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AFTER NUR BLOW TO WILSON'S PAY PLAN: HEALEY TO USE "TORY POLICIES"

The settlement of the railwaymen's pay claim, on the basis of a 30% increase, is a heavy blow to the pay policy of the Labour Government. The requirement of the capitalist crisis was that Wilson stood and fought. Their retreat reflects the growing strength of the working class and will be a spur to all workers fighting to protect their living standards.

Having failed in confrontation, the Wilson cabinet, which long ago gave up any pretence to a socialist approach to the crisis, now turns to the attack on another front - unemployment.

In an unprecedented statement last Saturday, Labour Chancellor Healey delivered an ultimatum to the working classes: either accept a new 'social contract' in which wage increases are massively below price increases thus slashing real wages, or face what he termed "Tory policies" on health and social services.

Healey gave the working class six weeks to accept his threat. Wilson, speaking on Monday backed Healey up, saying that six weeks is too long. It is clear that a date has been set for a deflationary budget which would massively increase unemployment from a starting point of nearly one million.

The Tory press screams hysterically to the Labour Government to proceed. The *Sun* last Saturday called for public spending to be cut until "we all bleed", and went on to say "leave the roads unfinished, leave the new council offices unbuilt. Yes, and the new schools and hospitals, too".

NEW SITUATION

The working class now faces an entirely new political situation. Wilson is well aware that workers will defend jobs. He knows that the class movement before which he retreated on the NUR claim contains the same threat as that behind the miners' strike which brought down the Heath government in February 1974.

For the Labour Government to turn to the creation of mass unemployment is not an easy road. The militancy shown on wages can in a moment turn into the widespread and determined defence of jobs. This is shown in the decision of the AUEW conference to support *all action* (including occupations) in opposition to redundancy.

The pressure building up in the working class can be seen in the steel industry, where workers have been in struggle after rejecting the phoney deal cooked up by Benn and the BSC.

INADEQUATE

As working class resistance builds up, the inadequacy of the old forms of struggle are exposed. The railmen's settlement, whilst being a blow to the Labour Government, is a *cut* in real wages. A government economic adviser calculated recently that a 37% wage increase is necessary to maintain take home pay at a rate of inflation of 25%.

The claim contained no demand for a sliding scale of wages agreement to keep pace with inflation using an index worked out by trade union committees. Such a clause is the only way to protect workers against inflation under these conditions.

By their avoidance of such a fight the trade union leaders are preparing the ground for Wilson. Jack Jones' support for the social contract and his proposal to limit wage increases by the use of flat rate payments is central to this.

If Jones can swing the TGWU conference next week behind a 'new' social contract, and take this into the TUC conference shortly after, the inevitable failure of such a policy, in the face of the strength of the working class, will be used by Wilson to blame the working class and establish the argument to force his measures in.

Wilson needs this kind of cover. His problem is simple. If he could not hold the railwaymen to 27%, how is he going to hold the rest of the working class to 10%? If he is to have any chance he needs trade union leaders who speak to the working class in purely capitalist terms.

Jones argues that workers should accept a few percent less in order to save jobs. No doubt he will argue the same next week - that it is only higher productivity



Denis Healey

and lower wage settlements that can prevent unemployment.

Workers can find no solution in these policies. A fight for jobs is hotting up as unfilled vacancies dwindle and unemployment climbs relentlessly towards the million mark. For capitalism to survive this crisis millions of workers would have to accept the dole.

FIGHT BACK

To fight back calls for a new leadership which will lead a real fight to defend both jobs and wages. Both monetary inflation and "stabilisation" on capitalist terms must be exposed as *capitalist* instruments of the crisis, and ultimately two ends of the same stick.

Against soaring prices, the fight must go ahead for the sliding scale of wages. Against unemployment must come the fight for work sharing on full pay, administered by trade union committees.

Employers' pleas of "bankruptcy" must be answered by committees to examine their accounts, backed up by the nationalisation, under workers' management, and without compensation, of those industries proved unable to pay.

Workers have no interest in conserving bankrupt capitalism, and all attempted social contracts must be thrown out by the trade union and labour movement.

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PORTUGAL WORKERS COUNCILS MUST BREAK FROM AFM

An important new stage in the Portuguese Revolution was marked by the declaration of the 22nd June, after a week long meeting of the leadership of the ruling Armed Forces Movement.

The statement made it quite clear that the AFM is continuing to play its role in the defence of Portuguese capitalism. All political organisation within military barracks is banned. Independent militias of workers are forbidden. The political position of the parties in the constituent assembly is guaranteed, although these organisations are now rapidly losing the confidence of the working class.

Not that the military leaders are united on how to deal with this situation. Carvalho, head of the COPCON military security force, has been putting on a left face during the recent wranglings in the AFM, calling for an end to the constituent assembly, and for military rule linked directly to the AFM through workers councils and popular assemblies.

What lies behind such proposals is the loss of control by the AFM and its Stalinist allies over the leadership of the working class. As a recent despatch from Lisbon to the *Financial Times* put it:

"On the factory floor the communist dominated unions have long since been swept aside by militant workers councils many of whom are now controlling plant management and running the business."

On 16th June demonstrators marched to the Lisbon Palace calling for an end to the constituent assembly and for government "not by the rabble but by the workers".

In this situation Carvalho's policies represent a crude attempt to adapt the movement of the working class to Bonapartist methods of rule. He is looking for ways to prevent any independent action by the workers councils which would inevitably bring them into conflict with the AFM.

Many of these issues have come to a head over the occupation of the print works of *Republica*, whose editorial staff support the Socialist Party. What is involved here is clearly much more than the efforts of Stalinist-led workers to suppress the expression of other opinions in the workers movement. As the *Times* put it on June 20th, the Socialist Party "in the present struggle must be admitted to be on the right".

As the masses move rapidly beyond their traditional organisations, not only do the Stalinists lead such movements in order to head them off, sections of the AFM try also to adapt to them. Thus COPCON has supported demands for workers control over editorial policy at *Republica* in open defiance of the AFM's own press law passed last August which provided for journalistic approval of the election of editors but excluded any control by production workers. They have also defied the ruling of the AFM's own supreme council that the law must be implemented in the *Republica* case.

The real role of Carvalho and COPCON can be seen in the continuing imprisonment of the MRPP Maoists in the Caxias prison near Lisbon, formerly used by the fascist torturers, and the breaking up of demonstrations demanding their release. Carvalho sees the MRPP as a threat not because of its criminally wrong 'social fascist' characterisation of the social democrats and the Moscow-line Stalinists, but because it represents the possibility of independent action on the left.

The vital question of the hour is for the defence and expansion of the workers councils movement. Above all, it must establish the *independence* of the working class from the capitalist state and the AFM. It must set up workers militias and arrange national meetings to set up a plan for socialist reconstruction. The building of a revolutionary leadership to fight for the Fourth International on the basis of the Transitional Programme will be an essential part of this process.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS



A demonstration of Gandhi's opponents

INDIA

CRISIS FOR GANDHI'S GOVERNMENT

Like a shack in an earthquake, India's ruling Congress Party, which has been in power continuously for the last 28 years, is feeling the ground crumbling beneath it. The decision of an Allahabad High Court on June 12th to convict Mrs Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister for the last 9 years, of corrupt electoral practices worsens the crisis for her bourgeois nationalist government which has been developing for some time.

The world crisis is affecting all relations within imperialism, and weakening the basis of all bourgeois nationalist leaders. In India itself this has taken the form of rampant inflation, corruption in public life, especially in food distribution, and dramatic increases in the numbers of jobless in the towns and landless peasants, irredeemably hooked to moneylenders, in the country. This has polarised the classes in India and swept away the basis for a nationalist government.

These developments lie behind the conviction for a small part of the corruption upon which the Congress Party is based. Mrs Gandhi had her election to Parliament in 1971 set aside and is debarred from public office for six years for using paid government officials, including her former private secretary, to forward her election prospects. Four

other accusations, including spending over the legal limit and bribing voters with gifts were dismissed.

The Judge, Mr Justice Sinha, granted a stay of operation of the sentence for 20 days so a successor to Mrs Gandhi may be appointed but the Congress Party has announced that she will stay on as Prime Minister pending an appeal to the Supreme Court. This may take at least as long as the four year High Court action, and so almost certainly will allow her to remain throughout the next Indian General Election next year, besides giving her the chance of a friendly court which Mrs Gandhi packed with politically sympathetic judges in 1973.

Meanwhile the Congress Party stages innumerable rallies to whip up popular support, and the opposition parties have launched Resignation Demand Week with rallies and pickets outside the president's palace. The latter are heartened by the result of the Gujarat state election, where the Congress Party lost to Jayaprakash Narayan's People's Front by 12 seats in a 182-seat Assembly. The elections were held after months of disorder in the state last year, which started with protests over rising prices and ended with the dismissal of the State Government.

Mrs Gandhi has been driven into a corner by her very consolidation of personal power. She has to stay on and thereby be discredited because the Congress Party is literally unable to cope with her even temporary withdrawal. In the

last 5 years she has destroyed or driven out the old leaders, downgraded potential rivals and replaced chief ministers in states with her own nondescript loyal nominees.

The apparatus she runs is founded upon corruption. The Party is largely financed on 'black money' illegally contributed by businessmen and therefore protects the operation of a vast parallel economy in 'black money' which fuels inflation and creates starvation and scarcity. The rural bosses of the Congress Party dominate over food distribution, growing rich at the expense of the hungry. Mrs Gandhi's strategy has been to talk like a radical social-democrat, but to act to defend this system and the interests of big business.

Unlike the opposition parties, many large sections of workers have fought the Government tenaciously, revealing its vicious anti-working class nature.

In May 1974 there was a 20-day national strike of railwaymen over pay which was broken by the Congress government when they imprisoned 30,000 strikers and sacked 15,000. They joined the countless numbers of discontents who have now been in prison for months and years without trial. The Railways Minister responsible, Lalit Narayan Misra, was assassinated by a bomb in January this year.

Also in January this year was a national strike of 200,000 dockers for a pay increase of £2.75 per month following a 30% rise in the cost of living in 1974. The government declared this illegal under emergency regulations dating back to the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971.

DEMONSTRATION

Workers' and peasants' resistance was expressed on March 6th this year with a massive demonstration of half a million in New Delhi led by J.P. Narayan which presented a petition calling for an end to corruption in public life, the revocation of the 1971 state of emergency and the dismissal of the Congress government in Bihar State.

The growth of this opposition cannot of course be separated from the largely peasant movements which have swept to power in similar circumstances in the revolutions in Vietnam and Cambodia, and these must give tremendous

example to the Indian masses. The pro-Moscow Communist Party tries to defuse the movement. It has consistently supported the bourgeois Congress Party in the past and does so now, denouncing opposition as 'reactionary plotters'. (The *Morning Star*, paper of the British C.P. has this week called for the defence of Mrs Gandhi).

This is consistent with the policy of Stalin towards Chiang Kai-shek and the nationalist Kuomintang in China in the 1920s - looking for a force outside the working class Stalin found it in the peasantry and channelled it to support the bourgeois nationalists. Trotsky defeated this argument at the time, when he wrote in his 'Permanent Revolution' of the

"lessons of October - namely that the petty-bourgeoisie including the peasantry, is incapable of playing the role of leader in modern, even if backward, bourgeois society ... the peasantry can either support the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or serve as prop to the dictatorship of the proletariat." and further

"Stalin and Bukharin preached that thanks to the yoke of imperialism the bourgeoisie could carry out the national revolution in China. The attempt was made. With what results? The proletariat was brought under the headman's axe. Then it was said: the democratic dictatorship will come next. The petty-bourgeois dictatorship proved to be only a masked dictatorship of capital. By accident? No, the peasant follows either the worker or the bourgeoisie."

But the Stalinist theory of rigidly distinct stages of the socialist revolution has not been abandoned by the Maoists either, while one section collaborates in bourgeois governments, another section, having split on the issue of parliamentary working, engages in guerrilla warfare and sent its town cadres to work in the peasant movement leading struggles like those of the 'Naxalites', peasants who rose up and killed their landlords.

The great need is for the building of a Trotskyist movement as a section of the Fourth International which takes its understanding of the roots of Stalinist bureaucracy and parliamentarianism into fighting for the method of Trotsky's Transitional Programme. Here he states:

"The present programme is

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

Such a programme must include the nationalisation of land and the collectivisation of agriculture, but in such a way that, as Trotsky says, "it should exclude the possibility of expropriation of small farmers and their compulsory collectivisation. The farmer will remain owner of his plot of land as long as he himself believes it possible or necessary."

CREDIT

To assist this the moneylenders must be abolished and the banks nationalised under the management of workers committees which can then provide cheap credit for small farmers as well as large collectives.

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

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

Such a programme must now obviously include the demand for the resignation of Mrs Gandhi and a campaign for the removal of the Congress government and its replacement by a government of workers' parties, whilst at the same time fighting to develop soviets of workers and peasants within the wages struggles that are erupting now all over India.

CHILE

RISING PRICE OF DEFEAT

As prices rise in the shops so also does that price which the Chilean working class are paying for the betrayals of its leadership which culminated in the coup of September, 1973.

Recent critical statements by Eduardo Frei and other former leaders of the Christian Democrats - who supported the coup and are now wooed by the Communist Party and its allies in the former Popular Unity - result from the fact that, despite 20 months of ferocious economic and political attack on the working class, the junta has failed to restore a stable economic basis for capitalist accumulation in Chile.

DEVASTATING

But it is not for want of trying. There has been a devastating attack on working class living standards. In 1974 the official cost of living index rose by 376 per cent; and up to May this year by a further 125 per cent. Every three months wages are adjusted upwards by the change in this index up to a month

earlier: so real wages have time to drop by about half between each adjustment and never even momentarily catch up. In addition the official figures underestimate the rise in the cost of living by a huge amount.

A few price increases of basic commodities since the coup illustrate this: milk and sugar up by 17,000 per cent, cooking oil by 10,000 and calor gas by 8,000 per cent; rice by 21,000 per cent. The total effect has been to push down real wages to perhaps as little as one third of their level before the coup.

Increasingly the inflation has been accompanied by a major economic slump leading to massive levels of unemployment. The official figure for unemployment in Santiago (where nearly half the population live) was 9.9 per cent in March and was up to 13.3 per cent in April of this year.

These figures are generally thought to be about half of the real ones. Among many enterprises reported closing completely or for extended periods in the last two months are one of the country's largest steel blast furnaces and the major tyre company.

Inflation, then, is not only an

instrument of the junta in imposing wage cuts, but also a threat to it by shifting capitalist activity into speculation and by destroying the wealth of the petit-bourgeoisie which constitutes much of the junta's original support.

RECONSTRUCTION

Even ultra-cheap labour has not re-established a stable basis for Chilean capitalism. And the junta has now, under the expert guidance of the American monetarist economist Milton Friedman whose growing influence in the British ruling class is notorious, launched a programme of 'economic reconstruction' involving the ending of the deficits of the nationalised industries and huge cuts in social service spending including the ending of all free medicine. This follows massive cuts in the previous year when health and education spending fell from 30 per cent to 5 per cent of the budget.

Even if these measures curb inflation they will further raise the price of 1973's defeat for the Chilean working class by intensifying the economic slump as every historic gain of the Chilean workers comes under the axe.

W. GERMANY 'MIRACLE' FADES

The economic crisis continues to mount in West Germany, once the miracle of post war capitalism. Unemployment is increasing and now stands at five per cent. For the past 5 months 1 million workers have been out of work and the number on short time has risen to 950,000.

The major factor in the German economic crisis is the continuous fall in export orders especially in the capital goods industries, a fact which highlights the international nature of the current slump and the impossibility of any single capitalist country escaping its effects.

Falling exports continue in the consumer industries, however, especially the motor industry. Volkswagen will dismiss 600 workers at the end of the month as the first step of a sweeping rationalisation drive that according to Herr Smucker the president of VW will result in 25,000 redundancies (one fifth of the labour force) by the end of 1976.

In response to this growing attack on the working class the

Schmidt government boasts only of its wizardry in bringing down the rate of inflation, at the expense of a massive increase in unemployment, from 7.1% in February to 6.1% in May. While the earnings of millions of German workers fall with unemployment and short time, the 'Social Democrat' SPD acts only to stabilise the currency in the interests of bankers.

RACISM

Moreover by imposing a ban on immigrant workers being recruited by German firms and by preparing to send home the majority of recent immigrants after their work permits expire, the SPD leadership is able to masquerade as the defender of German workers (while in fact acting to increase unemployment) by diverting attention to foreign workers and stirring up racism.

The treachery of the SPD leadership demands a fight in the German working class for a new leadership which will carry through the fight for the political independence of the working class movement and prepare for the approaching revolutionary struggles.

AFRICA SURVEY

KENYA CORRUPTION AND VIOLENCE EXPOSED

A major scandal now threatens the regime of Jomo Kenyatta in Kenya. The events surrounding the disappearance and murder of a populist member of parliament, Josiah Kariuki, have exposed the web of corruption and violence on which the quasi-dictatorship of Kenyatta rests.

Kariuki, although himself a member of the nouveau-riche, post independence Kenyan bourgeoisie and frequent visitor to the Nairobi Hilton, was well known as a spokesman for the interests of the masses in the 'Parliament' dominated by Kenyatta's one party rule.

At the beginning of March, after a series of lucky escapes from bomb explosions in places known to be frequented by him, he was last seen alive leaving the Nairobi Hilton in the company of Mr Ben Gethi - commandant of the GSU, Kenyatta's para-military police organisation. Reported missing on a 'business trip' he was only discovered dead when his wife, acting on a hunch, smuggled herself into the Nairobi mortuary and identified his mutilated body.

The storm broke when the Parliamentary select committee investigating the Kariuki murder issued a shock report at the beginning of this month accusing top police officials, and by implication their political bosses, of participation in a major cover up. The committee noted in its report the difficulties encountered in its investigations - "largely due to the refusal of the police heads to render any assistance even by disclosing the names of witnesses who might have been of value to the committee" - and concluded that "the police knew who the culprits actually are but are unwilling to proceed against them".

ECONOMIC CRISIS

The murder of Kariuki - not the first political murder of left wing critics of the Kenyatta regime - has to be seen in the context of the developing world economic crisis and the total inability of the post colonial national bourgeoisie to secure economic growth, or an elimination of the vast inequalities of wealth and land ownership (most of the richest agricultural land in Kenya is still owned by Europeans) in the context of a world capitalist economy dominated by the capital of western Europe, Japan and the USA, now in the throes of an

inflationary crisis.

This is clearly shown in a recent economic survey of Kenya by the fairly conservative magazine *Africa* which reports:

"The high price of capital and intermediate goods which are essential for the development of the economy, and the deterioration in the terms of trade are imposing a strain on the balance of payments of the country. . . ."

"In addition the oil price increases have worsened the situation and the level of foreign exchange reserves has dropped sharply. This will slow the rate of growth of the economy and especially the industrial sector which depends on imported capital and raw materials. This in turn will slow the growth of Kenya's exports of manufactures and will have an adverse effect on domestic trade".

(*Africa*, February 1975)

The economic situation in Kenya has worsened indeed. The rate of growth of the economy fell from 13% a year in 1973 to 4.5% in 1974.

DICTATORSHIP

In this situation the inability of regimes like that of Kenyatta's to provide any defence against the capitalist world crisis while continuing to line their own pockets drives the masses into conflict with the regime. Already underground leaflets are beginning to emerge. To this Kenyatta can only react by tightening the grip of his dictatorship. He has already moved to sack anyone in parliament who spoke out in support of the report into Kariuki's murder. To date this includes the Minister of Works and the Assistant Minister of Labour.

In a society in which 220 Europeans own 800,000 hectares of rich agricultural land, and all the main hotels and industries remain in European hands with the active collusion of Kenyatta, while 70,000 landless Africans still live in camps set up during the Mau Mau rebellion (1956) the truth of Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution is graphically illustrated.

Real independence for the Kenyan masses can only be achieved when the gains of colonial independence are carried through to include the expropriation of the land and basic industry without compensation and under the management of the workers and peasants themselves. This requires the smashing of the Kenyatta regime by a revolutionary party uniting the workers and peasants.

MOZAMBIQUE

WHICH WAY FORWARD ?

In Mozambique, the FRELIMO government will assume full powers on June 25th, when the present joint FRELIMO/Portuguese rule comes to an end.

Immediately the historical questions of which road - capitalism or socialism in one country versus the permanent revolution will, and indeed already have, posed themselves. Since 1970 FRELIMO (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) has adopted the prog-

mainly via purchase of hydro-electric power from the Cabora Bassa dam and the employment, in brutal conditions of exploitation of 96,000 migrant Mozambican labourers in the gold mines.

The mere desire on the part of the FRELIMO leadership to 'abolish capitalism' in Mozambique will of itself do nothing to change this brute fact. Neither does it change in any way the similar economic dependence on Rhodesia. FRELIMO is committed to sanctions against Smith by closing his outlet to the sea via the railway from Rhodesia

in one country' or permanent revolution - linking the building of socialism in Mozambique to the active support for the revolutionary movement based on the armed struggle and the unity of workers and peasants throughout Africa.

The other alternative policy - 'socialism in Mozambique' - can only lead to the accommodation to South Africa and Rhodesia and the bourgeois black African states which will reproduce and maintain the basically colonial underdeveloped economy of Mozambique. The signs are that this accommodation is well advanced. In a candid interview given by Samora Machel, the president of FRELIMO, to *Africa* magazine recently he was noticeably equivocal on what has hitherto been a major plank of FRELIMO policy - the cessation of the export of 'slave labour' to South Africa. When asked bluntly whether contract labour to South Africa would continue after June 25th he replied:

"South Africa receives 150,000 workers per year. The Portuguese did not create the structures for those people to work in Mozambique. Therefore FRELIMO must before anything else create structures for those people. We are not hysterical revolutionaries, the ten year war tempered us . . . We will discuss with our people and ask: if we cut the contract what are you going to do?"

It is clear from this what sort of leadership we can expect from FRELIMO. Machel is similarly ambiguous on the question of attitudes to the rest of black Africa:

"Our policy is clear. First all African countries and members of the OAU are our allies. Secondly in Africa the Freedom movements are also our allies".

But as we have seen in the case of Zimbabwe it is precisely the OAU which has effectively sabotaged the liberation struggle through its policy of "armed struggle only if talks fail". FRELIMO does not challenge this strategy. In fact it participated in the original deal to get Smith to release Sithole and others in return for a guerrilla cease fire!

But it is only through active support now for the armed struggle in Zimbabwe that the workers and peasants of Mozambique will gain access to the industrial and mineral wealth of Rhodesia to help develop their own economy. Only as a part of such a strategy will sanctions against Smith through a closure of the Rhodesia-Mozambique railway, lead to victory as opposed to the economic ruin of Mozambique.



Samora Machel

ramme of 'socialism in Mozambique'. This poses, to say the least, a number of problems.

After centuries of Portuguese colonial rule under which Mozambique was forced to sell raw materials to Portugal at low prices, and buy back the finished product at inflated prices the economy on independence day will start out already on the verge of bankruptcy. Mozambique has enough foreign currency reserves to cover precisely 6 days worth of imports, and foreign debts of over £300m. This therefore highlights the dependence of the existing Mozambique economy on the neighbouring white racist regimes of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South Africa. South Africa at present provides 60% of all Mozambique's foreign exchange

to the Mozambique port of Lourenco Marques.

However, to carry through these sanctions would result in immediate loss of between £12m and £20m in income from Rhodesia. Coupled with this is the fact that a good deal of the rolling stock on the Mozambique railway system is owned by Smith, and furthermore the Mozambique railway network itself only links up inside Rhodesia. So immediate sanctions would pose a severe disruption in railway links within Mozambique itself.

What policy then do the advocates of 'socialism in Mozambique' have to solve these problems? They are posed with very much the same questions that faced the Soviet Union in 1917 - degeneration in the form of the myth of 'socialism

WHAT IS THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE?

The Workers Socialist League was formed on December 22nd 1974 as part of the fight to carry forward the method and principles of Trotsky's Transitional Programme, the founding document of the Fourth International. The WSL now represents the continuity of the struggle for these principles in the workers' movement.

The formation of the League followed the expulsion of over 200 members from the Workers Revolutionary Party, carried out bureaucratically by the WRP leadership in order to prevent discussion of their own abandonment of the Programme both in theory and in practice. These mass expulsions showed that there could be no hope of correcting the WRP - an independent organisation had to be founded to maintain the fight for Trotskyism.

Such a split came out of particular conditions. The rapid development of the economic crisis of capitalism and the forward movement of the world working class, which has now overthrown imperialism in Vietnam and Cambodia, began to produce the conditions to build revolutionary parties internationally.

At such a point the importance of a fight for the method and principles of the Transitional Programme, against both sectarianism and opportunism is paramount in the preparation of revolutionary leadership. After a hard period of isolation from the mass movement, Trotskyism now emerges as the only tendency with a programme and a history of struggle to lead the working class in the taking of power.

The defence of jobs through the fight for work sharing on full pay, run by trade union committees; the defence of living standards through the fight for all wage agreements to include a sliding scale to compensate for all increases in the cost of living as determined by trade union prices committees; the challenging of the "rights" of the employer and the preparation of the struggle for power through the fight to open the books of industry, and to establish workers control in the fight for

nationalisation under workers' management: all these policies are now called for in this situation. As they are fought for and workers are mobilised to win these demands, they begin to form a bridge between the present level of political consciousness of workers and the need for the working class to take the power. Yet the WRP refused to take up a fight for this method.

For this reason the most important developments in our work have centred on a break from WRP sectarianism and propagandism, bringing important gains in trade union work and opening up completely new areas. We are beginning to recruit and train from the new forces thrown into struggles in this period - not only trade unionists, but also professional workers, housewives, students and youth - in the fight to construct the party.

Our record shows that we continue to fight uncompromisingly to expose all those who attack and revise Marxism - not only the WRP but also the 'rank and file' policies of the IS group who refuse to defend the Soviet Union as a workers' state, and the IMG, who liquidate the revolutionary movement into unprincipled blocs and liaisons with anti-revolutionary tendencies, as well as against Stalinism and reformism.

Already it is clear that throughout the world the movement of the working class poses similar questions for those groups calling themselves Trotskyist, particularly sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International, producing similar splits and offering a rich possibility of developing a truly international movement based on the Trotskyist programme. For this reason the WSL is now engaged in a process of internal discussion prior to a full founding conference, a vital part of which is to hammer out and adopt perspectives for the building of the Trotskyist Fourth International, and the development of revolutionary parties based on the Trotskyist programme in every country in the struggle to end capitalism.

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PERMANENT REVOL



Trotsky

It is no surprise that our knowledge of the revolutionary process in economically backward countries was first developed by Russian Marxists, for Russia, scene of the first successful socialist revolution was just such a country.

The successful overthrow of capitalism is an international task which demands the building of sections of the Fourth International throughout the world. This cannot be done unless serious attention is given to the struggles of workers and peasants in the many underdeveloped countries of the world.

The lessons of the first socialist revolution thus take on an added richness in this epoch of wars and revolutions.

In Russia at the turn of the century only 14% of the population lived in the towns and the urban working class comprised only a part of this urban population. The largest class in the Russian Empire was the peasantry which had emerged from feudalism only some forty years previously.

Yet the peasantry was far from being a homogeneous class. Most did not own the land they worked whilst a minority, the kulaks, not only owned the land but even employed agricultural labour to work it.

CSARISM

The capitalist class was, in Trotsky's words, "very small in number, isolated from the 'people', half-foreign, without historic traditions and inspired only by a greed for gain." Power, however, did not rest in the hands of the capitalist class, but with the autocratic government of the Czar.

Under constant pressure from the West for several centuries, the Russian ruling aristocracy had been forced to build up state institutions of its own which creamed off a large part of the surplus product in a way which hampered the growth of the very classes that provided that surplus. The enormous bureaucratic/military machine that was created soon began to develop interests of its own.

As Trotsky observed, "At the moment when developing bourgeois

society began to feel a need for the political institutions of the West, the autocracy proved to be armed with all the material might of the European states. It rested upon a centralised bureaucratic machine which was quite useless for establishing new relations but was able to develop great energy in carrying out systematic repressions."

Hampered in their attempts to develop industry on a capitalist basis, politically subordinated to the autocratic government of the Czar and financially burdened with the cost of supporting the bureaucracy and the army, the capitalist class came more and more into conflict with the old order, conflict which was eventually to give rise to enormous revolutionary developments.

STAGES

The central question facing Russian Marxists at the turn of the century was this: if the conflict between the capitalists and the autocracy is leading Russia towards a bourgeois revolution, that is one in which the capitalist class will come to power, what will be the role of the working class and peasantry in this revolution?

The Menshevik wing of Russian Marxism stuck rigidly to a schema whereby society seemed to proceed through a series of fixed stages of development. For them, Russia, which was just emerging from feudalism, would have a long way to go under capitalism after the bourgeois revolution before socialism could be achieved.

First, they argued, the working class would have to support the bourgeoisie in their bid for power. Then a lengthy period of capitalist development would follow during which Marxists would have to fight to defend the interests of the working class. Only when capitalism began to decline could the fight for socialist revolution be seriously conducted. The immediate need, said the Mensheviks, was for a parliamentary democracy, similar to those in the West.

The revolutionary wing of Russian Marxism, the Bolsheviks, agreed that the approaching revolution would be bourgeois in

character. Lenin realised, however, that if the capitalist class could be liberated from the rule of the Czar, then the power of the landowners could be ended and a revolutionary redistribution of the land among the millions of poor peasants could take place.

Since the bourgeoisie were in league with the landowners, Lenin argued that this made possible and necessary an alliance of workers and peasants against the exploiting capitalists and landowners. It was this alliance that Lenin called for in the slogan 'The Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry'.

Such an alliance as this had never existed before and the new form of political collaboration that Lenin proposed in order to solve the tasks of the democratic revolution raised important questions. Would the peasantry be able to form their own party capable of solving the agrarian question? Which class, the workers or the peasants, would form the majority in the revolutionary government?

LENIN

As a result of the experiences of the 1905 revolution, Lenin began to formulate more definite answers to some of these questions. He became more and more convinced that the peasantry could not play the leading role in the coming revolution and that this task would fall to the working class, the only truly propertyless class, and therefore the only revolutionary class in Russia capable of overthrowing the Czar and carrying out the democratic revolution.

Having completed the democratic tasks of the revolution in this way, the question of socialism would be posed. The democratic dictatorship would grow over into the fight for socialism.

By the time of the 1905 revolution, Trotsky had already parted company with the Mensheviks whom he had supported at the time of the 1902 Bolshevik-Menshevik split. On the question of the revolution, he stood far closer to the Bolsheviks than the Mensheviks.

Trotsky totally rejected the idea that Russia would have to pass through the same course of development that the other, more advanced capitalist countries were going through. The economy of Russia, he argued, had a combined character: on the one hand, the most primitive economic forms, on the other, a capitalist industry amongst the most modern in the world, albeit on a very small scale.

So although the working class was small in numbers it was confronted with conditions of exploitation which were a match for any capitalist country in the world.

However, because industry formed such a small part of the Russian economy, and because the capitalist class was so dominated by the Czarist autocracy, the capitalists were forced to use revolutionary methods to advance their class interests, as for example, in 1905.

1905

But the capitalists were so afraid of the masses who have in all bourgeois revolutions fought for their own independent interests, that they were forced to pull back from the offensive before they had gained victory. Thus the 1905 revolution failed, since the working class and peasantry had not yet established a leadership capable of cementing the alliance and leading them to victory after their betrayal

by the bourgeoisie.

Trotsky, in analysing 1905, realised that the capitalist class were incapable of conducting a serious struggle for power. The solution of the democratic tasks and the agrarian problem could therefore come about only through the dictatorship of the proletariat, supported by the peasantry.

The peasantry, who had as their own class interest the redistribution of the land, were unable for a number of reasons to form a party that could successfully fight to carry this out. They were therefore forced to side either with the bourgeoisie or the working class. Since the bourgeoisie were themselves incapable of ending the power of the autocracy, the only way the peasants could achieve their aim of taking the land was by supporting the proletariat.

This meant that the proletariat could achieve power earlier than in the advanced capitalist countries, for it was obvious that if the working class carried through the democratic revolution, supported by the peasantry, the dictatorship of the proletariat could be established, and the building of socialism would be posed.

This in turn raised another important question. Marxists never believed that socialism could be established in a single country, not even on the basis of an advanced capitalist economy, never mind a backward one. So if as a result of the democratic revolution, the proletariat found itself in power, it would have to work towards ending its isolation as quickly as possible.

This would mean extending the revolution to other capitalist coun-

ably lead to explosions Therein lies the permanent character of the socialist revolution as such, regardless of whether it is a backward country that is involved . . . or an old capitalist country which has already behind it a long epoch of democracy and parliamentarism".

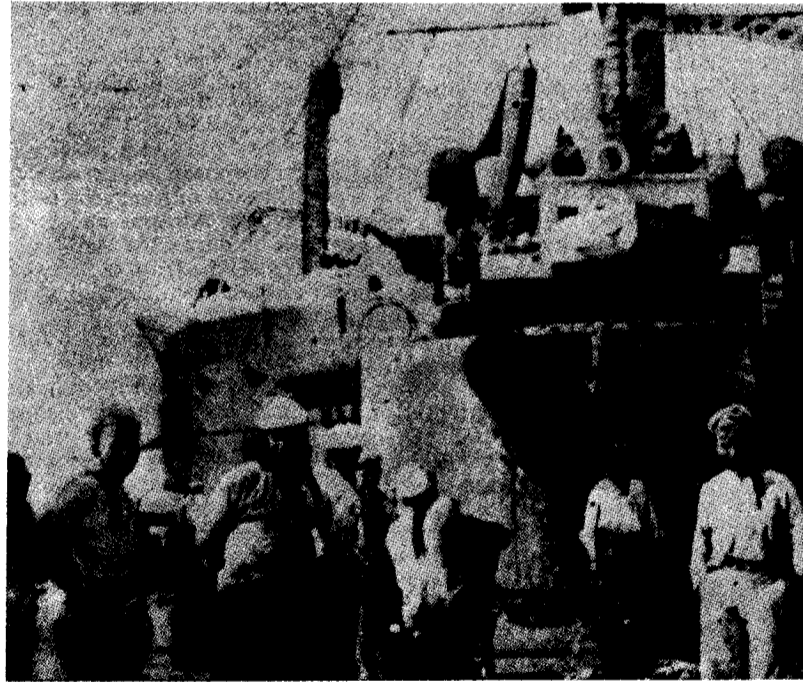
In 1917, as in 1905, the bourgeoisie were forced to resort once more to revolutionary methods in order to further their class interests. In February of that year a popular uprising led to the overthrow of the Czar and the setting up of on the one hand, a provisional government and on the other of Soviets.

The Mensheviks, of course, regarded the establishment of a parliamentary democracy based on the class rule of the capitalists as the "next stage" in the historical process.

MENSHEVIKS

But the fact that the bourgeoisie were so insignificant that, having overthrown the Czar, they could not establish a properly functioning parliamentary democracy, meant that the Mensheviks driven by the logic of their ideas, were forced to substitute themselves for the bourgeoisie in order that their 'laws' of history were not broken.

At the same time, therefore, that the working class were establishing Soviets as a rival basis of power to the Provisional Government, the Mensheviks were agreeing to become ministers in that govern-



Sailors mutiny on the battleship Potemkin in

tries and in particular to the highly industrialised capitalist countries of Western Europe. Trotsky expressed the essential points of his theory of Permanent Revolution in this way:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat which has risen to power as the leader of the democratic revolution is inevitably and very quickly confronted with tasks, the fulfillment of which is bound up with deep inroads into the rights of bourgeois property. The democratic revolution grows over directly into the socialist revolution, and thereby becomes a permanent revolution.

The conquest of power by the proletariat does not complete the revolution, but only opens it. Socialist construction is conceivable only on the foundation of the class struggle on a national and international scale. This struggle, under the conditions of an overwhelming predominance of capitalist relationships on the world arena must inevit-

ment.

As the working class moved to the left, the capitalists in the government grew more and more unpopular and eventually made way for the Mensheviks to fill all the Ministerial posts. Thus the Mensheviks found themselves ruling on behalf of the capitalist class.

As far as the Bolshevik Party was concerned, the February Revolution revealed the limitations of Lenin's slogan and the strengths of Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution. With the Czar overthrown, the majority of the Bolshevik leadership interpreted Lenin's slogan for the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to mean support for the provisional government.

Lenin, on his return from exile, launched what began as a one man campaign against this conception, eventually winning the majority of the Bolshevik leadership to his point of view. The provisional government of the Mensheviks and their allies was the highest point that could be

UTION

What the working class had to do now, some said, was to build socialism in Russia 'independent' of the rest of the world. It was Stalin who developed this idea into his 'theory' of 'Socialism in one country'.

This theory was in complete opposition to the theory of Permanent Revolution which the Bolsheviks had accepted in 1917. Trotsky, as the author of the theory of permanent revolution was attacked by those who supported Stalin. He was driven out of the Communist Party and eventually out of Russia as well.

Nevertheless, he continued to criticise this Stalinist theory which began immediately to lead to disastrous consequences for the Communist movement, starting with the wrong orientation of the Chinese CP resulting in the decimation of the best cadres at the hands of Chiang Kai Shek's bourgeois nationalist party, the Kuomintang.

As its revolutionary roots show, the theory of Permanent Revolution is no abstract historical question, but of vital importance for workers and peasants involved in struggle today. Since Stalin's death, the Communist Parties of the world have continued to advance the theory of socialism in one country which has resulted in the deaths of many Communists in the "third world" at the hands of the national bourgeoisie, which receives continued support from the Moscow Stalinists.

DEMANDS

In opposition to this, the Trotskyist movement today fights on the basis of the Transitional Programme, which embodies the kernel of the theory of Permanent Revolution. It states:

"Backward countries are part of a world dominated by imperialism. Their development therefore has a combined character: the most primitive forms are combined with the last word in capitalist technique and culture. In like manner are defined the political strivings of the proletariat of backward countries: the struggle for the most elementary achievements of national independence and bourgeois democracy is combined with the socialist struggle against imperialism. Democratic slogans, transitional demands and the problems of the socialist revolution are not divided into separate historical epochs in this struggle but stem directly from one another. When the Comintern of the epigones tried to revive the formula buried by history of the 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry', it gave to the formula of the 'workers and peasants government' a completely different, purely 'democratic', i.e. bourgeois content. . . . when the party of the proletariat refuses to step beyond bourgeois-democratic limits, its alliance with the peasantry is simply turned into a support for capital'.

The building of the Fourth International in the "third world" means organising the working class in their own independent parties representing the independent class interests of the working class. At the same time, transitional demands must be fought for around which the peasantry can be drawn to the side of the proletariat.

These demands must start from the democratic tasks that are posed in the struggle against imperialism and for the redistribution of the land. The masses must be shown in practice that the achievement of these demands can only be carried out by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat: from democratic slogans to transitional demands, developing awareness of the need for the seizure of power.

Full support must be given to liberation struggles throughout the world, including direct military and economic assistance. Only in this way can the reactionary theory of socialism in one country be fought against. This task of leadership falls to the Fourth International.

reached under the democratic dictatorship, argued Lenin. That slogan was therefore of no further use. It must be consigned, along with anyone who supported it, to the museum of 'Old Bolshevism'.

The revolution was only partially complete, however, and only the dictatorship of the proletariat could complete it. The slogans, said Lenin, must now be "All Power to the Soviets!" and "Down With the Provisional Government!"

Trotsky too, from exile, saw that it would be a betrayal of the working class to support the provisional government, while the workers, peasants and soldiers were themselves forming Soviets which constituted a dual power alongside that of the provisional government.

In such a situation, the democratic revolution could only be defended and extended through the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry. This would then pose the question of socialism.

For Trotsky then, 1917 was the year when his theory of Permanent Revolution was confirmed in practice. Having long ago abandoned his mistaken attempts to unite the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, he joined the Bolsheviks shortly before they took power in October 1917 and his theory of Permanent Revolution was incorporated into the theory and programme of Bolshevism.

The following years proved the second part of Trotsky's theory correct as well. The dictatorship of the proletariat had indeed posed tasks going beyond those of the democratic revolution as the Communist Party set about destroying



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the power of the capitalists by nationalising industry and the banks. Just as the law of uneven development had permitted the working class in backward Russia to come to power before the workers of advanced capitalist countries like Britain, so now that law ceased to apply and instead the many threads that linked the Russian economy to world capitalism began to assert themselves.

Politically and economically isolated from the rest of the world, Russia could only progress to socialism with the timely assistance of the working class of advanced capitalism.

None of the Bolshevik leaders in the period after the revolution thought that Russia could build socialism by itself. However, the defeats of the German Revolutions of 1919, 1921 and 1923, with the death of Lenin in early 1924, led to a feeling inside sections of the Communist Party leadership that aid from the proletariat was now postponed to the indefinite future.

REVIEW

The Battle for Unions

(A review of W. H. Fraser *Trade Unions and Society. The Struggle for Acceptance 1850-1880*, published by Allen and Unwin at £5.95)

By John Docherty

In the period covered by this book many of the institutions and attitudes of the modern working class movement were born. With British capitalism at the peak of its strength and prosperity, the trade unions were transformed from tiny localised bodies of conservative craftsmen into powerful organisations wielding considerable social and political power. Their leaders ceased to be portrayed in the capitalist press as 'payed agitators', but instead as upholders of all the respectable and individualist values of bourgeois society, even if their members were still at times 'greedy' or 'unreasonable'.

Fraser's book is not a continuous history of the trade union movement of a century ago, but rather a series of snapshots of many important aspects of its development. For anybody with some knowledge of the main events of the history of trade unionism in this period, his book provides an analysis of many important aspects of the formation of the working class movement. This review will consider some of them.

Struggle

One point which should be made clear at the outset is that however prosperous and secure British capitalists were a century ago, they never made any concessions to trade unions willingly or without a struggle. If employers recognised or bargained with the unions, it was only because they were compelled to do so in their most elementary interests.

The period covered by this book is between the collapse of the great wave of the Chartist agitation in the 1840s and the revival of the socialist movement in the 1880s. Although Fraser makes much of the 'apathy' of many trade union members on general political questions, he says little or nothing about the continuing echoes of the Chartist campaigns in the generations of the 50s and 60s, nor of the involvement of many trade unionists, not just the well-known leaders, in the International Working Men's Associations (the First International) from 1864. Without the maintenance of this tradition, there would have been no basis for the development of new forms of working class action in the 1880s, and of the battles of the 1890s that led to the foundation of the Labour Party.

The 'struggle for acceptance' was an important one, and in many ways formed the bones and sinews of the modern working class movement. However, as capitalist society developed, such 'acceptance' could never be stable or continuous, nor could it represent in any way a final resolution of the struggle between capital and labour.

The period after 1850 saw a number of important events for the working class movement. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers, set up in 1850, was later seen as a 'new model' union by virtue of its centralised constitution, its moderate industrial policies, and its alleged pre-occupation with friendly benefits. In fact, within months of its foundation it had

to fight a bitter battle for its very existence, with the employers determined to establish piecework systems that took away the independent power of the craftsmen. The Amalgamated Carpenters, and other unions of skilled workers in the building industry tried also to emphasise their respectability. But they too, in 1859-60 came up against efforts of their employers to get every one of their members to sign a 'document' renouncing their organisation.

It was in the face of such threats as these from the employers, as well as others from the courts, that different groups of workers found it increasingly necessary to work together to defend their right to picket, to protect their funds, and much else besides. A particularly vitriolic press campaign in the mid-60s concentrated on 'outrages' committed against blacklegs in Sheffield. In defence of the right to organise, trades councils were set up, national meetings and lobbies were held, and the TUC eventually emerged.

It was not the wheeling and dealing of the trade union leaders in the corridors of press and Parliament that secured the legal and political recognition by 1875 of the rights of the trade unions to exist. It was the growing strength and independence shown by the movement in the early 70s. The farm labourers, dockers and many others began to set up their organisations for the first time. In 1872, gas stokers were imprisoned when they plunged London into darkness in a particularly dramatic demonstration of trade union strength. In 1874, trade unionists refused to support Parliamentary candidates who would not agree to their legal protection. With the establishment of a Labour Party becoming a distinct possibility, the Tory government was forced to concede measures to give the trade unions protection which they subsequently enjoyed for a century.

Much of the dynamic of this process, of the desperate struggles to begin and to continue trade unionism, is missing from Fraser's account. However, there is much to be learnt from what he says about the development of the forms and methods of trade unionism.

conservatism

Fraser emphasises the conservatism and exclusiveness of early trade unionism: "The desire of workers to protect their job from the competition of outsiders is fundamental to the emergence and development of most trade unions". Most early unions, he says, were "concerned with resisting change", through the enforcement of apprenticeship regulations and other means.

However, even in the middle of the nineteenth century there were already many factors pulling the movement in other directions. From the beginning unions fought to obtain 'standard rates' for the job and to put an end to disparities between different firms and different areas. National wage negotiations were the culmination of this process. At the same time, trade unionists were consistently forced to come together for the defence of their right to organise. For any one section of workers to make advances, the whole movement had to be defended. The unions could thus be schools of class war even when at their most limited and conservative.

An interesting chapter of Fraser's book describes the views of the professors of economics in the mid-nineteenth century that trade unions could do nothing to

improve wages and conditions. He quotes one sympathiser of the movement to the effect that the economists were 'mere partisans of the strongest side, on a level with paid agitators or special pleaders, while assuming the function of imperial judges'. Such statements are an indication not just of the fact that there is not much new under the sun, but also that, however much trade union leaders crave for absorption into the machinery of capitalism, their members always in the end come into conflict with it.

At the centre of the developing trade union movement of a century ago was the desire of its leaders to be accepted as a legitimate and normal part of the functioning of capitalism. The mass political and social agitations of the 1830's and 40's had provided a general challenge to the system, but they had been defeated and pushed back. The British employers had the most advanced technology, the greatest self-confidence and the largest empire the world had ever seen. They were easily in a position not only to impose their standards at least for a time on the employers of other nations and the colonial peoples, but also on their own working class.

Bureaucracy

A capitalist class with such wealth and power could easily afford to buy off those sections of the working class organised in trade unions. Now that methods of mass production were accepted, sections of workers in many industries could easily be incorporated into the employers' system. The skilled printworker, the engineer who had served his time, the bricklayer who had painfully acquired scarce skills, these sections and many others, accepted the ideology of the employers about 'self-help' and 'independence'. With the help of higher earnings they could maintain a certain distance from the mass of the unskilled and unorganised workers.

The new centralised trade union organisations led to retaliation by the employers of the kind seen in engineering in 1851 and in building in 1859-60.

After trade unions were established the employers began to use the reformist trade union leaders to contain the organised strength which was emerging. These leaders could also be used by such middle class political leaders as John Bright in their war against the landed aristocracy who still dominated the political institutions of capitalist Britain. In this way was cemented an alliance between the Liberal Party and the mainstream trade union leaders which lasted for two generations.

This period of the 'acceptance' of trade unionism thus did much to establish the role of the movement and its leadership. Yet the position which was then established was very much a reflection of the dominant strength of British capitalism. Attitudes developed then which persist to the present day have now become a block to the further service of the interests of the working class. The 'aristocracy of labour' achieved much in building the first permanent trade unions. The first generation of the caste of union bureaucrats were able to claim the credit for the legalisation of trade unions. But all traces of aristocratic spirit and bureaucratic leadership will now have to be swept away in an epoch when quite new chapters of the history of the working class are about to be written.

'INVESTIGATOR'S HANDBOOK'

Published by COMMUNITY ACTION : 30p

REVIEW by John Lister

"Open the Books!" is a slogan much used and much abused in the growing crisis of British capitalism. From the lips of the reformist trade union and Labour leaders it is a plea to the employers to deliver a watertight alibi for their own refusal to defend jobs and wages.

But from the growing numbers of workers involved in struggle to defend their right to work, and against the employers' offensive on speed-up and on wages, it is a demand with a revolutionary content. It threatens to set loose the treasured and sacred "business secrets" of the capitalist class, and is intimately bound up with the threat to end private ownership itself.

The *Investigator's Handbook*, a guide to hundreds of sources of publicly available, but often little known information on companies, organisations and individuals provides a key to background material which can, if correctly used, greatly strengthen campaigns by workers for company books to be opened to trade union committees.

The *Handbook* is mainly directed towards assisting the 'libertarian' and anarchist currents which surround 'community newspapers' and of course for this reason misses out the significance of the fight to force companies to reveal business secrets. That is not the authors' intention. They seek to provide access to information for exposes rather than to direct towards the class questions involved in access to the account ledgers.

SECRETS

Indeed merely to dig around in the sources discussed in the *Handbook* will not in itself open the books of industry. But by revealing previously unknown information on the company in question, by revealing little known connections, and

some of the complexity and concealment involved, such material can show powerfully the necessity of trade union struggle to demand the full picture, the unpublished material, the 'secrets' themselves.

Why open up the secrets of capitalism? Because only when the broadest possible layer of workers understands the necessity to end the system can the necessary determination arise to carry through the overthrow of capitalist private property.

The exposure of the concealed workings of the system begins to prepare for this, because it shows not only the corruption, the profiteering, the manipulation and the gross exploitation which are inherent in capitalism, but also its increasing bankruptcy, its squandered resources, and the block it puts on scientific and technological improvements.

For Marxists the opening of the accounts of industry has always been a means to mobilise the masses. This is why as Trotsky wrote in his *History of the Russian Revolution*: "At the June [1917] Congress of Soviets, Lenin demanded serious measures of struggle against lock-outs, plunderings and organised disruption of economic life on the part of the industrialists and bankers. 'Publish the profits of the capitalist gentlemen, arrest fifty or a hundred of the biggest millionaires. It will be enough to hold them for a few weeks, even on such privileged terms as Nicholas Romanov is held, with the simple aim of compelling them to reveal the threads, the tricky manipulations, the filth, the selfishness, which even today under the new [reformist coalition] government are costing our country millions'".

[*History of the Russian Revolution*, Volume 1 p392]

This method itself flowed from the lessons and movements of that revolutionary period. Workers had begun in any case to challenge both the employer's right to shut down factories, and the figures on which he based his case:

"The manufacturers would refer to an absence of fuel, raw materials,

accessories, credits. The factory committees would interfere in the matter and in many cases indubitably establish the fact of a malicious dislocation of industry with the goal of bringing pressure on the workers, or holding up the government for subsidies. . . . In several cases the sabotage was so obvious that as a result of the exposures of the shop committees the industrialists found themselves compelled to re-open the factories, thus laying bare one contradiction after another."

[*History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. 1, p. 385]

PROGRAMME

The struggle itself then could have the most dramatic effects. Of course Trotsky is here describing a revolutionary period, but when we turn to the programme for agitation in the present epoch — "a pre-revolutionary period of agitation, propaganda and organisation", as Trotsky's Transitional Programme describes it — then such demands play a role in mobilising the working class and in the training and development of revolutionary leadership. "Open the Books" as a transitional demand in this way starts from the daily struggles and problems of workers, and clashing at each point with the requirements of capitalism and the limitations of reformism and Stalinism, directs workers towards the basic questions of power. Trotsky shows this clearly in the Programme:

"Workers no less than capitalists have the right to know the 'secrets' of the factory, of the trust, of the whole branch of industry, of the national economy as a whole. The immediate tasks of workers' control should be to explain the debits and credits of society, beginning with individual business undertakings; to determine the actual share of the national income appropriated by individual capitalists and by the exploiters as a whole; to expose the behind-the-scenes deals and swindles of banks

and trusts; finally, to reveal to all members of society that unconscionable squandering of human labour which is the result of capitalist anarchy and the naked pursuit of profits." (p. 22)

Here Trotsky talks of opening the books in the context of workers' control, meaning control by factory committees over the management, which creates a "dual power" within the factory at the point of production. The employer still owns the plant, and still receives the profits. But on questions relating to the production process workers organisations begin to deprive him of the control of that plant, demanding final say on manning, on track speed, on pay. As Trotsky states this situation cannot long continue because "by its very essence it represents the transitional state, because it includes in itself two irreconcilable regimes: the capitalist and the proletarian."

Completely different from current phoney concepts of 'participation', the factory committee retains full independence as a trade union committee. To strengthen its position in the plant it must work for the widest support, and and, in this, publicising information on the company concerned, its links, its profits, its swindling and deceit of the workers can play a key role.

CHALLENGE

At the same time we must be clear that to carry through the fight for such factory committees raises the question of what kind of leadership is prepared in this way to challenge, root and branch, the most entrenched capitalist property relations. Only the most resolute and politically conscious layers will carry through such a fight, and this demands the building of a Trotskyist revolutionary leadership.

While mobilising broader layers of workers, the struggle to open the books trains groups of workers

to understand the workings of their industry, and opens up the possibility, after nationalisation, of that industry coming under workers' management, run by elected trade union committees, and dispensing with the old managers installed by the employers. Trotsky shows how factory committees must come together on regional and national levels:

"Thus workers' control becomes a school for planned economy. On the basis of the experience of control, the proletariat will prepare itself for direct management of nationalised industry when the hour for that eventuality strikes." (Transitional Programme p. 23)

The *Investigators Handbook* is thus an assistance only for the very first leg of this central struggle in the workers movement. Its political limitations are clear and to a certain extent self-confessed, though the authors correctly stress that:

"Information should be used politically. This pamphlet has not been prepared to encourage attacks on others for the hell of it. The information must be put to political use as part of a campaign." (p.5)

They go on to say that: "Reports and pamphlets are not the end of a campaign: they are part of it. . . . Generally the publicity they attract is short-lived, so that you should continue to lobby to follow up your report." (p. 6)

The use of the word "lobby" indicates the protest politics of the Community Action Group. Nevertheless the *Handbook* explains some basic techniques of research, some necessary terminology, and directs towards sources of information which should be known to workers.

It can therefore be recommended to trade unionists to be used in the fight in every plant for trade union committees to confront the employers and demand the disclosure of business secrets. Despite its flimsy cover, the 30p price should ensure a wide sale in the workers movement.

ITALY

MASS VOTE FOR CP

The massive gains made by the Communist Party (PCI) in the Italian regional elections represent powerful movements in the working class in the face of the economic crisis.

It is not the threat of the CP itself whose reactionary reformist policies — including remaining in NATO, pose no threat to the stability of Western capitalism but the movements of the working class which the CP electoral gains represent, that worries the ruling classes of Western Europe and the USA. Due to the massive leftward movements in the working class the whole of Southern Europe from Portugal to Turkey is now 'politically unstable' from capitalism's point of view.

LEFTWARD

The increased leftward movement of Italian workers reflected both in the increased CP vote and the massive anti-fascist demonstrations in May show that the working class is now looking for a new leadership in the face of the mounting economic crisis. Recent figures on the Italian economic situation reveal unemployment as over 1 million and the number of workers on short time has risen 8 times over the last 5 months.



Berlinguer

Coupled with this the elections revealed the complete bankruptcy of the existing 'centre-left coalition' dominated by Christian Democrats (CD) which has ruled Italy for the past 30 years. Fanfani, the CD leader fought the elections on a strictly anti-communist 'Law and Order' campaign focussing on the rising crime rate and allegations of 'left-wing violence'. Yet as thousands of workers demonstrated in May the real danger is the increasing violence of the Fascists. This in the context of the deepening economic crisis and the wave of revelations concerning attempted coups, and conspiracies to protect

Fascists involving right wing politicians provided the basis of an increased CP vote despite the total lack of leadership provided by the Stalinists.

Shortly after the elections the Stalinists made it quite clear that they intended to continue with the popular front strategy "above disagreements, and above ideological differences" of the "historic compromise" affirmed at the last party Conference. According to Armando Cassutta of the PCI executive, the Stalinist policy remains to seek an "agreement between all the major popular forces" i.e. the CP, the Stalinists

and the left elements in the C.D.

At the moment the various factions in the C.D are trying desperately to see if, by removing Fanfani from the leadership and putting on a more "left image" they cannot maintain their own bloc with the Socialists and so prevent a government involving the Stalinists emerging at the next general election.

PRESSURE

The policy of the Stalinists plays right into the hands of this manoeuvring by the bourgeois parties — they want to play exactly the same game! According to Cassutta the PCI gains in the regional elections have increased the possibility of a dialogue and pressuring the existing (capitalist) government structure towards "a more rational use of resources and the elimination of corruption".

Nothing of the sort! — the CP electoral gains show the working class now demands a socialist solution to the economic crisis and an end to Fascist violence. The popular front compromise policies of Berlinguer and the Stalinist PCI will lead nowhere but to defeats. The need in Italy now is for the building of a party which takes its starting point as a programme for independent working class solution to the crisis — workers defence squads to protect pickets and the working class community in general against the fascist violence, — factory occupation and the struggle for workers control and nationalisation against short time and redundancies.

Workers Diary

ALL CHANGE!

The latest news that the Treasury are considering issuing a £1 coin to replace the devaluing paper version should surprise nobody.

As the inevitable 'spokesman' told reporters, people "don't take care of" £1 notes any more, now that £1 is only worth the same as the old ten-bob note when it was abolished in 1969.

Obviously this is hinting that today's workers, weighed down with excess cash in fat wallets, are lighting cigarettes with £1 notes, wrapping chips in them and using stacks of them to prop up colour television sets.

Coins, they think, would be better treated. We believe plans are in hand for small trolleys to be hired to workers on payday to cart off their wages in coin form, and cranes and fork-lifts are being installed in banks to handle each day's takings.

LETTERS

The Editorial Board wants to encourage letters on any subject, which should be kept as brief as possible.

Please send them to:
WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill,
London NW5 1HR

MASS DEMO CALLS FOR

Over 15,000 people demonstrated through London on Saturday June 21st against James White's Abortion (Amendment) Bill. The demonstration, which enormously dwarfed a 300-strong Festival of Light counter demonstration, marched from Victoria Embankment, ending in a mass rally at Hyde Park.

But the speakers completely missed the class issues involved when calling for opposition to White's bill. Renee Short centred her speech around an attack on men, and completely avoided the fact that this reactionary bill would affect the rights of working class families - women and men. She thus restricts the fight to women only - saying that women Labour MPs would vote against the bill - but at the same time refusing to question White's right as a Labour MP to make this anti-working class move or to amke demands on men Labour MPs.

DEFENSIVE

The speakers and organisers took a defensive stand on the whole issue. They are not, in spite of the slogans, mobilising a fight to win 'Abortion on Demand' but are only campaigning to defeat this amendment.

This ignores the fact that the present law is far from adequate - as Leo Abse (co-sponsor of White's bill) never stops pointing out, it did not concede that abortion facilities were a right to every woman - it still depends on the area you live in and the views of individual doctors whether you can obtain an abortion now - and the middle class who know the system and can pull the right strings are heavily advantaged.

Obviously the bill must be defeated but the campaign must not stop there. At present there is a complete lack of struggle for this aspect of women's rights being waged by the Labour and trade union leaders. Trade union banners were put at the end of the march, showing that the NAC fails to understand the need to fight in the unions for the defence and advancement of the rights of women.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The demand for Abortion on Demand can only be taken up as part of the struggle of the working class as a whole to defend its rights and living standards against the attacks of capitalism. Such a struggle will come face to face with the bankruptcy of the existing trade union leadership, which has never seriously fought for the rights of women, for equal opportunity, and

ABORTION ON DEMAND



A small part of the 15,000 strong demonstration

adequate maternity leave on full pay. Nor are they prepared to fight the social contract or for the release of the Shrewsbury Two, or against other attacks on workers' standards of living.

The WSL leaflet on the march linked the questions of women's rights and working class leadership:

James White's reactionary bill is just one part of a series of attacks by the capitalist class and the Labour government on the health service and the living standards of the working class. By introducing this legislation White is firmly lined up with all those right wing elements to obtain more rigorous censorship and to intensify the oppression of family life are of a piece with trying to increase the exploitation of the working class on behalf of capitalism.

DISGRACE

It is a disgrace to the Labour movement that such a man as James White continues to represent it. Local Labour parties must take immediate steps to remove White and other MPs supporting his repressive policies, and for their replacement by others who are prepared to maintain the rights of the working class.

There must be a campaign throughout the entire labour movement for the defeat of this legislation. Decent health standards can only be guaranteed through the efforts of the organised working class. It is essential that there should be a continual struggle against all hospital closures, and for the maintenance of those standards of health care that the working class has a right to expect.

The defence of the health service has already begun in earnest. In the East End of London, where

facilities are being cut and the Poplar Hospital is threatened with closure, a committee of trade unionists has been set up to resist. Workers Socialist League members have proposed that the committee should demand access to the books of the area health authority as a step towards workers control of the service. Housewives, tenants groups and others must be involved in this struggle. The national conference of ASTMS has also voted in favour of joint committees of trade unionists to defend and improve standards in the health service.

FREE

The right to free contraception and abortion on demand must be part of any socialist health service. The achievement of any such aims is currently being held back by the policies of the Labour government in attacking the living standards of the working class in order to salvage the profits of capitalism in the face of world economic crisis. Even the existing inadequate standards of public health are now under attack.

Yet for the real emancipation of working women from the drudgery of domestic labour and the oppression of the bourgeois family much more is necessary. Communal kitchens must be established. There must be full communal child care facilities. Modern technology must be applied to the elimination of household tasks. Above all, women must no longer be cheap labour, the first to be sacked, compelled to make do on a reduced income..... The struggle for the rights of working women poses the necessity to replace the present leaders of the working class movement by those prepared to maintain their interests. The Workers Socialist League is fighting to build such a leadership as a necessary step in the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by a planned socialist economy.

AUEW TO FIGHT SACKINGS

The Labour Government's plans to impose wage-cuts on the working class received two major blows last week.

One was the concession of the railwaymen's wage claim, and the other was the decision of the National Conference of the AUEW opposing "any incomes policy having as its aim wage regulation through interference from any source".

Hugh Scanlon, the union president, spoke against the motion. He said the union should support the social contract as a way of avoiding the 'strengthened' version now being mooted.

"It will be a disaster if we are in any way committed to a social contract that envisages a deterioration rather than a maintenance of living standards. If the price of having to avoid such a disastrous step is to go with the existing contract then I am with that."

This argument is entirely spurious. The social contract was never designed to maintain living standards but to cut them. The most important question is whether this resolution will be fought for at the TUC conference and in the factories or abandoned as a similar one was last year.

RIGHT TO WORK

During the conference the latest increase in the unemployment figures was announced. Delegates passed an emergency motion saying that "every worker has a fundamental right to work" and instructing the union Executive to "mobilise and support action taken by the membership to enforce that right".

If this resolution is to be carried out it means that "action" in the



Scanlon - voted for social contract

form of, for example, occupations, in the defence of jobs must be declared official.

RYDER

The role of the Ryder report in attacking the jobs and conditions of British Leyland workers emerged clearly in the conference. Bob Wright, the so-called left, who recently lost the election for General Secretary to the right-winger John Boyd in a postal ballot, and who was closely involved in the investigation leading to the Ryder report, opposed a call for the nationalisation of Leyland. He argued:

"To say at this time that nationalisation is the only answer will to some extent set back our position in Leyland".

Wright clearly wants to keep his hands free for further deals at the expense of British Leyland workers. However, the motion was carried despite his opposition.

MERIDEN CO-OP THREATENS JOBS

Short-time working and possible redundancies face 1,200 motor cycle workers at the Birmingham Small Heath plant and 1,500 workers at the Wolverhampton plant of Norton Villiers Triumph.

This follows a history of crisis in the British motor cycle industry starting with the collapse of the Birmingham Small Arms group and the establishment of NVT in 1973. Since then, NVT lost £8m and continues to lose £2m annually.

Affairs have been brought to a head by a drop of 60% on the American market for NVT 'super bike' exports. This is a reflection of the world wide capitalist slump where restoration of profitability demands massive speed-up, wage cuts and redundancies.

RIVAL

But this situation has been complicated by the existence of a rival plant - the so-called 'workers co-operative' at Meriden.

One of NVT's first decisions was to close the unprofitable motor cycle plant at Meriden, which resulted in an 18 month battle to keep the plant going by forming a co-operative sponsored with £5m from the government.

The acceptance of this reformist scheme had an enormous effect at Meriden. The labour force was halved from 1,750 to 870, all demarcation was ended, wages were established at a flat rate of £50 a week - lower than the average wage in the area.

In other words the profitable restoration of Triumph at Meriden was entirely at the workers expense. In the first four months of its existence Triumph Meriden has doubled its productivity and now has reduced its labour force to 350!

SPEED UP

To restore profitability has meant that the workers co-op has been forced to replace workers by machinery, introduce speed-up, and enforce a massive cut in its wage bill.

NVT is contracted to sell the Meriden output for its first two years and considerable resentment is felt by workers in the Birmingham and Wolverhampton plants where the co-op is seen as a direct threat to their jobs.

In this context, where Dennis Poore, himself, the chairman of NVT is demanding that the government nationalise, a programme capable of defending all jobs, including the 350 at Meriden, has to be fought for.

On this basis the books of the company should be opened and the demand for the nationalisation under workers management of the entire motor cycle industry without compensation, should be advanced. The demand has to be fought for in relation to the development of a planned economy under workers management. As part of this workers should demand state finance and state contracts to maintain production.

CAR INDUSTRY

COWLEY

Workers at the BLMC Cowley Body Plant, like many other workers, accepted rises of 12% in the annual Wage Review in February.

At the time one of the factors in securing acceptance, as well as the threat to jobs, was the statement at a mass meeting of production workers, by the T&GWU official that if the cost of living rose by more than 10% from December he would go back to management and demand more.

Of course this increase in the cost of living has taken place and the WSL locally has been concentrating on this statement in all the

leaflets put into the plant. We have said that this vindicated our fight for a sliding scale of wages clause to be included in the review, and that this should now be fought for.

The T&GWU stewards decided on Wednesday 18th June to put in the claim. This was then taken to the works committee and all unions agreed to go along with the claim. On Friday 20th June the works committee met the management who refused to make any offer. The union officials have now been called in.

COVENTRY

The Chrysler car company are continuing their hard line

against their work force in Britain.

The 350 workers at their Coventry plastic components plant have been on strike for two weeks demanding payment for the period that they were laid off because of the Stoke engine plant dispute.

This issue of lay-off pay is continuously arising in the motor industry because of the insecurity of earnings.

The reply of the Chrysler management to this important issue for the whole motor industry is to threaten a total shut down, making 20,000 workers idle - unless the 350 strikers agree to take their dispute to arbitration without preconditions.

The Chrysler company therefore would rather see their whole British production stopped, than concede this money.

T & G MUST REJECT CONTRACT



Jack Jones

Jack Jones, architect of the original social contract, will be fighting hard for his plans for wage control at the T & GWU Biennial Delegate Conference beginning on Monday.

This will be the centre of the agenda of this policy-making body of Britain's largest union, and the GEC has tabled a resolution supporting the 'contract'.

TURNING POINT

The debate comes at a turning point in the struggle of the working class following the blow to the Labour Government struck by the NUR.

Jones, however, will seek the authority of the conference to push through his call for flat-rate increases across all industries.

His argument emerged at a T & GWU rally on May 17th, when he said:

"The trade union movement must find ways and means to secure a positive response to the government's efforts to fight the effects of the economic crisis; Wages are by no means the main cause of inflation, but the present trend for wages to increase faster than prices spells economic disaster". This argument attacks the very reason why unions were built - not just to defend existing conditions, but to improve them through struggle against the employer. How can living standards improve if wages are not allowed to increase faster than prices?

If this does as Jones states spell "economic disaster" then it questions whether workers can afford to allow the capitalist system to continue, not whether living standards should be improved.

It is also untrue that, as Jones suggests, his plan could reduce

inflation by 10%. All it will do is cut the value of wages, while inflation, created by the system of capitalism, continues unabated.

The WSL calls on all delegates to reject Jones' position, which if adopted would sacrifice the basic principle of free collective bargaining - a principle upheld in many resolutions passed at the last BDC.

In rejecting the social contract, the T & GWU conference can line up with the AUEW, the Scottish and Yorkshire areas of the NUM and other unions which reject the social contract.

SLIDING SCALE

The only answer to inflation is not wage restraint, but to fight for a sliding scale of wages clause in pay agreements, giving point for point increases in line with the cost of living index worked out by trade union committees.

Two motions on the agenda call for such a policy - one from the 5/293 (BLMC Cowley) branch. They must be supported as the only way forward on wages.

The other big issue, as the Labour Government moves towards massive cuts in public spending will be unemployment. Again the crucial resolution is from 5/293 branch, calling for a sliding scale of hours - work sharing on full pay - and full support for workers who occupy their factories in defence of jobs. The AUEW conference last week passed a strong resolution in support of the right to work.

The decisions of the T & GWU conference will have a big influence on the TUC conference which follows it. If the T & GWU conference votes down the social contract, then it will disrupt the attempts being made by the Labour and TUC leaders to blame workers' wages for inflation, and would challenge Healey's threat of "Tory policies" in six weeks' time.

'BENN'S BILL' - THE FACTS

The removal of Benn from the post of Secretary for Industry by Wilson has been followed rapidly by talk of amendments to the Industry Bill which Benn had been steering through the Commons.

Even before his removal Benn had hinted at the possibility of a second White Paper being published to 'clarify' the bill's provisions, and over the last week, despite evasive talk by Varley, Benn's replacement, it seems clear that Wilson is determined to amend the Industry Bill into two areas:

Firstly to reduce or abolish the bill's power to compel information from firms even if they are involved in "planning agreements" with the National Enterprise Board which the bill sets up.

Secondly to curtail the power of the NEB to invest in industry without the consent of the companies concerned in that industry.

PROTECTION

It would be utterly wrong to see these amendments as an abandonment by Wilson of any previously "socialist" policies. The provisions for the disclosure of information in the original bill were well padded with protection for business secrets such that trade union representatives on the NEB could face up to two years' imprisonment for revealing such information. [See Socialist Press No.1]

The object of these provisions was simply an attempt to draw trade unionists into the process of Industry's rationalisation and reorganisation which necessarily meant an increase in speed-up and unemployment.

This is shown in the second point now proposed for amendment - the powers of the NEB to provide financial assistance and to nationalise industries or sectors of industry. The aim was clearly to use state finance as a tool for the further reorganisation of industry and the restoration of profitability at the expense of the working class.

This emerged in the one example of NEB intervention - the Ryder report. Ryder gave massive hand-outs of cash and made provisions for worker "participation" in management in return for massive increases in productivity, and labour force reductions over a period of years.

The content of Benn's Industry Bill has therefore always been speed-up and unemployment to

restore the profitability of capitalism but has tried to incorporate layers of bureaucrats into the operation of this in order to defuse resistance.

RADICALISM

Benn's verbal radicalism gave some capitalists the impression that he would not stand firmly enough against workers threatened with unemployment.

We should have no such illusions. Benn, though nominal mover of the Industry Bill, was backed all the way by Wilson, and has never opposed Wilson except when permitted on the Common Market issue.

He has supported Healey's budget attacks on jobs and since his removal by Wilson as a gesture to the bankers, Benn has shown his completely unprincipled careerism by refusing to attack the move, and meekly accepting the new job.

A sharper insight into Benn's politics was given by his first public appearance as Energy Minister where he invited his Tory opposite number on a "non-political day", congratulating the oil monopolies on bringing ashore the first North Sea oil.

Benn in his new job thus continues the role of confusion glossed over by left talk which has kept him his cabinet position and protected Wilson and Healey.

FUND

DEVELOPMENT FUND
£500 Monthly

While both the TUC and the Labour leaders collaborate with the CBI and seek a capitalist 'solution' to the crisis, the need is for a leadership with a programme to defend jobs and wages.

The success of the WSL in expanding into new areas and the growing support for its policies stem from this understanding and the programme put forward in Socialist Press.

Our development fund helps expand the work of Socialist Press, preparing to expand the paper itself beyond an 8-page fortnightly.

Please send donations to:

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

Massey Ferguson

After 5 weeks of strike and occupation, Massey Ferguson workers returned to work after an offer of an additional 45p on top of 13%. This amounts to a wage cut and the responsibility for it falls clearly on the trade union leaders.

At the crucial point in the struggle - after the High Court decision to order the end of the occupation - the Birmingham branch of the WSL distributed a statement to Massey Ferguson workers, sections of which are reprinted below.

"The decision of a High Court judge on Friday to order the ending of the occupation of the Massey Ferguson tractor plant in Coventry must be resisted. It is an attack not just on the occupation, but on the strike, on the ability of workers at Massey Ferguson to fight the attack on wages. Massey Ferguson had prepared in advance for a long strike; the only way to make the strike effective was to occupy

the plant. Following the High Court decision, designed to weaken the strike, the Shop Stewards Committee has been shown to be completely correct in boycotting the court hearing. The occupation must be continued in opposition to any legal moves against it.

The attack on the occupation by the courts is only the latest attempt to use the law to break the resistance of workers. We have seen the conspiracy laws of 1875 resurrected for use against pickets - the jailing of the Shrewsbury 2 - the Immigration Act used to deport militant workers, and recently the use of the police to smash the student occupation at Warwick University. The employers are preparing all these laws for use to discipline and weaken the working class.

In the fight to continue the occupation, workers face not just the opposition of the "law of the land", and the company, but also the AUEW leadership and district officials. Throughout the strike the District Committee has done nothing to mobilise

STEEL STRIKE

The British Steel Corporation plant at Port Talbot, South Wales faces total shut-down as the result of a strike by 3,800 steel workers fighting proposals to implement new work schedules, which would mean wage cuts for large numbers in the plant.

The new work schedules drawn up in cooperation with local trade union leaders are a result of the agreement made last month by the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation and the BSC. The agreement, made under the supervision of Wedgwood Benn, fraudulently proclaimed, in the capitalist press as a "reprieve" for steel jobs was a plan for rationalisation and speed-up.

In the Port Talbot plant the new schedules, by cutting out weekend working, will effectively cut the wages of some workers by 30%. Average earnings will then be forced down by between £15 - £20 per week.

Despite the public "row" with Monty Finniston, BSC chairman, and his left posturing at steel workers demonstrations, Benn

has continuously collaborated with the BSC board in preparing the present attacks. It was on his initiative as Industry Secretary that the present agreement was made for the destruction of existing manning agreements.

Steel workers must demand that those 'lefts' such as Benn and Foot urgently take up the defence of jobs and wages against the capitalist class and the Labour right wing or make way for those who will.

The demand must be taken up for the sacking of Finniston and the abolition of the BSC board. Committees of trade unionists at local, regional, and national levels must demand access to all accounts and information available to BSC management, with the right to supervise and control their actions. This must be the first step to full workers' management of the nationalised steel industry.

As the present cutback in demand for steel threatens jobs, the demand for work sharing on full pay must be fought for and the workforce retained in preparation for eventual expansion of the industry necessary for a socialist planned economy. Only with these perspectives can steel jobs be defended.

W.S.L. Public Meetings

COVENTRY

Tuesday, 1st July, 7.30pm.
Mercia Pub,
Cross Cheaping, Coventry.
"Oppose the Social Contract".

LIVERPOOL

Sunday, 29th June, 7.30pm
Bradford Hotel,
Tithebarn St, Liverpool 2.
(next to Exchange station).

support for the strike. George Butler, Coventry organiser, has now instructed AUEW members to quit the plant. This refusal to mobilise support is similar to the isolation of a strike at Crosfield Electronics in London where workers occupied following threats of closure. High Court writs were served, the occupation defeated, and 25 jobs lost, while the union leadership refused to fight".

REMOVE PRENTICE

The decision of the General Executive of the Newham NE Labour Party to recommend to the GMC that their extreme right-wing MP Reg Prentice be asked to retire at the next general election is a reflection of the hostility of the rank and file of the Labour Party to the betrayals of the Labour Government.

This example should be followed in all constituencies with right wing MPs and candidates (including Harold Wilson's constituency). It is in complete contrast to the way the 'lefts' in Parliament have refused to move to challenge Wilson, Jenkins and other Labour leaders.

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This fight begins on the shop floor but must be taken into the Labour Party itself.

In this fight those MPs, like the Tribune Group, who claim to stand to the left of Wilson must stand up and be counted. Their record so far is one of dismal capitulation on every question.

Those who refuse to lead the widest possible fight against Healey's spending cuts will share responsibility for them. The 'lefts' must fight to remove Wilson and Healey from the Labour leadership, and replace them with leaders prepared to defend the working class.