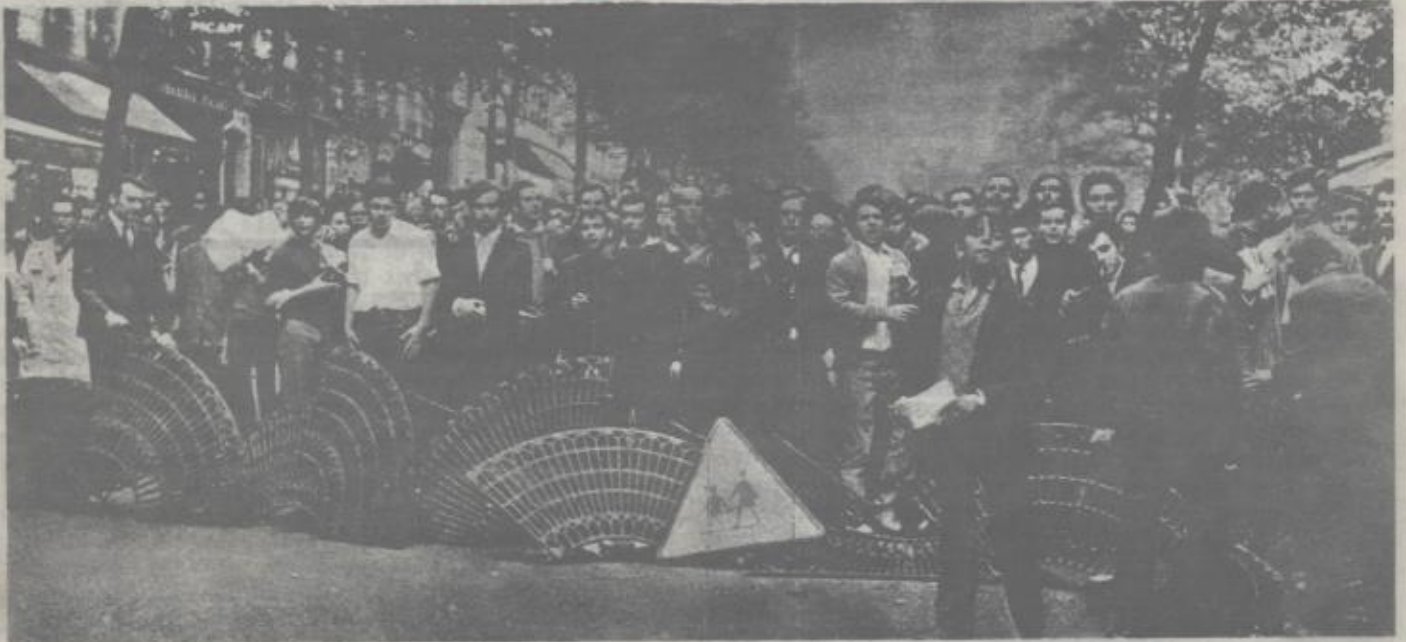


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LABOUR ^{1/6} AT THE CROSSROAD



Students: A Winter Of Struggle?

3/4
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5/2

letters

LETTER FROM J. SANDS, NOTTINGHAM

I would like to bring a meeting on Equal Pay for Women to the readers' attention. This meeting will be held in Room 8, House of Commons, Tuesday October 22 at 6.30 p.m. It is open to delegates from all unions and interested organisations.

This is initiated by the National Union of Vehicle Builders, the union of the Ford Women strikers and promises to be a very important conference with the aim of a "follow-on" womens' conference on equal pay.

HEADLIGHT the newsheet of the NUVB says, after referring to the Private Members bill on equal pay, "We hope to see Mr. Norwood (proposer of the bill) and many other M.P.'s, along with the representatives and delegates who have been elected by their organisations, supporting our historic meeting which will open up the phase of ACTION FOR EQUAL PAY."

I feel that this meeting will be significant and hope that all women trade unionists, shop stewards and activists will attend.

Yours etc.,
J. Sands.

P.S. For details of the conference write to:
National Union of Vehicle Builders,
East London Office,
Progress House,
76, Rainham Road,
Rainham,
Essex.

LETTER FROM SEAN REED (LONDON)

Comrade,

I have just seen the letter from Sid Bidwell in INTERNATIONAL No. 4. Even at this late date someone should try to teach Sid the difference between walking in front of a march and leading it.

Mr. Bidwell may well have walked in front of the July 7th, anti-racism march, but over 80% of the march, answering the call of other leaders, remained in Whitehall to fight; while a rump (following Mr. Bidwell?) marched out of the line of fire.

Yours etc.,
Sean Reed.

LETTER FROM FRANK GORTON (NOTTINGHAM)

Comrade Lloyd's article "Women as Mothers" seems to be written from a "status quo" position. Its main stream seems to justify the contention that "women's place is in the home". It seems that if we need well-adjusted children (as if that is possible in a capitalist society) they will have to be not only planned but personally tutored by the family in general and the mother in particular.

If this is to be then the argument runs logically that home life should be enriched and the family strengthened, to allow the mother to feel socially useful and fulfilled.

Doesn't Leonora recognise the historical need to weaken the family unit? Doesn't she recognise the family unit as being the basis of capitalist stability and exploitation? Is it not possible to generalise from previous and contemporary experiences and pose the question of social and not private control of the rearing of children?

Surely we should fight for the collectivisation of child care under carefully trained nurses and specialists. Some of the benefits from this would be the elimination of alienation between children at a very early age, the release of the mother into a socially useful or creative role, and the release of children from the generally amateur care of its parents.

The "family" freed from the multi-tensions imposed on it in capitalist society would take on a new look, a new feel, where the parents and the children would come together freely as the pre-condition for mutual enjoyment.

Yours etc.
Frank Gorton

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA and SOCIALISTS

EDITORIAL

It is now well over a month since the Russians invaded Czechoslovakia. There is talk of the withdrawal beginning but "some troops will stop behind". So far, the expected purges have not taken place, although many Czech officials have had to resign under Russian pressure.

Within the Communist Parties fierce debates are taking place. One at least - the Greek - has been split right down the middle by the Russian invasion. The MORNING STAR, organ of the British Communist Party has printed dozens of letters - for and against the Russian action. A writer in PRAVDA has sharply criticised the British Communist Party paper for being "one-sided" and at the same time lavished praise on those writers who have defended the Russian action.

The patterns which emerge generally confirm our previous editorials on the subject. Russian action has been a bad blow to the anti-imperialist struggle but the fact that, by and large, the leadership of this has passed into the hands of anti-stalinist forces has meant the damage has been lessened. International stalinism has received a mortal blow - all the more because there will be other events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union itself of a similar nature. Each one of these crises will hit the CPs of the world harder and harder.

Probably the most amazing thing that has come out of these events has been the tremendous unity and courage of the Czech people. This is the main reason why the original plans of the Kremlin (to find a loyal Government of people who called them in) has failed. Faced by a monolithic

Czechoslovak people the leaders of Russia and other Warsaw Pact countries must have been very worried about the effects on their troops.

This unity and courage is the most hopeful thing to come out of the affair. It is proof of the irresistible nature of the pressure for workers' democracy in the countries of the Soviet bloc. The rule of the bureaucracy is outdated and outmoded. Far from showing its strength, the invasion of Czechoslovakia showed its weakness. It will not give up its privileged position without a fight - the invasion of Czechoslovakia showed that, too.

However, in keeping up our struggle for solidarity with the Czechoslovak people we can make it much more difficult for the rulers of the Kremlin to carry out a purge. This action, plus that of helping to build a movement of solidarity with the Vietnamese people is the best way we can help our Czechoslovak comrades.

But our comrades in the Communist Party are faced with problems, too. The invasion of Czechoslovakia has shaken that party to the core and has shattered the confidence of many very devoted militants. Those of us who learnt the true nature of stalinism through past events need to do all in our power to make sure that the great debate in the Communist Party gives all these militants a new perspective. Far from being a gloomy one, once people understand that events in Czechoslovakia had a sociological explanation, once they understand the nature of the bureaucracy and once they find out that the conditions that led to the rise of the bureaucracy are fast fading, they will realise we should draw hope from these events in Czechoslovakia.

for a worker - student alliance

There are many indications that this is going to be an autumn and winter of student struggle - already we have our first student demonstration over the closure of Hornsey Art College. The mood that built up during the spring and early summer could very well explode.

Students are, of course, expressing their discontent with the present educational system and their frustrations because society has really nothing to offer them. This has to be our starting point. Workers should be very suspicious of the attempts by the capitalist press to blame trouble on agitators or on the "elitism" of the students.

Because of the power of the capitalist propaganda machine these views find echoes (sometimes of a very subtle nature) even on the left. Socialists should combat anti-student sentiments in the working class movement just as they fight against racialism. Instead the left and industrial workers should welcome the fact that students are ready to fight, using the most militant methods for their rights. Any struggle against the Government's policies by the people is to be welcomed at this stage. But there is more to it than that - the students' struggle will inspire the young workers to fight too. Moreover, their struggles, especially when they have some successes, will stimulate others who have forgotten how to fight.

In short, we can expect to see (although we fear on a much lower level) the same kind of thing in Britain as happened in France earlier this year.

The marxist left should, of course, identify itself completely with the student struggle. Each new fight brings into the fray many more soldiers for the general fight against capitalism. Students go very rapidly from fighting on their own issues (although this is where the fight best begins), to adopting a completely anti-capitalist position.

The long term effects of all this will be very healthy too. A large section of the students today will be the technicians, teachers, academic staff, etc., of tomorrow; sectors which have been very largely proletarianised by modern capitalism. It is quite old-fashioned to look upon the vast mass of the students of today as the privileged of tomorrow. This is, in fact, the basic reason for the upsurge.

Workers should give support to the struggles of the students - they will find that students will not be backward in their desire to help workers' struggles (in fact, sometimes problems arise because of their enthusiasm). The radicalisation of the already proletarianised students will be a big factor in destroying British capitalism.

STUDENT UPSURGE: tactics and strategy

Martin Turner

Any consideration of increasing student militancy must begin with an understanding of the structural changes that have occurred in British universities since the second World War. The major change has been the increased number of students engaged in higher education. Before the second World War the number of students never rose above 70,000 but by 1967 had reached over 300,000. In 1967 students constituted 11% of their own age group- this compares with 2.7% before the second World War. A significant change in intellectual employment has occurred, the majority of university graduates are no longer guaranteed admittance to an elite professional class. They will mainly become white collar employees of the state or industry and consequently part of the great mass of salaried workers. What we have seen over the last few years is a tremendous transformation of the productive forces which has meant the re-integration of intellectual labour power into productive labour, mens' intellectual capacities becoming the prime productive force in society. The result has been the emergence of a new social grouping.

The vast increase in the number of students should be seen against successive governments failure to allocate sufficient increases in expenditure to provide the lecturers or the material facilities that students require. There has been a growth in the ratio of students to lecturers and in some cases the physical overcrowding of students in university buildings. Even worse has been the unwillingness of successive governments to raise grants even to keep pace with rising prices. Many students, consequently are living in poverty.

Capitalist educational systems have always faced one problem. The problem of harmonising two contradictory necessities: the necessity of developing human capabilities to fulfil the changing manpower requirements of an advancing technology and the - political - necessity of ensuring that this kind of development does not bring on any increase of consciousness of the individual, provoking him to challenge the existing division of labour and distribution of power. The tremendous expansion of universities has revealed a latent conflict between the supremacy of the liberal university and the economically necessary technocratic education. The revolts at Hull, Essex, Bristol, etc., have revealed the essentially dynamic character of these contradictions.

The non-existence in Britain of any revolutionary tradition and the complete failure of the political left has had unique consequences. The fragmentary nature of the socialist student movement and that more students participate in anti-Vietnam war activities are two. It is therefore of value to analyse alternative courses of action open to socialist students.

the possibilities of changing society through the present political system. Many socialists still believe that change can come through the Labour Party. However most students are not allowed to join the Labour Party and if they are, and show any independence of the Party line are likely to be removed. An example of this was after the expulsion of Ken Coates from the West Nottingham Constituency Labour Party. When the ward Labour Party, to which he was a member, voted against his expulsion the student members of that ward were removed, within a month, en bloc. At a time when the British Labour Government is the executor of British capitalism, when many young people are going on the streets to protest against British complicity in the American military expedition in Vietnam. It is to say the least absurd for student socialists to commit themselves to such a party.

Secondly although I think it is essential and will prove of great value in learning tactics, we must have some reservations about involvement in industrial action. Clearly, however much we can learn tactically, however much we are behind workers in their struggles, however much we strive for reciprocal contacts, all of which are extremely important, we will never be the subject of a real growth of consciousness in these activities. This is so because it is only when one experiences the contradictions, the objective conditions of living the sort of life a docker, a building worker, or an engineer lives, that the consciousness that results from that life and the fights over the contradictions at the centre of any dispute will develop. The validity of the struggle may be universally apparent intellectually but it will only be apparent existentially to the worker. It is in the contradictions of one's own working situation that we can expect to develop this consciousness. It is in fact with this strategy of looking inward that students have advanced recently.

It is in this role I see the Revolutionary Socialist Student Federation. As being able to insert itself into the contradictions of higher education. There is no doubt students are coming into conflict with their milieu, and recent events in the universities indicate that a process of qualitative change in the nature of demands put forward by students is taking place. What we must demand is the right to take part - and I believe that it should be a decisive part - in the design of courses and the structure of academic teaching, so that we can design our future role in our future society. This presents us with very new challenges. We must learn what it is we will need to learn. It follows that we must have a conception of society that we want our knowledge to serve. Among the obvious changes linked to academic design, we will need to engage in a struggle against examinations- the present ultimate control over academic life. It is in this struggle that I see socialist students. In the struggle to open up, keep open, and extend the contradictions in the educational system.

First of all it is worth saying something about

VSC MULTI-ISSUE SINGLE-ISSUE?

ERNIE TATE

From the beginning, the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign has been confronted with the question of whether or not it should be a single-issue organisation, primarily concerned with the Vietnam War, or a multi-issue movement; that is, should the VSC campaign on the different political and social issues as they arise, with Vietnam becoming one of many?

This theme was discussed at some length at the last national VSC conference in May, and it seems to me that the delegates overwhelmingly came down in favour of maintaining the VSC as a single-issue organisation, committed to campaigning on Vietnam. One paper, adopted almost unanimously by the conference, stated: "The VSC has been able to unite organisations and individuals with the most diverse analyses of British society within its ranks. It has done this because it has been non-exclusive and because it is essentially a single-issue campaign." The question was raised again recently when the Czech crisis erupted. Immediately VSC was under pressure to make its position known, especially by reporters of the national press. On Sunday, August 25th, a massive demonstration of over 10,000 was organised outside the Russian Embassy in London by a quickly constituted ad-hoc committee comprised of representatives of most of the left groups, in which a VSC representative participated. Although by a mistake it was announced that VSC was organising the demonstration, the question was raised whether or not, in fact, VSC nationally should initiate such actions, and whether or not it should initiate campaigns on any other question than Vietnam.

It should be noted that certain local VSC groups tend to be used for many purposes and get involved in other questions. In this they have full autonomy. The problem is whether VSC should be nationally involved.

The first thing to understand is that VSC is a minimum-programme type organisation built on a bloc of about four distinct political groupings. VSC has a very limited aim and analysis. Its position is very simple as stated in its declaration of aims. This is not to say that individuals inside VSC do not have a particular analysis, having the full right to put it forward in VSC, but no-one has the right to say that the position of their group is VSC's analysis on any particular question.

Of course, it is sometimes necessary for VSC to issue statements on other topics, but these should always be issued from the viewpoint of the primacy of our concern with Vietnam. For instance, when we issued a statement about the attempt to assassinate Rudi Dutschke, it was from the point of view of our close collaboration with him in international activity against the war.

The reason for caution in these matters is very easy to understand. VSC exists because of the incapacity of any of the existing revolutionary

or socialist groups to carry out, in their own name, the effective campaign that is necessary in Britain to defend the Vietnamese people against American aggression. It therefore became necessary that some of the existing groups push into the background their important differences in analysis and even programme, in order to facilitate a unity around the single issue of Vietnam. All the groups and individuals who came into the founding conference of the VSC came with the opinion that urgent action was necessary in Britain. VSC's strength was quickly seen in its ability to win people who were not members of any of the existing groups.

In my opinion, that urgent situation still exists. The war continues and escalates despite all the talk about "peace" and the Paris negotiations. The VSC is still confronted with the huge task of making good its original aims. There is still no group on the left which is in the position to say in its own name that it can speak for the left as a whole and begin to do the job that the VSC has been doing until now. VSC has by no means exhausted its potential for expansion within the framework of its own terms of reference.

It has always been difficult to put this idea across and it required a lot of practical experience and working together before the concept became clear. The commonest error made was when members of existing groups that make up VSC, would argue and demand that VSC carry out the tasks and functions which their respective groups laid claim to. It should be remembered that when efforts are made to involve the VSC nationally in other issues, or when the VSC does get involved in other campaigns, no matter how harmless they may appear, should they be the tenants' struggles or racism, it weakens the VSC because it tends to cut across the unity that has been built up on the Vietnam question, and introduces the potentiality of divisions.

In my opinion this was the danger in the case of Czechoslovakia and the Russian invasion. There is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of VSC



members were opposed to the invasion: but it must be stressed that this would, in many instances, be for different reasons because of the differing analyses they have. It should not be assumed that all members of VSC have the same analyses. It is quite possible for VSC people or local groups to even support the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, in fact some do, and still remain effective and loyal members of VSC.

If it is proposed that VSC should campaign on this issue, for example, then the shift can become open-ended with all kinds of possibilities. Where should the limit be? Why not campaign on Cuba, on rents, on the wage freeze? We would all agree that these are burning issues, but once VSC begins to act this way, then it begins more and more to approximate to a political party. Participation in VSC will require greater and greater common agreement, and instead of strengthening VSC, these other issues will weaken it. No single individual or group has the right to say a priori which issue will or will not become divisive.

VSC can't pretend it is one thing and act in a contrary way without accepting the consequences of that change. If it changes in this way, the first thing it has to do is to explain to the other groupings in Britain why it exists separate and apart from them, and why people should join it, and not any one of the other groups. It begins to compete in an already crowded field. If some people feel that such a change should take place, this must have the widest discussion and

a new conference. It is totally wrong for such a change to "creep in" by gradual moves by individuals in VSC who feel frustrated by its limitations.

VSC's success in drawing in unorganised people who feel the need for an organisation is the basic reason for this question coming up. If people feel that we should now turn this success on Vietnam in the direction of launching a multi-issue organisation, an avowedly, but as yet unspecified political party, they must realise the extreme importance of what they are suggesting. To do this without all members of VSC being able to express their opinions about it, would be very undemocratic and would severely damage the organisation.

It is my firm conviction that the VSC experience has strengthened the left as a whole; but it has only done so by being successful at what it set out to achieve. I am further convinced that if VSC is even more successful in the future, then the trends in this country towards regeneration of the left and revolutionary regroupment will strengthen.

If the Left in Britain is able to live up to its responsibility to the Vietnamese revolution, then it itself will become revolutionised and it will have taken a giant step in the construction of a revolutionary instrument capable of overthrowing capitalism. Let us not be too impatient- there are no short-cuts through the very real difficulties that are before us.

CZECH STUDENTS AND THE RUSSIAN INVASION

an eyewitness account

Tessa van Gelderen

If anyone in Czechoslovakia on the night of Aug. 21/22 thought the Russians were just paying a courtesy call, they had only to listen to the continual noise of the invaders' aircraft to know they meant business. On that eventful night, if nothing else did, those aeroplanes flying low over Prague (partly to land troops and tanks, and partly, I'm sure, to intimidate the population), brought home the reality that Czechoslovakia was being occupied.

The reaction of the people was mixed. Some tried to stop the soldiers, physically with their bodies, while others attempted to reason with the soldiers by talking to them; still others would deliberately ignore them, walking through the streets of Prague as though the tanks and troops just did not exist. In the first few days this seemed to affect the Russian soldiers the most, completely demoralising some who thought that they had come at the request of the Czech people; these same people who now went out of their way to ignore them.

Other soldiers were under the impression

that they were manoeuvres, while others had thought they had landed in Hungary or East Germany for military exercises. All seemed bewildered to find themselves in a hostile situation. (One soldier in fact committed suicide when he realised the role that was expected of him). These incredibly young-looking soldiers were forced to find their own food, often seizing vans by force and taking food that was for general distribution. Yet despite all this, the Czechs were careful to level their criticisms and condemnations at the Soviet Government and not at the soldiers, who all the time I was there they regarded as their brothers - misguided brothers but brothers, nevertheless.

Many wild rumours circulated throughout the time I was there including the "news" that China had invaded Russia during her army's absence; that 1,000 inhabitants had been killed in one town in Slovakia by the troops when they attempted to resist the invaders; that Kossygin had committed suicide. With so many such stories being broadcast and not all later being denied, it was sometimes difficult to know exactly what was happening.

The invasion occurred one week after I had arrived

in Prague. In that week I had talked to many people, in particular students. I was struck by their difference in attitude to the Government from previous times. Last year, for example, students I knew talked of leaving their homeland and going to Britain, U.S.A., etc. Yet at that time they also spoke of the fact that it had been impossible to criticise the Government before, in any degree, even among friends, for fear of reprisals. Even last year, then, the situation was lot of adventurists who could never hope to achieve anything, they themselves were acting in much the same way (although admittedly in entirely different circumstances). Considered tactically those in Czechoslovakia could be considered more adventurist than the French students who did not try to resist tanks and troops armed with machine guns. But I think generally there has been a greater understanding of the part students can play in the struggle.

Since I have left Czechoslovakia, I have learnt of students who have left the country and are hoping to study in Western Europe or North America. They no longer have any faith in what their universities can offer them. It would be easy to say that they should stay and fight, easy enough if you are not directly engaged in the struggle and facing the penalties involved.

What we can and must say is that now the situation is no longer considered front page news in the bourgeois press, we on the left must continue to give full support to the Czech people and complete condemnation of the Russians. We must do this until the last Russian soldier has left Czech soil; (as somebody said: "It was bad enough seeing the tanks on every street, but it is worse now they have 'withdrawn' knowing they are here but not seeing them"); and beyond this we must support the people of Czechoslovakia in any attempt they make - be it the setting up of workers' councils, the formation of an opposition socialist party outside the National Front, the continuation of less censorship, more free speech, the attempts at anti-bureaucratization and destalinisation, etc., - anything, in fact, that will help bring about the political revolution in Czechoslovakia and establish workers democracy.

This is something more than a lessening of censorship. These were the writings about a man whose existence had been wiped from the history books of Russia. Of course, this is not the fundamental reason for the Russians' invasion but I think it gives a good indication that the Russians were afraid of a left-wing revolution; as opposed to a right-wing counter-revolution. (This is not to say that such a revolution was taking place but only to suggest that perhaps it was a very real fear on the Russians' part that it might.)

The students I talked to, although supporting Dubcek to the hilt, knew that he was still a bureaucrat, that something of stalinism must have rubbed off on to him - after all he had managed to survive (and more than survive) some of the worst years of Stalin's regime whilst living in Moscow.

All this the Czechs knew but they supported Dubcek as the best alternative available. The students I came into contact with knew there was no counter-revolution but they were under the impression the Russian Government was naive enough to think there was. They equated the talk of the Russian soldiers (who thought Russia had complete freedom of speech and that Czechoslovakia had become capitalist) with the views held in the Kremlin.

Before the Russians came I asked students if they felt opposition to Dubcek came only from the right, from the Novotnyites. When they replied in the affirmative, I put the idea that there may well be some opposition from the left. I say "idea" because the concept of opposition that was left of the C.P. was alien to their way of thinking. This is only to be expected in a generation that has learnt to equate communism with marxism-leninism Soviet-style. The youth I talked to consider themselves to be socialists and realise their idea of socialism differs from that of the C.P.; yet their political level is very low because what they would like to read (e.g. Trotsky, Guevara) is not readily available, and what they should read (i.e. Lenin and Marx) are barely glanced at since these are the official "bibles" of the C.P.

The students were very critical of their counterparts in France during the month of May, but, again their arguments were at a very low level politically. Their criticisms basically boil down to the fact that students cannot bring about a revolution (which is perfectly true but indicates a complete misunderstanding of the role the French students played; which is probably due more to lack of any real information than anything else); and the criticism that revolutionaries do not take a holiday in the middle of the revolution. Yet when the Russians came these who resisted actively were the students. A week after I heard Czech students dismiss those in France as a changing, hesitantly and slowly maybe, but changing all the same. Yet having tasted some freedom the Czechs naturally wanted more, and when they did obtain more the Russians naturally "objected". Czechoslovakia, the most vulnerable of the Soviet bloc countries, could not possibly set a precedent in this way - at least not if the Russians had any say in the matter.

But were the easing of censorship and the granting of a few liberalisations the only reasons behind the invasion? Certainly most socialists, East or West, reject the idea of a counter-revolution taking place and the Czechs themselves knew the difference between destalinisation and the advent of capitalism (which they most definitely did not want). Was there in fact something deeper behind the Russians' "anxiety"? It is well-known that excerpts from a manifesto "For a Government of Workers' Councils in Czechoslovakia" issued by the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution, founded by Leon Trotsky, appeared in June 24 edition of a new magazine, "Informational Materials"; and that Deutscher's "The Unfinished Revolution" was in the process of being serialised in a student-orientated paper.

CASTRO ON CZECHOSLOVAKIA

It is greatly to be regretted that Fidel Castro saw fit to support the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia. At first it was felt that this might have been due to Russian pressure. However, the speech in which Castro put his position indicates otherwise. It was an attack on Russian policy.

It is very clear that the Cuban leadership does not understand the nature of bureaucracy and stalinism and that it has a very simplistic view of the danger of the restoration of capitalism. However, while criticising this position, no socialist should stop supporting the revolutionary policies of the Cuban Government because of this incident; any more than they should stop supporting the Vietnamese revolution, whose leaders also supported the Russians.

TUC & the Labour Party

Charles van Gelderen

The Centenary meeting of the T.U.C., coming as it did in the fourth year of a Labour Government with a decisive majority should have been a red-letter occasion. The Labour Party is very largely the creation of the trade unions, brought into being to give political expression to the aspirations of the working class. Though the Labour pioneers were by no means marxists, they had an instinctive class consciousness. The Labour Party was seen by them as the party of the working class, arrayed against the politics of the capitalist class. The crown of their efforts was to be a Labour Government, their Government legislating for them and not for the bosses.

At Blackpool the hitherto close relationship between the trade unions and the Labour Party was severely strained. The weary old stalwarts could mount the rostrum and, beating their breasts, proclaim their loyalty to the Labour Government. It was clear to the most casual observer that this did not reflect the views of the rank and file. By a decisive majority the delegates voted against the Government's incomes policy, recognising it for what it is: the most vicious piece of anti-trade union legislation since the Tories introduced the Trade Union Act after the General Strike. And it was not only the votes on the floor which told the story. The determination of the engineers to call a nation wide strike despite the penal sanctions involved speaks the same language.

Significantly, the Dyers and Bleachers resolution approving the General Council's wage vetting machinery was carried by a derisive 34,000 in a vote of nearly 9 million. Almost half of Britain's trade unionists are not anxious to see the T.U.C. do the dirty work for the Government.

The militant resolution in favour of equal pay for men and women is heartening. But Congress has been carrying such resolutions since the 1880's. Only if the threat of industrial action becomes effective will this resolution have any meaning. It is high time that the Labour movement acted resolutely to remove this last reservoir of cheap labour - women - from the labour market by forcing equal pay.

The increasing militancy of Labour's industrial wing was also reflected in the elections to the General Council. Hugh Scanlon replaces the un mourned Lord Carron; Frank Cousins topped the poll with a massive vote of 8,468,000. Jack Jones of the Transport Workers, Alan Fisher of NUPE, Terry Parry of the Fire Brigades Union and George Doughty of the Draughtsmen, all help to bring a slight breeze of fresh air and some recognition of what the rank and file are thinking into the Council Chamber.

THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

The annual conference of the Labour Party is the alter ego of Congress. Without a doubt the Government's anti-working class economic policies will again be defeated at Blackpool in October. Even with Jennie Lee in the chair exercising all her undoubted charm this can be taken for

granted. But passing resolutions is not enough. Like the union, the Labour Party must find a way to make its votes effective. Local Constituency Parties must be prepared to give moral and financial support to any industrial struggle which has this end in view. This will be one way to make the Government take more notice of the Conference resolutions. In the long run, the establishment of genuine links between the political and industrial wings on a local as well as a regional and national level will do more to restore the morale of the movement than even winning the next election.

Conference agenda reveals that it is economic problems which are the main pre-occupation of the movement at the moment. This accounts for the unusual paucity of resolutions on foreign policy. The workers fear mass unemployment, rising costs and savage cuts in real wages in the months ahead. This is reflected in the resolutions and is symptomatic of the almost complete loss of confidence in the Labour Government.

The continuing drop in membership, to say noth-

EQUAL PAY: i

Antonia Gorton

The rebellion against the leadership at the 100th TUC to support unions who take industrial action over equal pay for women is significant not only for women workers but for the entire labour movement. For, given a militant adherence to the intent of the amendment, the results could have far reaching effects indeed.

There are over eight million women workers, approximately one-third of the total working population, about one-tenth of these are in the public service or in professions where there is no wage discrimination by sex. The cost of "equal pay" at its most conservative estimate has been put at £600 million a year and goes from there up to £1,600 million.

In LABOUR'S VOICE (so charmingly decorated by bunny hostesses) the Broadsheet prepared by Christopher Norwood M.P. shows that Britain is second from the bottom in the industrialised nations in the percentage of female hourly earnings compared with men's. He says "If the Government could afford to put 6-9% on the wage costs of distribution and construction by the Selective Employment Tax, the country can afford a phased rise of about 6% in the national wages bill to bring to an end a century of exploitation of women at work." Since when would a rise of about 6%... bring to an end a century of exploitation... Ye Gods and little bodkins! A phased rise of 6% would still only bring the percentage up to 64% of the male rate and, assuming everybody else stays the same, well below Sweden's rate of 76%.

y - the last warning?

ing of the 15 parliamentary by-elections, and the local government elections, tell the same story. Labour is doomed for years in the political wilderness if the leadership is allowed to follow its present disastrous course. It is up to the Conference to show, overwhelmingly, that there is an alternative road - the socialist road - to victory.



"That's what I like - team work."

HOW BRITISH WOMEN FARE

RELATIVE HOURLY EARNINGS IN MANUFACTURING - 1965
Women's earnings expressed as a percentage of men's

Sweden	76%	Norway	73%
West Germany	68%	Finland	68%
Belgium	67%	Great Britain	58%
Japan	52%		

AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS - October, 1967

Classification	Men	Women
Food, Drink and Tobacco	8/9	5/3
Chemicals	9/10	5/4
Engineering and electrical	9/6	5/9
Shipbuilding	9/8	5/4
Vehicles	11/3	6/5
Clothing and Footwear	9/-	5/6
All manufacturing	9/8	5/7

Industrial action necessary

The big problem with even this proposal is that the Government with its wages and incomes policy of a permitted 3% increase in wages per year - which must, in addition be related to productivity, relatively high unemployment; continuing deficits in overseas trade; and its loyalty to private capital is simply not going to grant any concessions in this matter unless a tremendously militant mass movement forces it to.

A TOTAL PROGRAMME REQUIRED

More than 4 million women at work get less than 5/- an hour and one in 25 get over 10/- per hour. Its not only a matter of women getting less pay for doing the equivalent jobs to men, its the lack of training facilities, of apprenticeships, of social prejudices which contribute to the low wage rates for women.

According to John Raven, writing in the TELEGRAPH 3/8/68, "British women have fewer opportunities for training, less acceptance in top job and a tendency to be given unskilled and poorly paid occupations...At a recent count there were only 8,000 female apprentices compared with over 300,000 males; and in many industries apprenticeship is the only door to advancement. There were only 110 female engineering and electrical apprentices compared with almost 90,000 males. Yet in the subjects studied in this field, examination results from "O" level to degree class lists show that women are at least as able as men. Further they have a marked advantage in manual dexterity which must be increasingly important as designs

become more complex and compact..."

While the equal pay demand is central, other demands must back it up. Women must be organised into unions where they are not; apprenticeships must be open to them; the state must provide child care facilities.

A number of unions have now put themselves out in front of this fight. The amendment urging industrial action was moved by Miss Joan O'Connell, DATA, who said "only 10 per cent of women working in Britain received the same salaries as the men they worked with. This position would not change until the women at Fords were joined by others up and down the country and were supported by male workers...Employers who counted their profits in millions were watching the debate to see whether their licences to profiteer on the pathetically low wages of women would be renewed."

Mrs. E. Hunt, ASTMS, supported the amendment, "We are not going to sit back and wait for legislation. My association has declared its intention of taking industrial action in suitable cases to secure equal pay for women members."

The projected conference on equal pay scheduled for Oct. 22 in London should come forward with useful ideas for deepening the movement. But if the struggle gets back on the parliamentary trail we can expect to wait for our emancipation until 200th anniversary of the TUC.



Photo: Black Panthers in formation for the funeral of brothers who were shot down by U.S. cops.

Black Power

discussion continued

Letter from John M. Chappell (Newcastle, Staffs.)

Dear Sir,

Thank you for sending me a copy of INTERNATIONAL. I am concerned that both your paper and its sister journal WORLD OUTLOOK a) support the Black Power movement and b) write off the struggles of industrial workers in advanced countries as worthy of only passing notice.

In the U.S.A., and to a lesser extent in Britain, black workers have been subject to severe discrimination in housing and jobs, and hounded by white racist gangs. It is understandable that their resentment of this treatment should lead many of them into the error of evolving a racism of their own, believing that their enemy is not the bourgeoisie but the white race. This is what the Black Power movement aims to do, as is most clearly expressed in Carmichael's statement in Havana that since the white man has taught us to be ashamed of being black, so we should learn to be proud of it! Any man who is proud of the colour of his skin is a racist, since by implication he considers men of other colours to be inferior. Michael X was explicit on the inferiority of the white race in describing them as "monkeys, devils and bastards", as quoted in your article, and whilst one must oppose the action of the bourgeois police in arresting him, this is a racialist statement of the crudest kind. If Powell or Colin Jordan had made the same statement about black people, you would rightly have been indignant. But then, your two authors, Messrs. Tate and London themselves seem to share subconsciously the same racial prejudice, since they insist on spelling "white" with a small "w" and "Black" with a big "B".

As to the socialist pretensions of the movement, it is significant that whilst Carmichael made an apparently socialistic speech in Havana, prominent Black Power spokesmen have advocated the growth of black capitalism in the U.S.A., thus opportunistically adapting their politics to their surroundings. Their tie-up, through such persons as Michael X, with the reactionary Black Muslims, a mystical religious sect reminiscent of the Ku Klux Klan, is also very sinister.

On this issue, therefore, it is not the I.S., S.L.L. and R.S.L. who are being sectarian, but the United Secretariat and its affiliates are being opportunistic, and as we have seen, the S.L.L. would have had a more than adequate case

if they had had the courage to accept Boutelle's challenge to a debate.

Your two authors attempt to wriggle out by a series of shallow sophisms. Firstly, it is pointed out that a large section of the white proletariat is racist, and suggested that the only alternative open to building the Black Power movement is to wait for white workers to become revolutionary. This is false; revolutionary Negroes, like white Marxists, should be "getting stuck into the job of combatting this racism by education and propaganda". This means that revolutionary sections (at present largely Negro) of the proletariat must organise not racially but on a class basis. Only in this way can black militants build a bridge to the white proletariat and win over its conservative and racist elements.

To build a black racist movement, on the other hand, can leave white workers at best indifferent and at worst exacerbate their racial hostility to their black comrades and so set up a vicious circle. To suggest that this is formal, as opposed to dialectical thinking is another sophism. To invoke the dialectic, and particularly the principle of "unity of opposites" as a pretext for doing the opposite of what is necessary is a favourite trick of Stalinists, Healyites and other pseudo-Marxist quacks. On this principle one could argue that since Wilson is pursuing an ultra-opportunistic, pro-capitalist policy, then dialectically the Labour Party will develop into a revolutionary socialist party.

The correct policy for a revolutionary party to take on Black Power is to "get stuck into the job of education and propaganda", against black as well as white racism, and to win the movement over to Workers' Power. When this is done, the foundations of a mass movement will have been laid.

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

Yours faithfully,
John M. Chappell.

We are continuing the discussion upon Black Power because of the obvious confusion that exists on the left: However, in view of the danger of repetition we will have to limit further articles to those which say something new. We have asked Pat Jordan to reply to this letter, in this light.

Comrade Chappell expresses, in what appears to me to be a very direct and honest way, ideas which are very widespread on the left. It is not very often that comrades holding these views are so forthright. Hence one can value comrade Chappell's contribution much more than those who qualify their statements with "ifs" and "buts".

The fundamental fault in comrade Chappell's thinking is that he proceeds from the point of view of formal logic, as opposed to the marxist method of dialectical logic.

Comrade Chappell tries to refute this but his remarks on the subject show that he has no grasp of the subject. I would advise him, most seriously, to read what Trotsky wrote on the subject in DEFENCE OF MARXISM (an essay: the ABC OF MATERIALIST DIALECTICS, page 48, Pioneer edition.)

I will leave his foray into the field of grammar to others more gifted in this field. As for his charge that INTERNATIONAL considers the struggle "of industrial workers in advanced countries as worthy of only passing notice", I am astounded - he obviously has not seen our issues covering the French crisis.

Marxists do not la Kant put things into categories which exist independent of time and circumstance. Comrade Chappell equates the feelings of Stokely Carmichael on the question of colour with those of Powell and Colin Jordan! Stokely Carmichael is a leading light of a movement which represents the aspirations of a terribly oppressed minority - Powell and Colin Jordan express the prejudices of an oppressive majority (the reflection in form of ideas of imperialist exploitation of the colonies).

But for Chappell this is unimportant: pride in one's race or colour is racist, racism is bad, therefore Carmichael and Black Power are reactionary. For him racism is something which exists in the abstract, independent of time or space - this is pure philosophical idealism.

Comrade Chappell shows this approach even more clearly when dealing with Black Power. For him "Black Power is Black Power"; he does not see it as a complex process, with contradictions, tendencies and an inner logic.

Marxists consider any set of ideas from their content and function in a particular set of circumstances. If comrade Chappell were right all national consciousness would be reactionary because pride in one's own nationhood would imply that peoples of other nations were inferior.

Lenin combatted these kind of ideas in his writings on the national question (see THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION, etc.)

Every ideology that the struggle throws up (and let us remember that the Black Power idea was born in struggle as opposed to the sterile sectarianism of the SLL, RSL and IS on this subject which arises from dogmatic contemplation) has to be considered from the point of view of its function in the particular situation. The power of the bourgeoisie rests, in the last analysis, upon its power over men's minds.

It has two particular functions: (1) to justify the status quo, and present it as the natural and eternal state of affairs; and (2) to prevent any struggle to change this "natural" state of affai-

rs. The specific form that bourgeois ideology has taken among the black people is that of instilling into them the idea of their own inferiority. It taught them that because of this inferiority they had to accept a lower standard of life, that because of this inferiority they should not start a struggle - they would only suffer defeat - and that because of this inferiority they should restrict themselves to appealing to the better nature of the superior whites.

Black Power cut through this nonsense like a hot knife through butter. It has given the black people confidence and set them into motion. To say that this will exacerbate the racial hostility of the whites is nonsense. In fact, Black Power can do the opposite by winning the respect of white workers.

The phenomenon of Black Power, therefore, must be enthusiastically welcomed at this stage by all marxists. Of course we want the ideas of marxism to grip the minds of black militants and the INTERNATIONAL's co-thinkers in the United States are doing more to facilitate this than anyone else. In fact, because marxists have a positive approach to the ideas of Black Power this is very much facilitated.

When comrade Chappell says that the black people must organise on a class basis only he is challenging their right to organise as an oppressed minority. It is an elementary principle that any sector with common interests has the right to organise in defence of those interests. That is why we have unions for special types of workers, why there are youth organisations and organisations for national minorities. Even the old people have their OAPs, would comrade Chappell deny them that right? Why does he pick on the black people, especially as they are the most oppressed of all? I would suggest that his sense of outrage is an expression of prejudice bolstered by the pressure of the capitalist press and other right wing forces.

There is no contradiction between organising as black people and organising on class lines. In the United States the overwhelming majority of black people are workers; in many big towns they are by far the majority of the working class. Where the white workers will let them in, they are in the same unions. Moreover, in case comrade Chappell has not grasped the fact, Paul Boutelle and Fred Halstead (a white) are in the same political party.

Comrade Chappell, we all stand for workers' power - but this will not come from merely re-iterating slogans. Nor does it come from "combatting racism by education and propaganda" alone. Ask the SPGB, they have been doing that for over 60 years.

Workers' power will come when marxists link themselves with living struggles and win the mass of the people who want to fight for revolutionary ideas. Lecturing people who are fighting in the streets about the error of their ideas is not the way to achieve this.

The Black Power movement in the United States has put the fear of god up the ruling class (let us hope it does the same in this country!). In denouncing Black Power and advocating integration one puts one's self in the same camp with all those who have tried to hold back the struggle of the black people.

Tariq Ali, the capitalist press and the Newsletter

Bob Purdie

Hardly a day goes by without the newspapers featuring Tariq Ali. The articles pour out in an unquenchable stream. They vary from the vulgarly spiteful or the deliberately distorted, to the pseudo-knowledgeable and the nauseatingly patronising.

There are good reasons for this, the television, press, etc., always try to present politics as a conflict of personalities. For instance the resignations of Brown and Gunter were accompanied by a welter of enquiry into how they felt about other members of the Government, but very little examination of the political reasons for the splits. It is part of the cultural decay of capitalism, that it seeks always to focus on the peripheral, the inconsequential, and the ephemeral. To encourage people to search for reality in a world of war, exploitation and crisis would be to multiply the forces which are determined to change that world.

The publicity which Tariq receives is determined by the need of the communications media to personalise the upsurge of the militant left in order to avoid discussing the reasons for that upsurge. It has nothing to do with the desire for publicity of Tariq Ali. It is however a measure of the importance of what we all have achieved.

It is noticeable however that this has produced a certain amount of resentment towards Tariq from a number of comrades. The reaction from a section of the crowd outside the Soviet Embassy, when Tariq got up to speak, and the cameras started flashing and whirring, was rather childish. The attempt to shout him down was both undemocratic and unfair, and was gleefully reported in the press next day. To take advice from the Black Dwarf poster, our motto should be "Know Thy Enemy". Our enemy certainly is not Tariq Ali.

One section of the left which is habitually unable to discern exactly who its enemies are is the Socialist Labour League. So convinced are they that everyone else is dedicated to "diverting" the workers from following their "correct" leadership, that they have long ago lost the ability to be objective about other left-wing tendencies.

It was inevitable that they would get round to "dealing with" Tariq. They are faced with the danger that a large number of their followers, the youthful ones in particular, have not yet had their minds closed, and could easily wonder whether their own dwindling ranks compared to the growth of the forces around V.S.C., was a proof of the superiority of their "principled" version of marxism.

Desperate as they are, it was also inevitable that they should turn to the capitalist press for their ammunition, both to pick out reports which can be conveniently twisted, and also to smear Tariq with the insinuation that he courts publicity for his own ends.

THE NEWSLETTER of August 31st carries an article by Cliff Slaughter entitled "Capitalist Press Praise for Anti-Communists." The main purpose of this article is to "prove" that the two mass left wing demonstrations against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia were anti-communist, and

included reactionary elements, we do not wish here to deal with this accusation which is compounded of misquotation, distortion, and direct lies. Suffice to say that the demonstration held on the Sunday following the invasion started with the participants howling down the hypocrites who spoke at the Labour Party rally, and ended with them howling down a Young Tory who had infiltrated the demonstration, and attempted to speak. And both demonstrations were a sea of red banners.

Now a few examples of what they say about Tariq:-
"The Socialist Labour League is hated, and rightly so by Tariq Ali and those like him....."

"It's time Tariq Ali was told to shut his mouth. He is deliberately used by the capitalist press to build up a picture of what is supposed to exist to the left of the Communist Party."

"Political playboys are an expensive joke so far as the real marxist movement is concerned. At critical times like the invasion of Czechoslovakia they become the spearhead of all the middle-class 'democratic' rubbish around the left...."

TYPICAL STALINIST METHODS

These should suffice to give the flavour of this vicious attack. Since Tariq has not made any statements about his emotions concerning the S.L.L. it is rather stupid to accuse him of "hating" the denizens of Clapham High Street. This is of course a typically stalinist argumentation. Once you establish that someone is moved by hatred for your ideas, you are not obliged to examine his ideas seriously and objectively. Stalinist, too, is the "shut his mouth" language. Come off it S.L.L., you don't impress anyone with that kind of polemic, least of all the new layers of young people who are being drawn into left-wing politics at present. That type of attitude will hasten the isolation which you are bringing upon yourselves.

The "political playboy" accusations are more subtle, but just as unfounded. Tariq worked devotedly for V.S.C. long before becoming "famous" and becoming a national figure has not altered that commitment, although it has changed the way in which it is expressed.

His work on the BLACK DWARF should be mentioned. This is one of the most valuable publications to appear on the left for sometime. Its success is due mainly to the work Tariq has put in, and the job of editor is not the most lucrative post which his talents could command.

And let us not forget that the threat of deportation still hangs over Tariq. Think back to Callaghan's statement in the House, in answer to Robert Mellish's demand for Tariq's deportation. It is likely that the October demonstration will be followed by renewed witch-hunting attempts.

What is required is solidarity with Tariq, and appreciation of the contribution he is making, not petty jealousy and malevolent comment.

Labour Party at the crossroads

Julian Atkinson

It is a measure of the crisis of Labourism that two books* have been published this month that chart the present disaster course. It is the first that is the most surprising and indicates the depths of disillusionment and disaffection that Wilsonism has caused amongst the ranks of the previously faithful. The contributors to "Matters of Principle" are very much men of the centre: academics, technocrats, benevolent social engineers and meritocrats to the last man; precisely the group that Wilson aimed at with his coupling of socialism and science and the whole "white heat of technological revolution" rhetoric.

These men are uneasy when they criticise the Labour Government and continually stress what they consider to be the positive aspects of Labour's record, but criticise they do. They are not shaken by the Prices and Incomes policy - most of them would probably support it - their dissatisfactions are at once more particular and more diffuse. The particular failings with regard to race, education, governmental method, foreign policy etc., are meticulously noted. But it is a wider unease that motivates these apologetic revolutionaries: "Piecemeal social engineering makes sense only if we have a prior notion of the purposes of the engine."; "A party of radical reform must state its aims; this is as much a part of its job as carrying them out." The contributors have found that pragmatism has turned into opportunism. Their solution is a return to "principles" or, more concretely, to the aims of building a participatory democracy. It is this, they feel, that is so lacking. One contributor comments that the only decision in which the public has felt it has had a say has been the retention of the Esso tiger. The answer then to the drift in Labour's policies lies in producer and consumer cooperation as implied in Clause IV.

"WILSON THE LEFT" MYTH

Paul Foot is less ambiguous in his diagnosis of the complaint and, consequently, has a clearer analysis of what ought to be done. Foot carries through his argument via a study of Harold Wilson. His first task has been to demolish the myth of the "left-wing" Wilson. The record stands very plain. In the post-war Labour Government, Wilson operated the Board of Trade as an annex of the CBI. His ideology revolved around the premise that only socialism could guarantee the real growth and health of private enterprise and already his speeches were studded with the phrases "dead wood in the board rooms" and "merchant venturers". He even received the rebuke from the arch-conservative Herbert Morrison that he was "too moderate" - surely a record!

The meteoric rise of Wilson was stopped by his indecisiveness during the 1949 devaluation crisis; a lapse that enabled his rival Hugh Gaitskell to gain the ascendancy. It was Gaitskell, very largely, who was responsible for the introduction of prescription charges. Wilson swung into opposition behind Bevan and started to posture as a man of the left. He went to the

extent of resigning from the Government, although considerable evidence exists that Morrison forced him to resign; his letter of resignation was never published.

This temporary set-back proved to be the making of Wilson. He could, from then on, combine consistently right-wing policies with invocations of the name of Nye whenever he needed Constituency support. This dual nature was the corner stone of his success but at the same time explains the extremes of disenchantment felt by many of the Constituency left. During Government Wilson and the Labour Party had to make a choice between right-wing policies and left-wing verbiage.

The economic crisis left by the Tories allowed no room for manoeuvre. Either capital or labour had to be attacked. The seamen's strike drove Wilson into the open as a staunch defender of capital and a red-baiting opponent of the unions. Foot's book is a valuable document in the story of the decline of reformism, although not all his formulations are uniformly precise and occasionally he takes a somewhat simplistic view of the process. What certainly is shown by the book is that a void has been left in the Labour movement by the demise of reformism as a valid option, and that it is the marxists who must fill that void.

* Matters of Principle, edited by Tyrrell Burges Penguin, price 4/-.

The Politics of Harold Wilson by Paul Foot, Penguin, price 6/-

A decisive conference

As matters stand it appears almost certain that the Labour Party conference at Blackpool will follow the TUC in voting solidly against the Government's anti-working class policies, gazing into the crystal ball a bit more deeply, we can be fairly confident that a policy will be adopted somewhat similar to the Socialist Charter. This is to be hoped and every socialist should work for this.

The Socialist Charter is an ambiguous programme - it has to be welcomed because it is an attempt to organise around a political programme but, unfortunately, many concession on programme were made in its formulation. There is, for instance, no position taken of opposition to the Incomes Policy. Many of the economic measures advocated boil down to an alternative capitalist strategy. The left has paid dearly for mistakes of this kind in the past: remember the confusion caused when Wilson adopted TRIBUNE's advice and devalued.

But even this is secondary: the main thing that is lacking in the Labour Party is a fight. If victory for the Socialist Charter can be used to start a fight in the party for an alternative left policy, we will have made a great step forward.

In order to launch such a fight the rank and file will have to be drawn in. The way in which the Socialist Charter "descended from the heavens" is NOT the way to ensure massive rank and file participation. Following on from this conference the left should call its own conference to thrash out a fighting strategy and a new programme in a completely democratic way. This is the only chance there is to reverse the decline of the left in the Labour Party.

Fred Halstead speaks on G.I. anti-war mood

John London

What attitude should the Vietnam protest movement in the United States have towards the American army? Should the militants refuse to go into the army? These were the themes of Fred Halstead's speech in Caxton Hall, London, on Wednesday, Sept. 18th. He had just visited Saigon along with Barry Shepherd, editor of the American Militant. The meeting was organised by the International Marxist Group. Halstead, a revolutionary socialist and Socialist Workers' Party candidate in the forthcoming presidential election in the United States, is a prominent figure in the New York anti-war movement.

He told the audience of how the anti-war movement in the United States had reached a crisis of not knowing where to go next. "Millions have moved into opposition," he said, "with probably a majority of the population being opposed to the war in one way or another, there have been some of the largest demonstrations on any question or at any time, and yet all this has not stopped the war."

He spoke about the wide impact of the Vietnam war upon the United States and the changes that have taken place because of the war. "It has created a revolutionary process," he said. "The United States is freer today than it has been since before the second World War, for the exchange of controversial views and ideas." In contrast to when he first became a socialist, he said, literature stalls selling a wide range of socialist literature are now to be seen in all major colleges. This is a direct result of the Vietnam war and the movement that has grown up around it. "This freedom was not given from on high, but it was taken in struggle," he said.

The process, he went on, is presently limited to the students and black people. "It has yet to spill out to other sections of the population before it will have a decisive impact. 100,000 students cannot stop the war. Activity must be spread to those sectors of the raw community which could stop it. 100,000 truck-drivers could stop the war if they mobilised against it; and so could 100,000 soldiers. The problem is to spread it into the working class." With the exception of the black population, this was extremely difficult, he said. But there is one possibility - the G.I.s, the majority of whom are working class.

The choice for young people who are opposed to the war, when they are faced with the draft, is to go to prison or to leave the country, maybe for life. This takes them out of the resistance to the war. He showed how the potential had changed now that the draft boards had begun to remove deferments for graduates - the young people who have been through the radicalisation of the past few years. "The mixture of the young college activist with the blacks and poor whites is explosive," he said.

"It was to demonstrate these possibilities," he said, "that we went to South Vietnam. When we talked about going to Saigon, people told us that this would be foolish - they said we would be killed or have a bullet in our backs. We were

not risking our lives as far as the G.I.s were concerned," he stated. "We knew the opposition was wide among G.I.s as it is in the general population."

He told how they went to Saigon like a couple of tourists, and were not stopped, either because the American authorities did not want the embarrassment of stopping someone who was a presidential candidate, after having had the capitalist politicians there; or the South Vietnamese government is in such a state of confusion, it does not know what it is doing.

"We talked to individual soldiers wherever we could meet them. We went along the streets passing out leaflets, in bars, into service clubs and onto a large base.

"We found a minority of G.I.s for the war," he said, "and a larger minority were against, and the bulk were confused. There was no hostility from G.I.s. "The only real trouble they got into was in a bar in Saigon, when a white soldier sparked off a fight after making a racist remark about a black G.I. who was speaking to Fred. A fight ensued.

"As a result," Halstead went on, "the Vietnam war is one of the main engines of radicalisation inside the United States: it begins with opposition to the war and then carries over to some kind of understanding of the general imperialist system."

In his conclusion he brought to the attention of the audience, the recent developments among GI's against the war. (see other article). He mentioned that a very important demonstration of GI's was scheduled in San Francisco on October 12th. The audience showed great interest in several GI anti-war papers which are published inside the army.

Halstead explained how there is an extremely tense atmosphere and it is not excluded that there will be a racial explosion. "The war exacerbates all the problems of U.S. society," he explained.

After leaving South Vietnam, he went to Thailand where he stopped off in Bangkok. "If anyone wants to know why the U.S. is fighting in Vietnam they should go there," he said. "If you walk down-town, you see the names of American, West European and Japanese businesses, all grafted on to a semi-feudal society."

He related an incident in Japan where Halstead and Shepherd attended an anti-war conference where he took issue with Emrys Hughes, M.P. who had spoken at the conference to the effect that he hoped that U.S. would see the light like Britain and give up its colonial holdings. Fred pointed out that in fact Britain was still imperialist: all that had changed was that the U.S. had become the world's cop.

"This condition," Halstead said, "requires the U.S. to spend eighty billion dollars on military overseas expenditure. It is the reason for the permanent draft. The draft was not always permanent, but it is now."

G.I. UNREST WORRIES PENTAGON

SAN FRANCISCO - On Oct. 12, GIs here will lead their biggest demonstration yet against the Vietnam war despite moves by top military brass to stop the action. The GIs followed by reservists, veterans and supporters, will march along the same route used by the April 27 antiwar march this year.

A rally in the Civic Centre with GI speakers will be held after the march. GIs are working with veterans and peace organisations in building the march. A broad base of support is being built. Endorsements and financial support have been obtained from labour unions and churchmen.

Lieutenant Hugh F. Smith and Airman Michael R. Locks of Hamilton Air Force Base are among the GI leaders building the demonstration. Both worked on the GI contingent for the April 27 march and on the Aug. 10 GI teach-in in Berkeley.

That the military brass is concerned by the Oct. 12 march was revealed by a leaflet being distributed to servicemen in the Bay Area. The leaflet reproduces the text of an unclassified message received at the Air Force communications centre in the Pentagon Aug. 28.

The message is headed "Personal for General McConnell from General Estes." Gen. McConnell is chief of staff of the Air Force; Estes is chief of the Military Airlift Command.

The message says, in part, "Strongly believe this demonstration should be quashed if possible because of possible severe impact on military discipline throughout the services."

Estes points out in the message that there is now no Air Force regulation against men demonstrating against the war while in uniform. The only pertinent regulation AFR (Air Force Regulation) 35-78 bans wearing a uniform during civil rights demonstrations only.

Estes, in the message, "reluctantly" recommended that Smith be honourably discharged, but on Sept. 9, Smith was instead ordered to a new duty station on Taiwan and is, of course, to report prior to Oct. 12.

Smith, however, has said that the march will not be stopped even if he and Locks are shipped out or confined. "Others will step in to take our places as soon as we leave," he said.

Lawyers in the Bay Area have volunteered their services to help Smith fight what they consider an illegal move by the Air Force in shipping Smith out.

Smith and Locks see mass action as the best way of spreading opposition to the war and say that the broad support already obtained indicates a new stage for the antiwar movement. "We see a new

and broad link-up of GIs and civilians, something that has not happened before, coming out of this march," Locks said.

The two servicemen have also been active in forming the GI Association, or GIA (the name is a take off on CIA). According to Locks and Smith, GIA membership is widespread and includes men stationed in Vietnam, Korea and elsewhere. "We need our own organisation which will look after our own interests and allows us to take common action to our common problems," Smith said.

Civilian support for the Oct. 12 march includes "miniskirt" and "mom" brigades of women to leaflet at bases and service centres in the cities. Broad mass support is seen by Smith and Locks and their veteran and civilian supporters as the best way of encouraging GIs to march and to protect them from retaliation by the brass.

French Crisis Documents & Analysis

This is a fascinating collection of documents and analyses indispensable for the understanding of the May upsurge. Pierre Frank, secretary of the (banned) Parti Communiste Internationaliste (French section of the Fourth International) writes at length on the significance of the events as a whole, and contributions by Francois Thibault, Ludovik and Francis Michel cover particular aspects - the student movement, the Comites d'Action Lyceens, and the way the various revolutionary organisations measured up to the test of the events. Two statements by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and a complete documentation of the leaflets issued by the P.C.I. provide a stage-by-stage analysis of the trend of developments.

An interesting addition is the collection of quotations from *L'Humanite*, together with the press issues of the leadership of the French Communist Party and the C.G.T., which provides a hardly creditable record for these bodies in the face of what happened.

The pamphlet as a whole is a must for all those who think that the French events have introduced a new element into European revolutionary politics. For those whose French is not so strong, English versions exist of six of these documents in the appropriate back issues of INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS(1) - the two statements by the United Secretariat (Vol. 6, No. 21, 3rd. June pp. 516-519 and Vol. 6, No. 24, 24th. June pp. 588-590), two of the leaflets of the P.C.I. (Vol. 6, No. 22, 10th. June p. 525 and Vol. 6, No. 23, 17th. June p. 569), the joint communique of the three Trotskyist organisations (Vol. 6, No. 22, 10th. June pp. 525-528) and the statement by Pierre Frank on the dissolution of the P.C.I. (Vol. 6, No. 24, 24th. June p. 580). In addition copies of an English translation of the account of the behaviour of the different revolutionary bodies by Francis Michel can be obtained, postage paid, for 9d., from Pioneer Books, at the above address.

(1) Available from Pioneer Books, price 2/3 post-paid. A translation of the main article by Pierre Frank appears in INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVIEW, current issue, also available from the same address, price 4/- post-paid.

Mai 1968: Premiere phase de la revolution socialiste francaise - numero special de Quatrieme Internationale, juillet 1968. (Available from Pioneer Books, 8 Toynbee St., London E.1. - price: 7/6d, postage paid.)

German Students discuss perspectives

A Report of the
S.D.S conference

Frank Hanson

The 23rd National Conference of the Socialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund (S.D.S.), held between Sept. 12th and Sept. 16th at Frankfurt University, was indicative of the general political development and the organisational contradictions predominant in the German Socialist Student movement.

Formerly a youth section of the German Social Democratic Party (S.P.D.), which split in 1960 over the adoption of a new "ultra-reformist" programme, and providing a focus for the increasing alienation of students as a social grouping in advanced capitalist society (plus the catalyst effect of the Vietnamese struggle) it has rapidly assumed a revolutionary character. This has been increasingly manifest in campaigns on Vietnam, Springer and the Emergency Laws.

Although against the background of strong anti-communist feelings (fostered by twelve years of fascism as well as stalinism in East Germany) and relatively high living standards, such developments have been encouraging; but it has also meant that the S.D.S., whilst being anti-stalinist and anti-authoritarian, has also been influenced to a certain extent by anarchistic and Marcusean concepts.

Consequently, the central problem, running throughout the Conference, was that the S.D.S. embodies a revolutionary character with a structure of a reformist organisation. This question was constantly posed. However, as very few of the 120 delegates seemed to realise that organisation can only be based on political orientation, no practical concrete solution was supplied. In fact, certain decisions tended to exacerbate the situation.

For example, the first two days were spent discussing whether to expel five leaders of the pro-Moscow faction who had refused to participate in the demonstrations sponsored by the S.D.S. at the Sofia Youth Festival. It was argued that although no grouping could be expelled for a theoretical position, measures could be taken against those who refused to accept unity of action.

However, decisions to act are made by all tendencies discussing until a predominant majority view has been obtained, there is no utilisation of the united front concept. Consequently, even though the Central Committee was given the right to suspend branches which accepted these expelled members back into the S.D.S., these political parasites were not effectively excluded and the methods by which they were expelled only epitomised the fact that S.D.S. is a loose organisation and not a party.

Debates on forthcoming activities such as the Army-Worker-Student alliance and the Emergency Laws, whilst being on a high theoretical level of abstraction, again merely scratched the surface regarding the principal contradiction within the

S.D.S. It may be that the S.D.S. has reached its political height and some new formation will be needed in order to further the movement, for the existing organisational form appears incapable of analysing and learning from its own history.

The conference was also important from an international point of view, as there were delegations from most West European left-wing student and youth organisations. Fraternal greetings were delivered by the J.C.R., Ed Guiton of the V.S.G. and Fred Halstead, presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party who also gave a speech on his activities in South Vietnam. Notably the leader of the F.E.R., the Lambertist student organisation was unable to address the conference due to a tumultuous reception of jeers and boos.

A QUARTER OF MANKIND

The main weakness of this very interesting and well-documented book, is that the author, Dick Wilson, is not a marxist. This assertion is not as dogmatic as it appears, as I believe that for a proper understanding of the nature of the Chinese state today, a thorough grounding in marxist economics, philosophy and ideology is vital. Wilson most nearly approaches what capitalist society says a scientist must be, that is, non-partisan, "objective". But it is precisely this lack of viewpoint which gives a superficiality and muddiness to the book.

For instance, one can only view with suspicion the scholarship of a man who uses the term lump-enproletariat to describe industrial workers and peasants, and again, equates intelligentsia and bourgeoisie.

Despite these drawbacks, he has handled his subject with sympathy, giving a reasonably accurate picture of the India-China border dispute, although he presents this as an outcome of over sensitivity, misunderstandings and manoeuvrings without going into the very excellent reasons India had for provoking this incident. He shows that China's suspicion of the West is not due to "xenophobia" on the part of the leadership, but due to the very real bad experiences they have had particularly with Britain. He goes into the questions of national minorities; the exploitative relationship of Russia; the differences among the leadership on such questions as art; and their foreign policy. The one big subject which is omitted is that of the Cultural Revolution, which except for references scattered through the work is not treated as a separated phenomenon. This is quite an important omission from the viewpoint of the student of contemporary China who would naturally look to this type of book for an opinion. The role of the Chinese in breaking with the hegemony of the Russian leadership and providing a new focus for the international communist movement is not gone into either.

In summary, A Quarter of Mankind is readable, well-researched and informative. But it should be regarded as supplementary rather than definitive on the subject.

Antonia Gorton

A Quarter of Mankind, a Pelican book - A967, 333 pages, 7/6.

W. J. B. & Co., Nottm.(T.U.)