

WORKERS' ACTION

No. 65

July 21 to Aug. 11th

10p



Now for the wages explosion

TWO YEARS ago pay controls were introduced with a great fanfare. They were the only responsible way to deal with the crisis, it was said. At the cost of a little nastiness, they would enable us to avoid massive inflation and unemployment, and indeed to go forward to a new golden age of social welfare.

This August 1st, with 15% inflation and 1½ million unemployed, Phase 2 ends. Not a single worker aware of his or her class interests will mourn its passing.

The bosses' press agonises about the danger of a 'wages explosion'. The Government is trying to get a 10% limit on wage increases, and together with the TUC it is trying to impose a 12-month minimum interval between claims. Claims by dockers and car workers, dated from August 1st, already threaten to smash these limits.

But the officials and the bureaucrats, the parliamentarians and the careerists, who imposed Phase 1 and Phase 2, still have snares in store for us. The car workers' claims show their influence [see back page].

We need a strategy of our own to counterpose to the bureaucrats' strategy and their dividing tactics. A strategy, not just for a 'wages explosion', but for the fight-back against all the bosses' attacks.

Our Strategy for the Fightback

Over the Grunwick strike there has been a movement of class solidarity of such proportions that the ruling class dare not use its full force for fear of provoking mass strike action.

Yet no long ago the Heathrow engineers and the Port Talbot electricians stood alone in their fight against the Social Contract. Likewise the Leyland toolroom workers had to fight on their own against Phase 2, while the Leyland Shop Steward Combine Committee made fine speeches about the need for a united fight against Phase 3.

Now it is clear that there isn't going to be a tight formula for Phase 3. Because of the enormous pressure from below, the trade union bureaucracy has had to defend the Government's demands and talk in terms of a "return to free collective bargaining".

Instead of stone wall resistance to any action for substantial pay increases, the TUC leaders now talk of a tactic of negotiating small increases in minimum wage levels nationally and leaving it to the members to fight for anything more than that. That way they hope the struggles for substantial increases in pay and improvements in conditions will be fragmented and weak.

If, in spite of this the struggles prove to be strong and militant, the trade union bureaucracy, of course, will step in to try to undermine them. That is why now they are talking about "decentralisation", "differentials", "flexibility" and "productivity increases" — all ideas geared to fragment the future struggles, removing the class wide significance of each claim and each action.

Cont'd on Page 3

GRUNWICK: MASSIVE PICKET FOR AUG. 15th

"THIS TIME, no march. Nobody moves from this gate".

That is the decision of Mrs Desai and the Grunwick strike committee as they plan another day of action, probably for Monday August 15th. Following the scandal of July 11th, when thousands of pickets were marched away from Grunwick while the scabs' bus was allowed through the gates, the strikers are determined they will not be bullied and misled by the TUC and APEX bureaucrats for a second time.

The next mass picket, timed to mark the anniversary of the strike, is planned by the strike committee with one purpose in mind: to shut down the firm. Already on July 11th it was proved that the police can be beaten. For four hours the pickets stopped the bus from getting anywhere near the gates.

Of course, there was an outcry. Callaghan and Rees were leaping up in Parliament, promising the Tories they would rush in legislation to outlaw mass picketing in the future. And of course APEX General Secretary Roy Grantham hurried to deplore the violence.

MOBILISE

These men won't willingly call another mass picket. For that reason militants up and down the country must begin now to mobilise. And we must demand that the trade union leaderships and the TUC give full support to the action.

Scarman's Court of Inquiry is a complete irrelevance in this fight. Set up in an attempt to defuse the strike, even from Callaghan's point of view it is a piece of wishful thinking. The strike committee feel the court will probably find in their favour — but Ward has already declared that he won't pay a blind bit of attention. And if Scar-

man dares to find for Ward, the strike committee will fight on anyway. Heads or tails, there are no winners.

But if Callaghan's living in a world of make-believe, then Ward and NAFF certainly aren't. For them this battle isn't fought according to the Marquess of Queensbury rules — they are quite prepared to resort to violence and intimidation when it suits them. The law is a tactic to be used or ignored as circumstances dictate. And they know what is at stake, too: the unity, the power and the fundamental rights of trade unionists, and quite possibly the fate of the Labour Government as well.

NOOSE

Meanwhile the daily picketing goes on, now jointly with the T&G drivers, and regular help is still needed. The Cricklewood postmen remain solid, but in the face of Jackson's overt hostility and the constant threat of the law they must keep on getting messages and resolutions of support from all trade unionists while the fight goes on to spread the blacking of Ward's mail. Elsewhere the noose is being drawn tighter: the strikers seem finally to have cut off the supply of Kodak film.

The fact remains, though that Grunwick is wounded but not dead. Apart from the mail, the crucial services have still not been cut off: gas, electricity and water, phone. And any relaxation of the pressure on Ward could open up the way for NAFF and the Tory neanderthals to counter-attack. There can be no reliance on the trade union bureaucrats or any of their devices to win this strike. Victory will only be won by effective solidarity action and a massive picket on the 15th.

This time there must be no betrayal!

WORKERS' ACTION will be taking a two-week summer break. Next issue, August 11th.

COMMUNIST PARTIES IN CRISIS

BRITAIN Russia loyalists go their own way

SINCE THE death of Franco, the Spanish CP has marked itself out as the Communist Party willing to go furthest on the 'Eurocommunist' path of playing down its links with Moscow in order to gain positions within its own capitalist state.

And finally it has goaded Moscow into openly attacking Spanish CP general secretary Santiago Carrillo.

An article, entitled "Contrary to the Interests of Peace and Socialism", in the Soviet journal "New Times", declares that Carrillo is "anti-Soviet" and that those associating with him politically are therefore taking a road "consonant with the aims of imperialism, in particular, the United States".

NO CHURCH

Carrillo has shrugged off the attacks. "Because these people think that the international communist movement is a church", he said, "they see themselves as being the Office of the Holy See. They still think they can pronounce anathemata and excommunications".

The "New Times" article sets out to attack, not Eurocommunism as such, but Carrillo's use of it. "Making the concept of 'Eurocommunism' an issue in political struggle is obviously a manoeuvre aimed at diverting attention away from the anti-

The fragmentation of Stalinism went a step further last Sunday with the split of a faction led by Sid French from the British Communist Party.

Despite appearances, the split had little to do with any change in CP policy reflected by the new draft of their 'British Road to Socialism'. The reformist strategy of the 'British Road', relying on parliamentary progress to socialism through an alliance with left Labour MPs and trade union bureaucrats, was just as much present in the first, 1951, draft, as in the current one.

In fact, the Communist Party abandoned any revolutionary attitude to the British capitalist state as long ago as the mid-1930s. During the second world war it declared that "the class-conscious worker is the one who crosses the picket line", and after the war it called for a

coalition of Labour with "progressive" Tories.

But in the mid-1930's the monolithic authority of Stalinist Russia meant that CP policy could be pushed through without splits or questioning. The previous zig-zags of Stalinism — ultra-left in 1923-5, opportunist in 1925-7, ultra-left again in 1928-34 — had gone in parallel with a thorough bureaucratisation of the Communist Parties.

Today, many Communist Parties have over 30 or 40 years of reformist practice gained solid footholds in capitalist society, and they are not so closely tied to Moscow. The fact of CPs in power in other countries challenges Russia's authority as the "socialist fatherland", which has been even more severely dented by workers' uprisings like Hungary 1956 and Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin.

It is these international stresses and strains — recently most sharply expressed in the open war of words between the Spanish CP and Moscow — which lie behind the split in the British CP.

The key idea of Sid French's faction is the "leading role of the party". In the British class struggle, this translates as a drive for more aggressive tactics, which means that for many industrial militants the faction appears to the left of the official Communist Party.

But the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe it translates into positions to the right of the official Party. The French faction supported the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, and objects to the CP's defence (mealy-mouthed though it is) of the anti-bureaucratic dissidents.

"I've no sympathy for these Czechs", Frenchites could be

heard saying in 1968. "I've been fighting for socialism all my life. They had it handed them on a plate. And now they want to get rid of it".

This Stalinist view of the world projects the betrayals and zig-zags of Stalinism onto the working class. The workers are always fickle, unreliable, likely to abandon the militants who are struggling resolutely for their interests. And it is because of that fickleness that the bureaucratic dictatorship is needed in Russia and Eastern Europe.

How big Sid French's split will be, and what its links with Moscow will be, is still not clear. But in any case another shake-up for Stalinism can only help revolutionaries trying to win militants away from all the variants of its reformist and bureaucratic strategies.

SPAIN

Party withstands Russian onslaught

monopoly struggle, at presenting those West European Communist parties which are labelled 'Eurocommunist' as being anti-Soviet, stirring up a controversy between fraternal parties, in particular between those in power and those fighting to win power".

"In Carrillo's postulations, 'Eurocommunism' is closely linked with his escalating anti-Sovietism".

The sharp personalisation of the attack shows that the CPSU leaders hope not only

to split the followers of Carrillo from the other 'Eurocommunist' parties (the French and Italian CPs above all) but also to create a split within the Spanish CP.

The article ends with an appeal directed to, among others, Dolores Ibarruri (La Pasionaria) who is from the Asturias and whose son fell at Stalingrad. "The CPSU and the PCE were linked for many years by bonds of friendship and solidarity, mutual aid and support. The memory of those who sealed

the friendship of our parties and peoples with the blood they shed on the fields of the Asturias and in the trenches of Stalingrad will be cherished for ever both by the Soviet people and, we are confident, by our Spanish comrades".

Yet all the long-term leaders of the PCE who lived for

a period in the Soviet Union have signed a statement of solidarity with Carrillo's views, and characterised the attack on Carrillo as an attack on the PCE as a whole. In the Central Committee of the PCE, there was reportedly one vote against Carrillo's line — possibly that of Marcelino Camacho, leader of the Workers' Commissions. For the present the Spanish CP is more concerned with the crumbs from Suarez' table than with what Moscow says.

DEVOTION

Carrillo has borrowed ideas from Trotsky, and even called for Trotsky's rehabilitation, in order to distance himself from the Soviet Union.

His book contains an analysis of the Soviet Union as a state ruled by a bureaucratic caste with its own material interests. This caste is not a capitalist class, but it is oppressive and "commands unlimited and virtually uncontrollable political power".

But Carrillo's borrowing from Trotsky does not show that he has come any closer to the revolutionary socialist ideas defended by Trotsky. On the contrary, Carrillo's concern is not to promote a revolution against the Russian bureaucracy, and still less against capitalism, but to prove his devotion to bourgeois parliamentary democracy.



Carrillo flanked by Italian & French CP leaders 4 months ago —

State orders Labour meeting

THAT political bear-pit, Newham North East Labour Party took another lurch to the right on July 13th, as right wingers captured all the key positions at a reconvened AGM.

The background to this stormy meeting was a tangle of court proceedings spearheaded by Paul McCormack and Julian Lewis — right wing self-styled political trouble shooters who moved into the Newham Party after it had voted to oust Reg Prentice as its MP.

These two have initiated an on-going technique of using the law courts against the workings of the local Party, and to date have been largely successful.

This year's original Constituency AGM in February was declared unconstitutional by the High Court after action by Lewis, and as a result stiff fines were imposed on local party chairman Harold Lugg and Secretary John Clark.

The re-convened AGM was, on the other hand, forced to go ahead by the Court, although the NEC's Organisation Sub-committee decided on July 11th that on the basis of information received by National Agent Reg Underhill there were too many irregularities for the AGM to take place meaningfully.

The Court pronounced that this Sub-Committee was not competent to reverse an earlier NEC decision that the Newham AGM should go ahead.

Undoubtedly the NEC at its next meeting would have endorsed the decision of its Organisation Sub-committee. But before it could do so, Lewis had taken Reg Underhill to court and obtained a ruling that he was not to hinder the business or agenda of the reconvened AGM "subject to any resolution to the contrary being accepted by the meeting".

On the morning of the re-

convened AGM, each delegate received an 88-word telegram saying they should disregard all instructions not to attend the meeting "from whatever source including Labour Party headquarters". The telegrams were sent by solicitors Trower, Still and Keeling, who also act for the National Association for Freedom. Estimated cost of sending the telegrams is £800!

On the night, a resolution that the meeting should not take place was defeated 54 to 50. From then on it was a clean sweep for the right wing.

Lewis and McCormack had been able to pack the meeting by bringing along everyone who was possibly eligible to vote — mostly from trade union branches both inside and outside Newham. Lewis was aided by yet another court ruling on the eligibility of these trade union delegates, and by a great deal of red-baiting — which had been set

in motion by the national press witchunt at the time of the anti-Prentice campaign.

Many of the people he brought along would not have had an idea who to vote for, but that Lewis handed round election slates and his supporters dutifully put their hands up at the right time.

McCormack and Lewis have set a dangerous precedent of using the courts to dictate to the Labour Party how it should run its own affairs. Local activists suspect that if re-selection proceedings are advocated by the Labour Party's Annual Conference, we may see further legal actions both against the Conference and the NEC.

Lewis and McCormack's "Campaign for Representative Democracy" must be stopped in its tracks.

IAN HOLLINGWORTH
Newham NE,
Kensington Ward LP

COAT TAILS

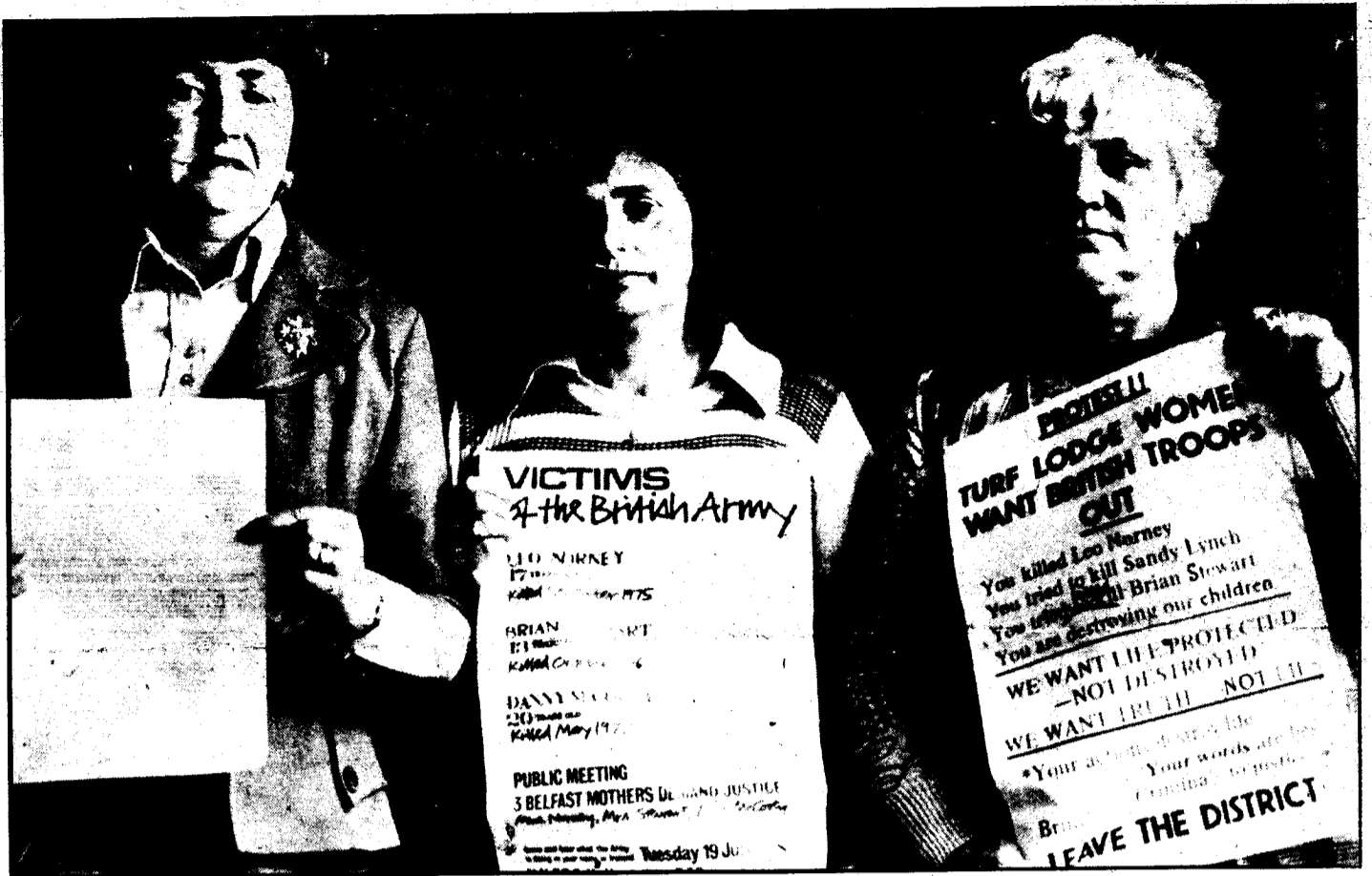
For Moscow, however, the values are reversed. That Carrillo coat-tails Suarez does not worry Moscow. When "New Times", to touch up its picture of Carrillo as a right-winger, denounces the Spanish CP's acceptance of NATO, it is silent about the French and Italian CPs' similar attitude.

But the criticism of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union touches them to the quick. When "New Times" complains that Carrillo says that the Soviet Union "while not being a bourgeois state, at the same time cannot be considered a workers' democracy where the organised proletariat is the ruling class", that is the core of the matter from their point of view.

PAUL ADAMS

Roisin McCooney, Kathleen Stewart and Annie Norney — campaigning for an end to the British Army terror that killed their sons

BELFAST MOTHERS DEMAND INQUIRY INTO DEATHS



LEO NORNEY was shot dead by British soldiers on September 13th 1975 while on the way to see his girlfriend. The British Army claimed he was armed, and four soldiers testified to this at the inquest.

The Ministry of Defence has now admitted that 17-year old Leo was a "totally innocent party", and his mother has been awarded £3000 compensation. However, no action is contemplated against the soldiers who shot Leo.

Brian Stewart was only 13 years of age when he died. He was standing with some friends

on a street corner when soldiers opened up, firing plastic bullets. One of these smashed his skull on October 4th 1976 and a week later he died. The British Army claimed he had been involved in a riot — as the ring-leader.

TV crews investigating the incident could find no evidence that any such riot took place. Local people have testified that there was none, and that Brian had been at home only a few minutes previously.

Danny McCooney was also a victim of the British Army. He died from internal injuries

sustained when he was struck in the stomach by a soldier using the butt of a rifle. The British Army have claimed that he was violently resisting arrest, but the sworn statement of his friend Michael Masterson shows that in fact Danny was trying to extricate him from an argument with the soldiers.

The Brits then took Danny to an interrogation base in the centre of Belfast, but the British Army have denied this and claim that they rushed him to hospital. Hospital records showing the time of his admission contradict this.

These are just three examples of acts of violence committed against totally innocent Irish youths by the British Army of occupation in the north of Ireland in the last few years. This sort of thing is not just an aberration. It is inevitable wherever there is an army of occupation fighting guerilla forces.

Such actions spring from the fact that the occupying force can never be certain just who is an armed combatant against them and who is a harmless civilian. They have to be suspicious of every native; more than that,

unless they despise and hate the "terrorists" who oppose them, it is difficult to fight against them, and these feelings are generally extended to the civilian population in general.

What we are currently seeing in Northern Ireland is but a repeat on a smaller scale of the events of the Vietnam war such as the My Lai massacre.

So far the British labour movement has failed to uphold the right of the Irish people as a whole to decide their own future. But the labour movement cannot turn its back on what the British Army is doing in its name in the Six Counties of Northern Ireland. At a meeting in London on Tuesday 19th July, the mothers of Danny McCooney, Brian Stewart and Leo Norney are to speak to demand an open inquiry into the three cases. What is really needed is a labour movement inquiry into the whole of British Army operations in Northern Ireland.

Chris Gray

Solidarity will burst the wages dam

Editorial

From Page One

If we have learned anything from Grunwicks, it must be the value of working class solidarity. That is what needs to be developed if the defeats of the past two years are to be reversed.

■ Since **WORKERS' ACTION** began we have called for a **sliding scale of wages** as the basic working class answer to inflation. This means the fight for increases at least making up for lost ground over the period of the Social Contract; and pay to be increased automatically as the cost of living rises.

Unlike the threshold agreements of 1973, this wouldn't mean waiting for some threshold to be crossed before wages were increased. Neither should it mean trusting our enemies to work out what the increases in the cost of living had been; an honest account of the movement of prices could only be made by working-class based committees. The fight for real cost-of-living protection is not an easy way out, a method to get better wages without struggle, as the right wing sometimes present it when they are advocating inadequate 'threshold' schemes. It will take a hard struggle to win the sliding scale of wages. But a unifying demand of this sort is necessary.

We can't predict all the tricks the Government or the union leaders may use to stop a 'wages explosion'. But efforts to split up and isolate struggles are certain.

■ In the public sector, where the Government as employers will be trying to set an example of keeping down wage increases, there will be the cry "Wages or jobs". Because of the cuts in public spending, the employers will say, wage increases can only be granted

at the cost of more redundancies.

That threat, too, needs a united response: a fight for **no cuts and no redundancies**. The banks and finance houses should be nationalised without compensation, and the crippling interest burden on local authorities removed. Instead of jobs being cut, the working week should be cut without loss of pay.

The ending of overtime work and the winning of a maximum 35 hour working week would by themselves enable most of the jobless to find work. We must also fight for the nationalisation without compensation of firms declaring large scale redundancies, while insisting on workers' control.

■ The project of a new law on picketing, which might restrict mass pickets, solidarity picketing, or flying pickets, is another clear attempt to tame and fragment the industrial struggle. We must fight to make sure that no such law reaches the statute book, or that if it does it is made unworkable.

■ Attacks on pickets and on public sector jobs could take a more drastic form if the Labour Government falls and the Tories regain power. Should we therefore hold back on our struggles to avoid causing the Labour Government too much trouble?

No. The most vicious Tory Government, faced with working-class militancy, is not invincible: the battles of 1972-74 showed that. Our own strength and our own struggles can defend us from anything the Tories try. But nothing and nobody can save us from ourselves, if we let ourselves in for bearing the burden of the bosses' crisis, by supporting a Labour Government which serves the bosses.

The fight is on to make up all the sacrifices imposed on us over the last two years. We should not be held back by the pleas of those who imposed the sacrifices in the first place. But we need the maximum unity in the struggle, and we must fight to bring every possible section of the labour movement over to our side, against the Social Contract men.

In the early hours of July 5th John McAnulty, a leading member of the *People's Democracy* group, was arrested in Belfast and, after being held and interrogated for 2 days, was charged with "possession of documents likely to be of use to terrorists" at an unspecified date between January 1976 and March 1977. He is now on remand in Crumlin Road jail.

The documents in question are, it appears, the very same set that the industrial organiser of PD, Denis Murphy, has already been charged with possessing in May of this year. But the documents were not apparently found in Comrade McAnulty's house or in his possession.

This suggests that the whole operation is nothing but a crude attempt to obstruct the propaganda activities of PD, which has consistently opposed the British occupation of Northern Ireland from a revolutionary socialist standpoint.

A protest meeting has already been held in Dublin and a similar one will be held on Thursday July 28th in the Conway Hall in London. PD have called on all socialist organisations and militants to raise the issue in the labour movement and to send telegrams to the Northern Ireland Office demanding the release of John McAnulty. Donations for the Defence Fund should be sent to the Connolly Bookshop, Avoca Park, Belfast 10.

THE LONG QUEST FOR FAIR LEFT UNITY

In 1968 there was a general strike of ten million workers, clearly the beginnings of a working-class revolution in France.

It radicalised a whole generation of students, and also thousands of workers. Already the movement of solidarity with the Vietnamese people against US imperialism had shaken the reformist or Stalinist inertia which had generally gripped the world's labour movement for many years.

In Britain disillusion with the Labour government had led to a serious decline in Labour Party membership, to the virtual death of political life in the Labour Party, and to reliance on direct action by trade unionists against both the employers and the Government.

The state of the revolutionary left was not good, though.

The major Trotskyist group, the one that had 'inherited' the most serious cadres educated in the movement over 30 years, was the Socialist Labour League (now WRP). It was an organisation of dedicated militants. But it was also behaving like a narrowly self-promoting sect.

It proclaimed itself as the "alternative leadership", and declared that "building the alternative leadership" was the answer to all problems of the class struggle, with the sectarian arrogance of a small organisation whose pretensions outstripped its organisational and political capacity.

It had the power to generate a semi-religious fervour in the working-class youth it recruited. But it paid for this in a massive turnover of members who had found its promise that the revolution was imminent if they would work harder, empty and a piece of conmanship.

A major contradiction had developed between the Trotskyist politics which the SLL proclaimed and their notion that "building the party" meant simply extending the apparatus and press of the SLL. The notion of the growth of the apparatus and the press had, as it were, taken on a momentum and autonomy of its own. The fundamental task of a real party, to build a base in the working class, was forgotten or else lied about and bluffed about. In reality, this was a period when the SLL squandered the base it had previously built up.

Continued on Page 7



"The workers, united, will never be defeated", chanted the demonstrators outside Grunwicks. But Grunwicks itself illustrates the problems. The workers weren't united on the day of action; they were divided by the trade union officials, between the march and the picket.

And there are many forms of workers' unity. "Unity" has been the cry with which workers have been called to put up with the Labour Government's pay curbs.

Unity of the left? Revolutionary unity? But how left is left? What is really a revolutionary policy?

Unity cannot be got just by wishing for it. The aims and methods of united action must be mapped out clearly; the differences that exist must be discussed, debated, assessed. The question is always: unity, to do what?

But today bad coin is driving out good. Bluff and bluster about "unity" is driving out serious clarification of political ideas.

Frank Higgins and Colin Foster discuss the meaning of socialist unity, the difference between unity and united fronts, recent experiences, and the way forward.

WHAT WAY TO

Socialist Challenge

BUILD A SOCIALIST OPPOSITION FOR A UNIFIED REVOLUTIONARY

"SOCIALIST CHALLENGE" is the latest in a series of efforts by the International Marxist Group and its international co-thinkers to develop a "broad left wing" united movement.

The most similar of the previous efforts was the paper "The Week", produced in the 1960's. While "Socialist Challenge" claims to be building a "class struggle left wing", "The Week" was based on the strategy of the "replacement leadership".

The next stage in the radicalisation of the British working class, it was declared, would be a left-wing current in the

Labour Party. Because the revolutionaries weren't strong enough, and the tempo of events was not fast enough, this current would not be led by revolutionaries, but by left reformists, who would emerge as a "replacement leadership" against the right wing of Wilson & Co. Revolutionaries could gain from this left reformist-led current.

If this "replacement leadership" did not exist, however, the whole process of radicalisation could misfire - with the result of demoralisation and lost opportunities for the revolutionaries.

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THE BIG DIVIDES IN OUR MOVEMENT

"Workers of the world unite!" The goal of working class unity is central for revolutionary socialists. Only by combination in trade unions has the working class been able to muster the strength to force the ruling capitalist class to concede improvements in wages and conditions.

Without unity of the workers in a plant or in an industry, the possibilities of maintaining working class standards in face of attacks by the bosses would simply disappear. The popularity of the idea of unity in the labour movement is thus grounded in the fact that the day-to-day struggle demands unity before anything is possible.

From the trade unions and the basic struggle for wages and conditions, the idea of working class unity was taken into the early socialist movement. The International Working Men's Association of Karl Marx began with the need to achieve unity between the workers' movement in Britain, France and Belgium, so that there could be common action against importation of foreign scabs during struggles in any

of the countries.

Towards the end of the 19th century, there was a wide growth of the socialist movement in Europe. Here too unity was accepted as a central goal. Many trends of thought were amalgamated inside the one party in many countries. Marxists and semi-liberals, implacable revolutionaries and very tame reformists, parliamentarians on principle and advocates of the tactical use of the general strike against capitalism - they all coexisted.

The unity appeared solid and imposing. In 1912 the Socialist International issued the Basel Manifesto, opposing the war plans of the imperialist powers and declaring that the working class would use a war situation to strike at capitalism. The International Working class movement, German and Belgian, British and French, Irish and Russian, all said the same to their own and to each other's ruling classes: the international working class movement stands united against each and all of you, and will fight against your war and against

your rule.

In 1914, however, with very few exceptions, the socialist organisations supported the war. They lined up solidly behind their own ruling classes and against the working class of the enemy powers. The unity of the Socialist (Second) International gave way to a division marked out by trenches, barbed wire, guns and mountains of working class corpses.

Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg and a minority of the Second International denounced the treason of the socialist leaders in the imperialist countries. They insisted that the previous unity had been a sham unity, which had hid the fundamental political divisions and allowed those sections of the old socialist parties most tied to collaborating with the capitalists and their state to gain dominance in the labour movement - while paying lip service to the principles of class struggle.

The international socialist movement could only be re-born after its collapse in the war if the internationalists, who had stood by the movement's principles,

carried through a rigorous split from the patriots and the reformists. There had to be rigorous political accounting for the collapse. In the future there would have to be severe political accounting within the re-born movement. There could never again be peaceful coexistence with the reformists.

The Communist (3rd) International was founded in 1919. Its proclaimed policy was ruthlessly to split and purge the world labour movement. Its goal was create an organisations of revolutionaries, and of revolutionaries only, to make war on the reformists allies of the bosses in the labour movement, as a necessary part of war on the capitalists.

It did not, however, ignore the need for working class unity in action. Instead of the vain unity which the Second International had created by gathering all political trends together, it fought for unity in action while insisting on keeping the political lines and programme of communism clear and distinct from reformism. To the reformist workers it

proposed the united front. Instead of the unfocused general unity of the Second International, it put forward proposals focused on concrete united action of reformist and communist workers.

It believed that in such actions the reformist workers would understand that the revolutionary politics of the Communist International were the only genuinely working-class politics, and that thus the C.I. could reunite the labour movement, under revolutionary leadership.

In Britain the Communist Party fought for affiliation to the Labour Party - and was rejected again and again, finally in 1925.

The split between reformists and communists is the fundamental division in the world labour movement.

Superimposed on the split that originated in 1914 is the split between revolutionary communists (called 'Trotskyists') and those who abandoned the basic ideas of the early Communist International in favour of the Russian "commun-

ist" nation in the 1920s. The Russian Revolution was followed after working class united action of reformist and communist workers. The complete J.V. Stalin abandoned world so favour of what the chose to 'Country'.

To help Russian Communist Party into tight groups in for the in state. The began - to have erent from The on basic on formist: p "their own state, and to it, which owed. first Russians: Thus it

SOCIALIST UNITY

INCORPORATING RED WEEKLY
Challenge
BY ORGANISATION 12p

GRANDSON OF THE WEEK

First duty of the revolution was therefore to ensure the "replacement leadership" existed. Gathering a number of left-reformist dignitaries as sponsors, "The Week" set itself to trying to goad the prominent left reformists to more militant stands. In parallel, the "Institute for Worker's Control" was set up, hoping to rally a segment of the "replacement leadership" round the transition to workers' control. It is today as a viable alternative to what the "replacement leadership" strategy has become in practice.

For when the working class did enter into struggle, the IMG was compelled by its strategy to respond in a *less than revolutionary* fashion. Their answer to incomes policy was - "Yes, but the workers must control". And, finally, the predicted left-wing current did not materialise. The radicalisation in 1967-8 took different forms. The IMG had in fact spent its time mimicking left reformism for several years, all for the sake of a mirage. "Socialist Challenge" is motivated by the same sort of wish to be a fairy godmother for History. This time it is a

"class struggle left wing", also largely influenced and led by left reformists, which must be wished into existence so that the revolutionary process can go forward and the Trotskyists can intervene. The presence of "Big Flame" and a few others in "Socialist Challenge" is mostly significant as a makeweight for it in relation to this coming left-reformist movement. The IMG declares that the next stage in the working class struggle will be (is? must be? would preferably be?) a broad movement to replace the right-wing Callaghan-Healey leadership by someone a bit more left-

wing. But History, once again, has refused to be wooed by these scenarios. All that the class struggle left wing has amounted to in practice is the IMG urging workers to unite with the left reformists, and thus suggesting that those left reformists are some sort of working-class alternative to Callaghan and Healey - a confused, inadequate alternative, but still an alternative. In the name of ple-in-the-sky unity, the IMG blurs over the fact that Benn and the Tribunites are as much a pillar of the bourgeoisie as Callaghan and Roy Jenkins.



MOVEMENT

alism that emerged. Because the Russian revolution remained isolated, the defeat of the 1918-19 uprisings of 1918-19, the bureaucracy based on machine control. Led by this bureaucracy the programme of revolution in attempting to build parasitic bureaucrats all 'Socialism in One

ions in the working class movement were now threefold. The reformists remained reformist, and the Trotskyists were the only revolutionaries in the sense that the early Communist International was revolutionary. The Stalinists combined reformist politics "at home" with a treacherous pretence of being revolutionaries; and they had the power of the Russian bureaucracy behind them, which enabled them to maintain the allegiance of hundreds of thousands of workers throughout the world, who wanted to be revolutionaries. From the 1930s, therefore, the revolutionaries became a small minority, and the dominant trends were reformism and pseudo-revolutionary Stalinism. Since the 1930s the convergence between Stalinism and reformism has progressed even further; and in recent years the revolutionaries have gained a larger audience. But the most fundamental divisions remain those carved out by the first world war and by the degeneration of the Russian revolution

VARIATIONS ON TWO THEMES

FROM THE 1930s, the basic divisions in the working class movement were between the reformists, tied to the capitalist state; the Stalinists, tied to the reactionary bureaucracy of the USSR (and, in recent decades, more and more embedded in their own capitalist states, too); and the Trotskyists, the only tendency dedicated to the fight for workers' power.

No section of the Trotskyist movement has become a satellite of capitalism or Stalinism. Yet today the Trotskyist movement is split into many different tendencies. Why?

Although the divisions are often aggravated by pointless and irresponsible factionalism, there are real political reasons for the major splits in the Trotskyist movement. The world since the Second World War has posed a series of new political problems - the deformed workers' states in Yugoslavia, China, Cuba, etc; 20 years of relative stability in the advanced capitalist countries; complicated national struggles in Ireland and in the Middle East.

The Trotskyists had to readjust and re-define their revolutionary perspectives. With limited forces, and few experienced leaders, they failed to do it adequately or unanimously. In the early 1950s the Trotskyist movement split on a world scale.

The split was not a clear one. But the dividing lines it introduced have been more important and more lasting than any of the other, minor, rifts in the Trotskyist movement.

On the one hand there are the sectarians, for whom all political life centres round the factional self-promotion of their organisation, the denunciation of "revisionism", and the proclamation of the "correct" combination of slog-

ans from the Transitional Programme - which History will reward by producing mass struggles from the womb of its ever-present catastrophic "crisis". On the other hand, those who make a more serious attempt to analyse the real movement of the class struggle - but then end up posing themselves as Marxist advisers to the most promising leftward-moving current.

The sectarian tendency is represented in Britain by a grotesquely degenerate form by the "Workers' Revolutionary Party" - and in a milder form by the Workers' Socialist League. The mainstream has been represented since the 1960s by the International Marxist Group.

There exist also militants who are trying to construct a Trotskyist tendency free from both dead-end sectarianism and supine opportunism. Workers' Action identifies with this trend.

What has happened to the Trotskyist movement since the late 1940s is that it has been reduced to a spectrum of sects - within which some groups struggle, with greater or lesser success, to rise above the status of sects.

Both the mainstream, and those who split in 1952-3, have been sects in the sense that they have been based on ideas to which they have been unable to give much living reality - even on a small scale - in the class struggle; ideas which have remained as "good advice" or as blustering proclamations. Within the bounds of those general ideas, they have been blown this way and that by the political winds on crucial questions, like Ireland, the Middle East, the Common Market, and their relationship to Stalinism and to reformism.

The SWP (IS) is a group which originated in the Trotskyist move-

ment, but long ago stopped defending many of the basic revolutionary principles of Trotskyism, even in a formal way. Today it is an ultra-opportunist organisation whose politics amount to little more than boosting trade union militancy.

Around the basic currents represented in Britain by the IMG, the WRP and the SWP (IS), there is a gamut of groupings which are sects in an even worse sense: that they try to solve the problems of the revolutionary movement by this or that glib variation on the formulas of their 'parent' organisation. Mostly they are quite self-satisfied and complacent about 'their' pet theories and positions.

The sight of this range of sects can easily lead to either (or both) of two wrong conclusions: contempt for the whole Trotskyist tradition (but, with all its faults, it is the only revolutionary tradition we have), or a wish for unity at all costs. But if creating new sects is not the answer, no more is a patchwork (and in any case impossible) unity of the old sects.

In Workers' Action we have not tried to pose as new world geniuses, cooking up whole new "theories" and "answers" on the spur of the moment. But in the effort we have made for a painstaking step-by-step development of ideas, regulated by the class struggles, there is, we believe, the life-blood of that process of 'developing theory' which is so often made a mystery among the Marxist left - but which is nonetheless vital.

There are real political reasons for the divisions in the Trotskyist movement. The divisions cannot be superseded until the political disorientation which caused them is superseded.

THE LONG QUEST FOR FAR LEFT UNITY

Continued from centre page

What is now the SWP (IS) was then a loose, primarily petty bourgeois, group, without discipline, and with little coherent politics other than the description of the Stalinist states as state-capitalist. "Militant" was a very dull and uninspiring collection of 'Trotskyist' Labour Party routinists who continued the routine when most straight reformists had stopped bothering. It was responsive neither to the French General Strike, nor to the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese, nor even to the strike struggles of the British working class.

APPEAL

The IMG had been in the Labour Party attempting to construct a "replacement leadership" for the social democracy. In 1967-8 they organised a major split between those who wanted to focus on creating links with labour bureaucrats, and those who wanted to build a movement in solidarity with the Vietnamese.

The latter won the faction fight, and certainly they were the better tendency — but they managed to gird themselves up to be internationalists for the Vietnam war only at the cost of abandoning, for years, any approach to the British working class movement.

"Workers' Fight" was a small grouping of militants attempting to continue the positive work of the SLL, as it was before 1963-4, and also attempting to analyse the experience of the Trotskyist movement. It existed in only three areas.

Into this situation IS launched its appeal for unity of the revolutionary forces. The platform was four points: against racism, against imperialism, against incomes policy, and for workers' control.

This was an opportunist move to give IS the possibility of recruiting large numbers of the newly radicalised. But IS did gain, and attempted seriously to turn the petty bourgeois youth it recruited towards work in and around factories.

FRINGES

In fact unity of the revolutionary left in 1968 would probably have allowed a much greater recruitment to revolutionary politics of the newly politicised. Failing that, many of them dropped out or drifted away.

The IMG refused the proposal for unity. The United Secretariat of the Fourth International (to which it is affiliated) had just decided on a general policy of 'open work'. In fact the IMG pursued the student radicals

with little success. IS, with an orientation to the working class, succeeded in recruiting proportionately many more students.

Against revolutionary left unity, the IMG argued that it would blur the political distinctions. Perhaps it would have done. But it would probably also have massively enlarged the entire revolutionary left. And within that the IMG could have fought for its specific policies. It chose instead to remain in the student fringes of revolutionary left politics.

Only Workers' Fight responded to the unity appeal. IS-WF fusion occurred in November 1968, and WF organised a Trotskyist tendency inside the united organisation. This tendency's battle ended with its expulsion in 1971. Inside IS there had been a defeat for the Trotskyists, which led to the development of the present SWP.

FUSION

However, it was not at all a pre-ordained defeat. Had the IMG joined in a fused organisation in 1968, then there might have been a different outcome — not only for the militants then in IS, but also for those then in the IMG.

The WF group expelled from IS in 1971 has since fused with other militants to create the International-Communist League — in the only real, if small, step towards revolutionary unity in recent years.

Some of the comrades of the former IS Left Faction subsequently split from the I-CL. This showed not that this politically-founded fusion had been false, but that these comrades had been too thoroughly trained in the IS school. It was the same problem as with their excessive respect, for too long, for their 'unity' with IS: unwillingness to draw uncomfortable conclusions, for unity or for disunity, from political principles.

But 1968's chance was lost. Today there is not the possibility of drawing in sizeable new forces into a united revolutionary organisation. Amalgamation of a number of small groups may be possible, but unless it is based on clear programmatic agreement it can only be at the cost of political confusion and blurring of distinctions.

In 1968 unity might perhaps have taken us a long way forward. It is ironic that those who were least responsive then should now, in quite different conditions, propose "left unity" as a bogus answer to the problems faced by revolutionaries today.

NO-ONE doubts that alternative sources of energy are needed for industrial society to survive even at its present level, let alone to allow for the sort of expansion and improvement envisaged by socialists.

At the moment, nuclear power is the only viable alternative.

Nuclear power is more efficient than fossil fuels and also — strange as it may seem considering the doom-laden warnings — less hazardous. Performance so far does suggest that nuclear fuel needn't be as dangerous as it is made out. Coal mining, for example, is far more hazardous than uranium mining, and we have the recent escapades of the North Sea oil blow-out to remind us of some of the environmental risks associated with fossil fuels.

Calculations of risk levels show that the chances of dying from contact with radioactive material leaked from a reactor in Britain are half as much as the risk of dying from the bite of a venomous beast, and that you're 500 times more likely to be run over by a motor vehicle. This doesn't mean they are absolutely safe, but it shows that many of the fears are exaggerated.

Waste disposal is the big problem. A recent report (Greenwood & Webb) suggests that the best method is to solidify the waste in glass blocks, seal the blocks in containers designed to last for hundreds of years, and dump them into the deep ocean.

By the time that the containers break up and the blocks start to leak, they predict that the radiation levels would be no greater than those we receive today.



It may well be possible to mine, use and dispose of nuclear fuel with much more safety than at first glance would seem possible. But there are still risks, and the search is on for alternative sources of energy that are not so dangerous and may be cheaper and more efficient.

Particular emphasis has been placed on natural resources not likely to run dry: wind, sun and tides. Once the province of "eco-freaks", such alternatives have become big science, with governments pouring millions of pounds into research. Will this be the way forward?

No-one yet knows. So far, few of these projects have looked capable of generating the enormous quantities of power future society will need. A windmill may light your home, but it won't power the factory that has to produce windmill parts.



ATOMIC ENERGY

PART 2



WHAT ARE THE OTHER OPTIONS?

Solar energy might heat your bath water, but will it heat the furnaces of a steel works?

The increasing volume and seriousness of research in this area suggests that it will indeed be possible. Among other likely developments is the building of power stations utilising the variations in temperature in different levels of the sea to produce electricity. This project — Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) — has already been developed to a stage at which Lockheed are planning to build a 160MW prototype.

Is it beyond the capabilities of capitalism to develop such projects? Obviously not — though cost and profitability will count for as much as safety in their calculations.

Capitalism researches and builds for profit, not for need. We can have no confidence that they will find the best — rather than simply the most profitable — solution to the energy problem. For this reason we have no reason to believe them when they say that this or that process is safe or isn't.

But we cannot oppose such developments as nuclear power. We have nothing in common with those reactionaries who want to renounce the future in return for a

mythical "golden past" of rural bliss. The danger of all-out opposition to nuclear power is that, whatever our intentions, we line up with mystics and reactionaries.

While not opposing nuclear power as such, we can express no faith in the capitalist class to use it safely. (Though the danger that a major nuclear accident poses to the rest of capitalism means that certain restraints are imposed on the profit motive over nuclear materials.)

We need to fight for the best possible conditions in the nuclear industry. We must not leave it up to governments to decide on the levels of safety and the necessary standards to adopt.

Concluding Neal Smith's Discussion article

But to exert any control, we need to know what's going on. Secrecy is very much a part of the nuclear programme. We must demand that it is ended and that there is access to all the relevant information about the dangers of nuclear power and what is being done to lessen those dangers.

In capitalist society science, technology and the processes of production are shrouded in mystique and secrecy. Workers have little chance to exercise control since they simply don't know what's going on. The information is kept in the hands of a technocratic elite, and nuclear power programmes are encased in secrecy.

Until science and technology are democratised and everyone plays a role in deciding how they will affect society, it will always be possible for demagogues to denounce all forms of technical progress and to gain the ear of socialists who should know better.

A FIRST STEP, BUT A BIG ONE



The years of the Labour Government, with the class struggle suspended as in a block of ice by the Social Contract, have seen few advances for the revolutionary left. If anything, there has been a numerical decline, a further fragmentation, and a tendency to withdraw from consistent attention to the problems facing the working class movement.

We have seen, as part of this, the growth of "stunt politics" (such as the SWP's Right to Work marches, the IMG's "class struggle left wing" project and diversion by both these groups of major resources for election work).

There has been little of what one might call 'taking stock': attempts to codify the experiences of the class struggle of the last years, to relate it to the foundations of Trotskyism, and from this to develop a programme for working class advance now and in the coming period.

This is one of the major things the recently published Manifesto of the International Communist League sets out to do.

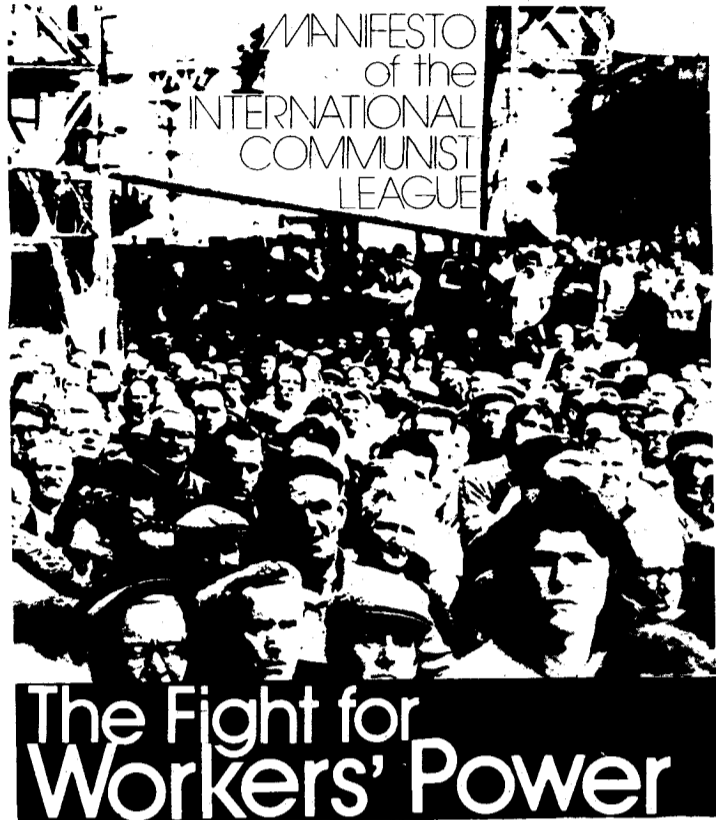
Titled "The Fight for Workers Power", the core of the Manifesto is an Action Programme encompassing aims and demands for struggles that range from day-to-day class conflicts to explicit offensives for the seizure of power.

The events around the Grunwick struggle show above all the ramifications that are possible from the most small scale or the most modest struggle.

Neither are the implications of the class struggle limited "horizontally" to questions directly about wages, conditions, jobs and union rights. The Action Programme brings in questions which are often shunted off to the sidelines of the struggle, so often left out of industrial bulletins and rank and file papers as 'less relevant'.

Such questions as racism and fascism, the oppression of women and gays, and Britain's occupation of Ireland, are treated centrally in this Programme.

And rightly so. We have seen how racism permeates and cripples the labour movement, how rampant nationalism is particularly among the Left (the anti-EEC campaign, the import controls calls). In even the most short-term programme, the ideology of the ruling class has



Reviewed by Bruce Robinson

to be challenged.

The structures of the labour movement set their stamp on every current struggle, and many cases at least half the battle is concerned with dealing with the obstacles presented by the movement itself. A struggle for workers' power requires a transformation of the workers' movement, and the Action Programme points a way for this.

Another recent lesson is the necessary interaction between defensive and offensive struggles. It is a lesson not missed in this Manifesto.

The I-CL situates its programme in the context of what has happened to Trotskyism since the death of Trotsky. Two of the trends visible around us are for a dogmatic repetition of one's allegiance to the contents (or even just the title) of Trotsky's 1938 Transitional Programme as if it solved all problems in a changing reality; or there are those (such as the SWP in this country) who simply adapt to the ebbs and flows of the class struggle on a day-to-day basis, rejecting any programme or guidance as tying their hands.

Both these tendencies are

the product of a degeneration in the Trotskyist movement since the 1940s. In the I-CL's view, to develop a programme against this background it isn't enough just to claim allegiance to the 'ideas of 1930s Trotskyism'. It found it necessary to re-work and develop these conceptions in the light of nearly 40 years' experience, and to rediscover many of the revolutionary ideas that have been bowdlerised and vulgarised in the course of the long degeneration of revolutionary Marxism. Not only to rediscover ideas, but to see how they might apply to today's class struggle, if at all.

For example, the Manifesto discusses the united front and the workers' government. This last has been used by "Trotskyists" to describe any government of the Stalinist and social democratic parties, thus gutting it of the revolutionary content with which the slogan was used by the Communist International — that is, as a transitional form prior to the seizure of power, which was only called for in certain specific circumstances as the logical conclusion of the tactic of the united front.

To those who abhor old ideas, it must be pointed out how immediate this question is given the possible developments in France and Italy.

One document can't accomplish the enormous task of developing a Marxist programme for today. The I-CL understand this; indeed, some important questions are only briefly referred to in this Manifesto, and not even tackled.

This Manifesto is, rather, a codification of the positions the I-CL has reached in its work so far. They do however provide the basis both for intervention in the working class struggle and for further ideological development. And it marks the first step in the task the I-CL has set itself of the ideological regeneration of a communist international.

[Available from G. Lee, 98 Gifford Street, London N.1; price 35p plus 15p postage.]

S.C.

COMBINE UNITY WON IN CHLORIDE'S 9-WEEK OCCUPATION

ON THURSDAY 14th July Chloride bosses received their Dagenham factory back from the hands of occupying workers. After 9 weeks the national strike-cum-occupation of 4,500 Chloride battery workers was over.

The stewards did not see the settlement as a defeat, but the fact is that little was won on the dispute's four demands.

On the productivity deal a guaranteed minimum bonus was agreed, but it was accompanied by an agreement to increase output as well as earnings.

On the import of batteries, Chloride management agreed to detailed consultation about the numbers but not on

the principle. On pensions the issue is to be left to a meeting of the national officers of the various unions involved. While management claim that they have yet to transfer work to the Porvair in Norwich, from bitter experience the stewards have learned not to trust them.

The long occupation was brought to this unsatisfactory end mainly because of the efforts of the national T&G officer, Tom Crispin.

But one positive gain has come from the strike: the move to bring the stewards from the various Chloride companies together to form a Joint UK Chloride Group Committee.



Teachers kept in from Grunwick picket

THE UNIONS



On Thursday 7th July, Newham NUT passed a resolution delegating 10 local teachers to attend the picket and demonstration in support of the Grunwick strike for July 11th.

18,000 other trade unionists were to attend this solidarity picket — but this delegation of ten teachers from Newham was barred from going ... by its own union!

Within 24 hours of the resolution the following had taken place:

■ Newham NUT President Maureen Seear took the resolution to NUT headquarters to "seek advice";

■ NUT headquarters phoned up all the delegates instructing them not to attend the picket in school time;

NUT HQ also phoned up Newham Education Authority telling them that any action in support of the Grunwick strikers in school time would be unofficial;

■ Newham Education Authority warned the delegation that any withdrawal of labour on July 11th would be treated as breach of contract.

In the event most of the delegation decided to comply with the instructions of the Union, feeling that there wasn't enough overall support in the NUT to guard against victimisation, and not wishing to divert the support for the Grunwick struggle into an NUT victimisation fight.

Did any other NUT delegations manage to slip past the Union's vigilance and attend the picket? Or did all other teachers attending merely "go sick"? In either case, as with the Newham delegation, it shows up the

scandalous role of the NUT Executive over Grunwick. Although the Executive didn't pass a motion saying no action should be taken, neither did it decide to sanction or lead any action, confining itself to a statement that the NUT "supports the right of workers to union recognition".

The incident also shows up again the repressive regime in the NUT, whose rules state that "no industrial action may take place without prior approval of the Executive".

A message of support, explaining the absence of the delegation, was handed to the Grunwick strike committee. It also called on fellow trade unionists to help teachers in the fight to restore the freedom of action of local NUT branches.

Newham NUT Committee responded immediately to the ban on its delegation, with a resolution endorsing the statement to the Grunwick strike committee, disassociating itself from the "Executive's negligence" and calling on other trade unionists to help to "break the Executive from its current position". It called on NUT school groups to give active support and money to the Grunwick strike, and called on the Executive to "align itself with the working class on this issue by a campaign of sympathetic industrial action".

Though this resolution won a majority, the right wing officers of the Newham NUT refused to circulate it, and the members of the Delegation (who had put the resolution) had to send it round local schools for other members of Newham NUT to see it.

IAN HOLLINGWORTH

WORKERS' ACTION

supporters' groups

BASINGSTOKE, BIRMINGHAM, BRISTOL, CAMBRIDGE, CARDIFF, CHELMSFORD, CHESTER, COVENTRY, EDINBURGH, HUDDERSFIELD, LEICESTER, LIVERPOOL, LONDON, MANCHESTER, MIDDLESBROUGH, NEWCASTLE, NEWTOWN, NORTHAMPTON, NOTTINGHAM, READING, ROCHDALE, SHEFFIELD, STAFFORD, STOKE.

Write for details of meetings and activities to:
WASG, 49 Carnac Street, London SE27

WORKERS IN ACTION

Two canning plants strike for frozen 10% rise

WORKERS AT Batchelors peas canning plants in Sheffield and Worksop have gone on strike for a 10% pay rise they were promised in 1975, but never got because of two years of pay freeze.

The strike has been carefully planned to coincide with the peak of the canning season, and Batchelors bosses are complaining that they could lose £14 million. Picketing has also been organised, and strike committee representatives have toured local steelworks in Sheffield.

The dispute will probably soon be made official by the T&GWU at local level in Sheffield.

The strikers' dispute appeal calls for "financial support for their members who are in dispute with their employers. This is the result of the company breaking the principle of an agreement reached in June 1975. The agreement was a two-stage settlement, one part to be implemented in June 1975, the other part in December 1975. Batchelors employees are seeking that the company honour the spirit and intention of the 1975 agreement and pay the percentage agreed for the second stage when permissible.

We are therefore seeking financial support from fellow trade unionists and assistance in our fight for justice on principles which have been previously established. Thanking you in anticipation of any donations forthcoming.

Gordon Pellegrina for the Batchelors employees. Please send donations to Mr V Knight, 42 Grimmsell Crescent, Sheffield S6 1AJ.

MICK WOODS

Mass picket planned against 19th Century site management

THE STRIKERS at Roberts, Kennington are still holding out after 14 weeks. With only four steelworkers working, and no Readymix cement crossing the picket line, the unofficial strike is beginning to bite even though many of the original pickets have left or gone back in through hardship.

For the first time, there is overtime working on Saturdays and Sundays. Don Speakman, Roberts personnel manager [and Lambeth Council Chief Labour Whip] has even tried to intimidate steelworkers at Roberts other site, in Brixton, into working at the Kennington site by threatening them with the sack! The Brixton site fixers responded immediately with a mass meeting and Speakman had to retract.

"Speakman is trying to make this strike look like an inter-union dispute, but we're getting financial help from both UCAIT and T&G members from many sites in and out of London" one of the pickets told WA.

The strikers intend to visit more sites to mobilise support for a mass picket soon to break the stalemate. The strike committee asked Workers Action "to thank all the sites which have helped us in our struggle against 19th century management". Messages of support and collections to: M Brooks, 49 Cuddington, Deacon Way, London SE17.

CHEUNG SIU MING

NEXT STEPS FOR THE CAR WORKERS WHO FOUGHT PHASE 2

CAR WORKERS have suffered more than most in the last two years of downturn in trade union struggle. Militants have been victimised and participation schemes have been introduced.

Still, car workers are standing in the front line for battle after August 1st. Several sections of car workers have delayed new wage agreements until after the end of Phase 2,

and are lodging demands way above the Government's 10% target as from 1st August.

As our reports from Leyland and from Fords show, the problem is for rank and file car workers to organise themselves to take this struggle into their own hands. Without that, these claims could just remain on paper, or leading to wheeling and dealing and behind-the-scenes sell-outs.

NEEDED: AN END TO LEYLAND PARTICIPATION

THE PROSPECT of "free collective bargaining" after August 1st has caused a flurry of activity on the wages issue in the British Leyland unions.

But many of the claims are inadequate. For example, at Longbridge the proposed claim is as follows:

"1. A substantial wage increase". (Originally the works committee wanted this to read 10% increase. The figure was deleted, ostensibly because the stewards wanted more. A committee is now looking into what "substantial increase" should mean.)

"2. Consolidate the £6 into the basic wage".

"3. Negotiate a single agreement for a substantial buy-out payment".

"4. Agree to changed methods of work for a substantial buy-out".

"5. Improved fringe benefits".

"6. Any changes in shift arrangements to be negotiated separately with the premium payments being higher than those in national agreements".

"7. The combined buy-out to be paid in two instalments, i.e. Christmas and annual holiday periods".

"After negotiations have been completed", the stewards will "enter into fresh negotiations on a factory incentives scheme".

Leaving aside the possible "substantial increase", this claim is worse than many achieved under Phase 2, since it proposes to "sell" working methods, bar-

gaining arrangements and possibly our present shift systems too, for a couple of lump-sum "buy-out" payments in the first year.

The claim does not mention the demand for parity with other Leyland factories. Why? The management are going to give us it anyway, say the Leyland union leadership. But basic wages at Longbridge are up to £11 less than other factories, and some of the better paid factories, such as the Rover group, are at this moment putting in claims for £15 across the board with cost of living rises.

It is true that the management badly want either full corporate bargaining or "group bargaining" (a half-way house), in order to sap the influence of militant shop-floor organisation, and they will

have to move towards wage parity to get it. But once the structures of the new bargaining system are there, delays and sell-outs on parity are certain.

Many stewards and workers appear to believe that if you want parity across the company, then you have to accept one corporate agreement: but this is nonsense. Parity means levelling-up of wages, using the better-paid plants as pace-setters for the rest.

The claim being proposed in the Rover group is a partial contrast to the Longbridge one. It consists of:

● £15 across the board for 40 hours and consolidation of supplements (the £6);

● A £75 minimum wage for 40 hours;

● Automatic cost of living increases.

This reflects, ironically, the influence of militant Labour Party members in the Rover group unions and the comparative weakness of the Communist Party there. But the Rover stewards have delegated the fight for their claim to the British Leyland Trade Union Committee, calling for it to be recognised as a national wages negotiating committee. This was the committee which called the April 3rd conference against wage curbs — and at the same time stabbed in the back the toolroom men fighting against Phase 2.

We need not only a good claim, but also the means to fight for it. That means, first of all, breaking the ties of participation.

D.B.



Officials who opposed the toolmakers' struggle in March can't be trusted to win this claim

FORDS: hold meetings to plan action on claim

THE 1977 Ford pay claim for 80,000 hourly paid workers was presented at the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee last Friday, 15th July.

Because the claim goes beyond Healey's pay limit, and because it will be the first major test of the Government's ability to maintain control over wages since Phase 2, the bosses' press is already sounding off warnings about it.

The claim deals with a number of elements of wages and conditions, and was agreed by a meeting of 300 Ford shop stewards last April. The main demands are for a 15% wage rise, 80% pay for all lay-offs, and a 37½ hour week.

Also included are demands for time and a third for all holidays, pension parity with staff, and the agreement to run no longer than a year.

Whatever the bosses' papers

say, the claim represents for Ford workers one step back and two small steps forward.

Last year, in line with Jack Jones' call, Ford workers demanded a 35 hour week. In 1977, after unemployment has risen, the claim is only for 37½.

On lay-off pay, and in the fact that there is a definite wages target, there are steps forward.

But 80% lay-off pay still means a loss of at least 20% of earnings when management sends workers home. A 15% increase in wages neither compensates for the Social Contract nor safeguards against future price rises.

The official leadership has done nothing to prepare a fight for the claim. But a fight will be needed if it is to be won, even in its present form.

In fact, the only time the claim has been raised has been

as a means to break the action against lay-offs in Dagenham recently. Danny Connors, convenor of the Body Plant, stressed the claim's provisions in a speech urging Body Plant workers to call off their action for the same demands!

But that fight over lay-offs, in both the Body Plant and the PTA at Dagenham, showed the combativity that exists in the rank and file. On Friday, while the pay claim was being presented, a section in the Body Plant struck for a time for the demands for £15 and a 35 hour week.

The annual 3-week Ford shut-down starts on 22nd July. The immediate and urgent task of shop floor militants when the plants start back will be preparing to fight for the claim.

As a Workers' Action bulletin circulated in Dagenham over a month ago put it, "Every shop steward should call full meetings on the claim. Discuss it, argue about it, but plan for action. Push resolutions for the National Ford shop stewards conference to meet again — not to discuss the claim but to prepare a plan of action to win it".

JOHN BLOXAM

EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Paid ads (including ads for publications) 8p per word, £5 per column inch — payment in advance. Send copy to *Events*, 49 Carnac St, London SE27, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

SATURDAY 23 JULY. Demonstration in defence of the 'Lewisham 24'. Assemble 2pm at Lewisham Station; rally 3pm at Lewisham Town Hall.

WEDNESDAY 27 JULY. Charlie Doyle (leading figure of the CP breakaway group) speaks against the concept of a "British Road to Socialism". 8pm, 'The Cock', 360 North End Rd, Fulham Broadway.

SUNDAY 31 JULY. "The Fight for Workers' Power". Workers' Action readers' meeting in Basingstoke with a speaker invited from the I-CL.

SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER (provisional date): Rally to launch the International-Communist League Manifesto, "The Fight for Workers' Power". From 2pm at the Co-Op Hall, Seven Sisters Rd, London N4.

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