan-Steel government.

Workers need a clear programme in defence of living standards—centring on the fight

for substantial rises linked to a sliding scale of wages to provide automatic increases to match inflation.

In this way the question of what kind of leadership is necessary to win these struggles brings to the fore the central political question facing the working class today—a thorough break from the class collaboration of the trade union and Labour bureaucracy, and the construction of a new political leadership prepared to mobilise the real strength of the working class in defence of its interests.

TOO YOUNG

Many of them are too young to have had such a history though their leader "General" Mbumba is an ex-member of the Katanga police.

They are fighting under the banner of the National Front for the Liberation of the Congo (the previous name of Zaire).

The spokesmen of this movement in Europe say its programme is "to build a new Congolese society to put an end to the neo-colonialist regime, the agent of international capitalism".

Both the Angolan and Cuban governments have denied Mobutu's claim that the guerillas are directly supported by them. But some degree of support at

This is why the war has become a focus for international imperialist and Stalinist rivalries, which have been growing so fast in Central and Southern Africa (see page 2).

The fall of Zaire to a government favourable to Angola and the Soviet Union would be a gigantic blow not only for imperialism but also for the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy.

It is no surprise, therefore, to find that Mobutu is getting his material support not only from Washington, Brussels and Paris but also from Peking. This is entirely in keeping with the readiness of the Chinese bureaucracy to line up behind the most reactionary forces (such as Margaret Thatcher) in their campaign against the Soviet Union.

The Soviet bureaucracy itself has yet to make an open move but stands ready to take advantage of an opportunity to extend its growing influence in Africa and to help any leadership which replaces Mobutu to crush any genuinely revolutionary socialist forces which emerge in the massive upheaval which the fall of Mobutu

MONTHLY FUND

OUR MONTHLY FUND suffered a setback in March with the final total falling short of £500 at £476.85. Since we committed ourselves to the additional cost of producing a special edition of Socialist Press this shortfall needs to be made up this month.

We have received in the first ten days of April the total of £224.10 so there is still a long way to go.

Donations so far received include: Cowley car workers £21.25; NHS workers £45; bookshop workers £17; Banbury £3; London £92.50; Birmingham £10; Leamington £3.25; Liverpool £5; Sheffield £5.

All donations should be sent to:

Socialist Press Monthly Fund
31, Dartmouth Park Hill
London NW5 1HR

SOCIALIST PRESS ★

PAPER OF THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

BRITAIN		EUROPE	
6 issues	£1	6 issues	£1.15
12 issues	£2	12 issues	£2.30
24 issues	£4	24 issues	£4.60

REST OF THE WORLD

6 issues	£1.50
12 issues	£3.00
24 issues	£6.00

I would like to take out a subscription to Socialist Press. I would like . . . issues, I enclose £ . . .

NAME

ADDRESS