

SOCIALIST PRESS



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MARCH FOR ABORTION RIGHTS!

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION ON ABORTION RIGHTS
Assemble at 1.30 p.m.
Saturday 31 March at Hyde Park

KICK OUT CALLAGHAN FIGHT FOR A SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE!



As we go to press there seems a slim chance that the Callaghan-Healey government might scrape through Wednesday's vote of confidence by the skin of its teeth.

Were this to happen and the Election be postponed it would be little consolation to the working class. While no worker wishes to see the Tories come to power, this wretched Labour cabinet, comprising scabs, collaborators, careerists and torture-chief Mason, is good for nothing.

Its five-year record of wage controls, mass unemployment and cuts in the social services have antagonised thousands of the working class supporters that put Labour into power hoping for socialist policies after the miners had brought down Heath's hated Tory government.

Sickened

Callaghan's present Parliamentary minority is itself the product of successive by-election defeats in which sickened Labour voters, seeing Callaghan offer nothing but plunging living standards, crumbling social services and growing dole queues, stayed at home or even cast protest votes for other parties.

As a minority government the Callaghan clique has continued to rule only by the most reactionary deals and alliances.

The Liberal Party's decision last year to break up the anti-socialist Lib-Lab coalition deal was followed by a succession of squalid back-stage

manoeuvres with the "tartan Tories" of the Scottish Nationalist Party.

Then more shameful still, came deals with the Ulster Unionists to legislate the consolidation of British imperialist rule in the occupied six counties through the provision for additional "border troops".

Having pulled back from an October election Callaghan was forced to pursue this wheeling and dealing while working might and mané to force home a fourth phase of wage controls—the 5% limit.

Yawning gulf

But a massive wave of working class resistance—beginning with the Ford's strike and lasting through to the present Civil Service pay struggles—exposed more vividly than ever before the yawning gulf between the pro-capitalist policies of the Callaghan government and the mood of the working class.

The result is that even while the diversionary "devolution" charade collapsed around their ears, the usefulness of the Callaghan cabinet to the capitalist class as a mechanism for controlling the working class dwindled to vanishing point.

Now anxious to get her hands directly on the windpipe of the working class, Thatcher has moved in for the kill, confident that Callaghan has driven away sufficient Labour voters to ensure a Tory victory.

£700m cuts

A sample of the policies to be pressed home by a Tory government was revealed in Thatcher's speech on the weekend, where she looked forward to cutting at least £700 million off public expenditure—even while boosting spending on the armed forces and the police.

These well-paid state thugs would no doubt be kept busy: Thatcher also proposes to attack trade union rights on picketing and the closed shop.

Tax cuts for top management will be coupled with new taxes on unemployment and sickness benefits. Thatcher's government will make even Callaghan look like Santa Claus.

It is of course Callaghan and the right wing Labour leadership who have opened the door to the Tories.

But they have been allowed to do so by the wretched opportunism of the Tribuneite 'left' wing that has time and again refused to lift a finger to fight for the removal of the Callaghan cabinet, or even to vote against



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Callaghan—opened door to Tories

their reactionary policies in Parliament.

As a result of their spinelessness, the Labour Party faces the prospect of a 1979 election with a manifesto that contains nothing, whatever for the working class.

Callaghan's election propaganda will focus on the reactionary TUC/government "Concordat", which itself proposes attacks on trade union rights and permanent wage control.

Labour offers not a smell of nationalisation; nor a breath of anti-imperialism; not even a hint of even the most puny reforms.

This bankruptcy is the Tories' greatest weapon.

Remove them!

This crisis cannot be resolved while the Callaghan gang remains in the leadership of the Labour Party.

The task of removing them must be confronted now. The precise timing of the election is a side issue to the massive crisis of leadership facing the working class.

Socialist Press has repeatedly urged socialists in the labour movement to campaign for a recalled Labour Party Conference to provide the platform to kick out the existing leadership and wage a struggle for socialist policies.

But in the event of an April or May election, socialists in each union branch and Labour Party must demand that their CLP draw up its own election manifesto based on the socialist policies necessary to defend the interests of the working class.

Withdrawn

Labour candidates in each area should be forced to declare support for such policies or have Party backing withdrawn in favour of a candidate who will.

At the same time any Labour 'lefts' who still profess to oppose Callaghan must be called upon to come out clearly

and lead a campaign for the removal of the present leadership and the adoption of a socialist internationalist policy.

There is no question that the best elements of the working class will respond to any serious campaign, to keep the Tories out of office.

But these workers must also be offered a perspective for ousting the Tories in their own ranks.

Those 'lefts' that refuse to mount such a fight reveal their own inability to struggle for socialist policies.

Revolutionary party

Indeed, whatever the precise developments, the next few months will be crucial months for the construction of a principled, revolutionary leadership in the working class.

The Workers Socialist League, fighting to build such a leadership, will continue to campaign for the organised working class to take up the struggle for the following policies:

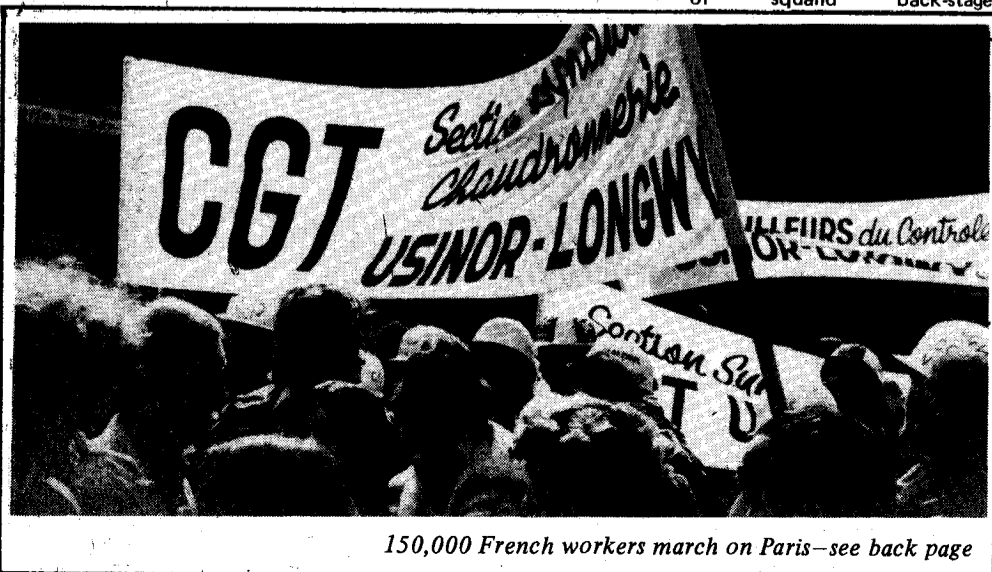
*End all wage controls! Defend living standards through wage claims with cost of living clauses to protect against inflation!

*End unemployment! Defend existing jobs through occupations demanding work-sharing on full pay. Demand a crash programme of useful public works to create new jobs!

*Open the books of employers that refuse wage demands or threaten sackings! Prove the case for the nationalisation of major industry without compensation under workers' management.

*Strike to stop the cuts in public services! Fight for a sliding scale of public spending protected against inflation. End private health care and education. Nationalise the suppliers!

*An end to national oppression and racism! Withdraw British troops from Ireland now! Scrap the racist immigration laws! No to import controls!



150,000 French workers march on Paris—see back page



General strike—but Irish bureaucrats try to head off fight on pay

Staged in complete defiance of the bureaucratic leaders of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, last week's colossal demonstrations in Ireland were bigger than any mobilisations over the last 50 years.

250,000 workers downed tools and joined huge marches through Dublin, Cork and Galway in protest at the effects of inflated levels of PAYE tax on workers' pay packets.

The Dublin march alone, organised by the Dublin Council of Trade Unions, was estimated by police at over 200,000—one third of the city's total population. A similar turn-out in London would bring 3½ million onto the streets.

Backing

It was accompanied by a virtually complete general strike in the city, officially backed by the Irish TGWU, the Amalgamated TGWU, and the Busmen's union, but unofficially backed by thousands of other workers and by thousands of housewives.

But as workers flooded the streets of the capital one group of people was still hard at work on behalf of Jack Lynch's reactionary Fianna-Fail government.

A working party of ICTU bureaucrats chose the very day of the mass protest to meet Economic Minister O'Donoghue at Government Buildings.

And while their work of class collaboration—aimed at devising some kind of "social contract" to head off any confrontation over this year's round of wage increases—went on, government officials gave a very different response to a delegation of demonstrators headed by ITGWU leader Michael Mullen.

Only repeated complaints by union leaders on the doorstep of Government Buildings eventually succeeded in persuading porters to accept letters addressed to Lynch demanding a change in the PAYE system.

But the divisions on policy within the Irish trade union bureaucracy are more apparent than real. The way in which 'left' sections of the union leadership have focussed on taxation as an issue is a conscious diversion from an all-out struggle to raise wages after the collapse of the National Wage Agreement.

Limited impact

While it is true that the Irish working class bears a disproportionate burden of taxation in relation to farmers and small, medium and big business, trade union action can only have an extremely limited impact on the tax system.

There is no way in which Lynch's pro-imperialist government is going to be "pressured" into imposing tax burdens on imperialist or Irish-owned industry, or on their electoral supporters among Ireland's farmers.

Advance

But there is little doubt that concerted trade union action to achieve substantial wage increases, protected against inflation and taxation through cost-of-living clauses, combined with the demand for the removal of the Lynch government could massively advance the struggles of the working class.

The only way falling living standards, mass unemployment oppression of small farmers and imperialist domination of the Irish economy can be ended once and for all is through the

establishment of a government of workers' parties which must be compelled by the mass movement to carry through a programme of nationalisation of major industry and the banks without compensation, and the establishment of a planned socialist economy.

Trotskyist Party

In this struggle the crucial issue is the building of a Trotskyist party capable of leading the struggle for working class independence against all wings of the trade union bureaucracy.



Fergus Whelan of Dublin Trades Council addresses part of the huge crowd

Blanket protest victory

In SP130 we reported a protest by Noel Murray and other prisoners in the Curragh Military Detention Centre.

We have now received information as to the cause of the protest.

As we have previously reported the Curragh contained less than half a dozen long term prisoners.

To keep the prison open the Lynch government filled the prison with child molesters, rapists, drug addicts and inmates of the local mental hospital.

The political prisoners were objecting to this and to the fact that the Governor had instructed the inmates to paint the prison.

This job had traditionally been done by outside contractors using union labour.

The political prisoners refused to do the work, not wanting to scab on the workers of Dublin.

For this act of class solidarity all privileges (including mail and visits) were removed for the weeks over Christmas.

We are pleased to report that the protest succeeded.

Privileges have been restored and the painting will be done by union labour.

The treatment of political prisoners in the Republic mirrors the treatment in the north.

Refusal by the authorities of permission to Amnesty Inter-

national to investigate prison conditions and charges of torture and harassment has led the Prisoners Rights Organisation to hold a public inquiry into such allegations.

The meeting, planned for early April, will last two days and will be chaired by Sean Macbride (Nobel Peace Prize winner), a prominent Dutch judge and various prominent figures from the legal profession and labour movement.

Exposure

It is hoped that the recent exposure by doctors in the north of torture by British imperialism will encourage similar developments in the South.

Coming at a time of mount-

ing class struggles in the south, a thoroughgoing exposure of the real nature of Lynch's justice would help to deepen the crisis facing the Irish capitalist class.

Socialist Press congratulates the prisoners in the Curragh on their successful defence of workers' rights.

We call on the Dublin workers to campaign for the release of Noel and the others whose only crime has been to oppose imperialism and stand up for the rights of the oppressed.

The very least Irish workers could demand would be trial by jury for these people and an end to rigged trials of the Special Criminal Court presided over by judges alone.

Italy—elections seem certain

The new Italian government which was sworn in last week is a government set up to fall.

Under the Premiership again of Christian Democrat Giulio Andreotti, it also contains ministers from the Republican and Social Democratic Parties.

It does not command a majority in Parliament and its only chance of survival was if, when it faces a vote of confidence in about three weeks' time, the Socialist Party and Communist Party decided to abstain to keep it in office.

But within days of the announcement of the new government the socialists decided that their 57 MPs would vote against it in the confidence debate.

And with growing sections of the Communist Party in full revolt against leader Enrico

Berlinguer's treacherous class collaborationist policies which have kept reactionary Christian Democratic governments in office since 1974, a Stalinist abstention is now most unlikely.

Further blows have now been suffered: deputy Premier Ugo La Malfa has died and a major furore has erupted over the arrest of a top manager of the Bank of Italy.

A whole group of his leading colleagues have now threatened to resign en bloc unless proceedings against deputy director general Mario Sarcinelli (over irregular loans) are dropped.

The results seem certain to confirm the intractability and depth of that crisis.

But they will happen nonetheless—because at present the Italian bourgeoisie have run out of alternatives which would avoid them.

Muslims fight Taraki

The revolution in Iran has brought new hope to the oppressed masses throughout the Middle East.

But in neighbouring Afghanistan, its main influence so far has been to strengthen reactionary forces.

Inspired by the example of Khomeini's religious leadership, backward Muslim tribes have risen in an attempt to establish an 'Islamic republic' by overthrowing the 'left' bourgeois nationalist regime of Nur Mohammed Taraki.

Fighting in the eastern regions of Paktia and Kunar has grown steadily more serious, and drawn verbal fire from Taraki's sponsors—the Soviet bureaucracy.

In its first breath of criticism since receiving an accommodation with Khomeini and Bazargan, the Kremlin leaders have claimed unconvincingly that 6,000 troops of the Iranian army have been sent into Afghanistan to assist the rebellion.

They have gone on to cite the Peking bureaucracy and the military dictatorship in Pakistan as major supporters of this threat to their latest client-state.

Kurdish revolt

The hopes of the Iranian masses for freedom are coming into deeper conflict every day with the 'revolutionary' government of Khomeini and Bazargan.

Women are continuing to organise against the fetters with which the Islamic leaders and the bourgeois politicians are conspiring to bind them once again in oppression.

The oppressed nationalities within the borders of Iran are now straining to step forward into freedom, with demands that the Tehran-Qom government recognise their right to self-determination.

In the revolutionary ferment of the last year, it has been the Kurds who have been in the forefront of these struggles.

Independence

The Kurds live mostly within the borders of Iran, Iraq and Syria, with smaller numbers inside the Soviet Union and Syria.

For decades they have fought for national independence and a Kurdish state.

In Iran, the latest phase of this liberation struggle opened in 1975, when the Shah signed an agreement with the 'progressive' Ba'athist regime in Iraq for the complete suppression of the Kurdish people and their political organisations.

This phase reached a peak last week in an armed uprising of the Kurds, centring on the city of Samandaj in western Iran.

The garrison was besieged for several days as the Kurds set up their own Provisional Revolutionary Council.

Disarray

With the state army in disarray and still not re-formed the central government was in no position to smash the rising by force.

And as one Kurdish militant put it, "if they wish to disarm us, they will first have to massacre us."

Messengers were sent post-haste to negotiate with the Kurds.

In the end it was none other than the Ayatollah Taleghari—second only to Khomeini in authority—who hammered out a deal.

In this seven-point agreement, major concessions are made to the demands of the Kurds, but all within the framework of a centralised bourgeois state.

Not satisfied

Such compromises will not satisfy the demands of the Kurds.

But such a partial victory



Bazargan

will encourage them to continue their struggles further.

The agreement will also encourage the Baluchis, Azerbaijanis, Turkomenis and Arabs within Iran to press more actively for their demands from the Khomeini-Bazargan government.

But its effect will not be contained within Iran—the Kurds have long been a piercing thorn in the side of the Turkish and Iraqi governments.

The example of the achievements in Iran will certainly drive the Kurds to renewed activity in these other countries, and that old thorn will strike newer and far deeper wounds.



INTERNATIONAL

Elections threaten Francoist bastions

On April 3, only a month after the general election, Spain will again go to the polls—this time in the first municipal elections since 1933.

It was another April day, two years before the last municipal elections, which ushered in eight years of revolutionary struggle in Spain.

On April 12 1931, the decisive victory of the Socialist and Republican candidates in the municipal elections, which marked the end of seven years of dictatorship in Spain, led to massive popular demonstrations and within two days to the flight into permanent exile of the King, Alfonso XIII.

Precedent

It is almost certain that on April 5 1979 Franco's protege King Juan Carlos will still be sitting in the royal palace and his friend Adolfo Suarez will still be in the Moncloa Palace (seat of the Spanish government).

But the precedent of 1931 has been a persistent nightmare for the "reforming" Francoists of the Spanish government as well as the reformists and Stalinists.

To the masses of Spanish workers and peasants it is the municipal administrations (the Ayuntamientos) which, along with the armed police and Civil Guard have more than anything represented the real presence of Franco's inhuman dictatorship.

Up to today these municipalities and their official powers remain intact. That has been an integral part of the strategy of the present "reforming" government.

The municipal elections have been deliberately held back until after two general parliamentary elections and the approval by referendum of a new undemocratic constitution.

Expectations

The regime knew that municipal elections today, because of the large workers' majority in the major cities, would still be capable of vastly raising the expectations of workers in their own leaders.

Although the reformist and Stalinist leaders have made numerous formal complaints at the delay in the municipal elections, they have in practice shown themselves quite ready to go along with Suarez' plans to politically anaesthetise the working class.

Nonetheless, the prospect of the weakening of the bastion of Francoism, which the municipalities represent, is still a threatening prospect for the Spanish bourgeoisie.

Avoid majorities

And it will be much harder for the main workers' parties to avoid getting majorities on councils and mayoral elections than it was for them to avoid winning the general elections of March 3.

For this reason the ruling



Suarez, with friends, on the campaign trail

class is today busy working out all kinds of electoral irregularities (known in Spain as *casiquismo*—undue influence—and *pucherazo*—ballot rigging) which are certain to be much more widespread than in the general elections.

Also a good deal of evidence is coming to light in the press of the existing Franco-appointed councils using up their last few days of life by diverting municipal funds, passing reactionary regulations which will be difficult for the new councils to undo and appointing Francoists to powerful full-time

municipal jobs.

All of Spain's 8,000 municipal councils will be elected on April 3. This means nearly 70,000 councillors for which there will be over 200,000 candidates.

The electoral system is a limited form of proportional representation which nonetheless severely discriminates against the smaller minority parties.

Under the electoral law mayors will be elected by the elected councillors.

In the main municipalities electors will face 10 or more

separate lists of candidates.

Adolfo Suarez government party, the UCD (Democratic Centre Union) will be putting up candidates in about 7,000 of the 8,000 municipalities, the PSOE (Socialist Party) in about 3,000 and the CP in about 1600.

Both the PSOE and the CP, however, have candidates in all towns with more than 10,000 inhabitants.

In many of the smaller towns in rural areas there will be only one list, either of "independents" (who will in most cases be loyal Francoists) or of the hard-line Francoist Democratic Coalition (from which the former leader Manuel Fraga has now resigned).

In the working class areas there are also lists presented by the left wing parties which stood candidates in the elections—these include the centrist Communist Movement (MC), the two Maoist parties (ORT and PTE) who are this time presenting joint candidates (in 1250 municipalities) and have declared themselves on the point of unification, and the "Trotskyist" LCR, Spanish section of the "United" Secretariat of the Fourth International.

The LCR's campaign is distinguished with the same confusions which characterised their general election campaign.

They seem happy to describe the main workers' parties (PSOE and CP) as part of the left and proposed united candidacies lists with them on the vaguest possible reformist political basis.

Nonetheless an editorial in the latest issue of their paper *Combate* argues that "this vote for which the PSOE and CP are asking remains 'completely useless' in beating the UCD in the municipal elections."

Insofar as this remark refers to the electoral division between the PSOE and CP, which divides the working class on no principled basis and helps the UCD to power, it contains an element of truth.

Jamaica strike wave spreads

The strike wave in opposition to Prime Minister Manley's 15% wage ceiling continues unabated in Jamaica.

The strikes have spread from factories and ports to banking and insurance. The pay limit was imposed last year as part of the cost the working class would have to pay for a \$240 million IMF loan to shore up the ailing Jamaican economy.

Other austerity measures included a massive devaluation of the Jamaican dollar and swingeing price increases on basic items.

Power and sugar workers are also threatening strike action in pursuit of their own claims while waterfront workers walked out after the employers failed to pay a \$10 a week travel allowance awarded by the Industrial Disputes Tribunal.

Soldiers

Jamaican Defence Force soldiers were sent in to unload flour and local currency fresh from the mint from two ships at Port Bustamante in Kingston.

The use of troops as a scab force can only tarnish still further the 'left' posturing of Manley's PNP government.

The need for a Trotskyist party with a programme to mobilise the Jamaican working class for socialism is now urgently posed if the pro-imperialist Jamaica Labour Party is not to capitalise on the betrayals of Manley at the next election.

'New Jewels' plan 'mixed economy'

Bowing to the inevitable, Caribbean Prime Ministers are one by one recognising the new government in Grenada headed by Maurice Bishop, leader of the New Jewel Movement.

The coup which overthrew Sir Eric Gairy has the undoubted support of Grenadians both at home and abroad. Khaki clad youths—including 80% of the island's Rastas—are patrolling the island—guns in hand—or riding around in jeeps giving the clenched-fist salute.

Grenadians in Britain demonstrated in London in support of the new regime and demanded the establishment of a workers' and peasants' government.

Gairy was a pro-imperialist

dictator who used his "Mongoose Gang" to crush opposition to his regime. He forged close links with the Chilean junta which supplied him with arms.

The obvious concern of the Caribbean Prime Ministers in Caricom centres on the threat that such an upheaval poses to their own unstable governments.

The indications are, however, that they have little to fear from the new government.

Not only is Jamaica's 'left' talking Prime Minister Malcolm Manley in favour of the new regime but the first statements of Maurice Bishop clearly show the direction his government is heading.

Despite the fact that the New Jewel Movement (Joint Endeavour for Welfare, Education and Liberation)

states in its 1973 manifesto that it supports nationalisation of the banks and insurance companies and a system of government based on the Tanzanian model, Bishop is now arguing against the nationalisation of foreign-owned banks providing part of their capital is used for local development needs. He is also reported as saying: "We will plan for a mixed economy, but it will be development-oriented."

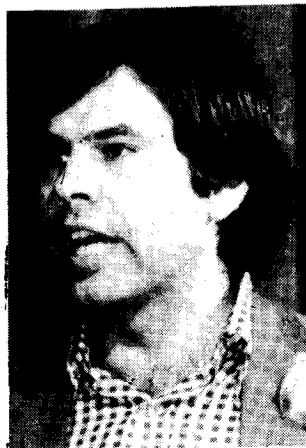
Although the overthrow of Gairy is to be welcomed, the workers and peasants of this impoverished island will only face a secure future as part of a socialist federation of the Caribbean in which they themselves control the wealth of the area.



Gairy



Bishop



PSOE leader Gonzalez

But the *Combate* editorial makes the call for a PSOE-CP vote conditional on those two parties ending their political rivalries.

The LCR apparently remains unaware of the use of the established Leninist tactics of voting for the workers' parties in order to force them into a situation where they must expose themselves.

The confusion of the LCR's campaign is now compounded, however, by their presentation of joint lists with other parties in particular in Euskadi (the Basque provinces) with the "left" nationalist candidates of the two parties linked to the different wings of ETA (Euskadiko Eskerra and Herri Batasuna).

In some circumstances it can certainly be correct to call for critical support to such candidates.

But the LCR's involvement with them in a joint list and limited joint programme necessarily blunts the impact of the clear revolutionary propaganda which it is the duty of any authentic revolutionary party to put forward in a bourgeois election campaign, whatever might be the voting tactics it advocates.

It is in Euskadi that, as in the Constitutional referendum of last December and the general elections earlier this month, the enmity between the masses and the UCD government is already showing itself most sharply.

The UCD after its electoral setback in the region on March 1, has been able to put up candidates in only 5% of the municipalities in Biscay province (one of the four Basque provinces).

No candidate

And in the most militantly nationalist of the Basque provinces, Guipuzcoa, the UCD has been unable to produce a single candidate!

This is already a warning that the government can expect that after these elections the question of self-determination for Euskadi (and the other nationalities of Spain) is likely to become even more explosive.

Also, after these elections, workers' parties for the time for 40 years will in some towns and cities be forced to take on responsibility for administration.

Despite all the electoral fraud and all the efforts of the Francoists, reformists and Stalinists to minimise the national political importance of these elections, that will be a significant development in the struggle to expose and remove the present working class leadership which is betraying Spanish workers to a new, apparently more "democratic" variety of Francoism.

DOCTORS BACK IRWIN: GET BRITISH TROOPS OUT NOW!



The allegations of Royal Ulster Constabulary torture of suspected republican prisoners in the notorious Castlereagh and Gough interrogation centres received further support last week.

Members of the Forensic Medical Officers Association of Northern Ireland voted in support of the stand taken by former Castlereagh police doctor, Dr. Robert Irwin, who has stated that he has evidence of at least 150-160 cases of brutality.

And leading police surgeon Dr. Denis Elliot, from the Gough interrogation centre, has publicly requested to be transferred, since he no longer feels able to comply with a 1975 Tokyo convention obliging doctors to expose cases of torture.

Set back

These continuing ripples among Protestant doctors hitherto silent on police and army brutality are another setback to the efforts of Labour's 'Minister for Torture', Roy Mason to evade the clear evidence of police brutality contained in the whitewashing Bennett Report.

And if next week's vote of confidence goes against the government, the blood-stained Labour cabinet will be forced into an early election with their reactionary role in Ireland a topic at the forefront of discussion.

No illusions

However there should be no illusion that a Thatcher government offers any ray of hope for the Irish liberation struggle—least of all for the 300 republican prisoners who continue with their heroic struggle in 'H' Block of the Long Kesh concentration camp, demanding the restoration of prisoner of war status.

Though political status was at first granted by the Tories and only scandalously withdrawn as part of Butcher Mason's "iron fist" attempt to crush the war of liberation, Tory spokesman Whitelaw has made it plain that he would not now sanction any such concession.

No future

While republican and socialist militants correctly criticise the sketchy resistance within the Labour and trade union movement to British imperialist oppression in Ireland, there is no future whatever in a perspective of "pressuring" a viciously anti-working class Thatcher government.

Rather the attention of the British working class needs to be focussed on the necessity to remove the reactionary Callaghan-Healey-Mason leadership of the Labour Party which

speaks and acts solely in the interests of British imperialism.

Same traitors

The fact that this Labour leadership supervises the military occupation of the six counties and the savage repression of all opponents of British rule is the same leadership that uses the Special Patrol Group to smash picket lines, the army to break strikes, and collaborates hand-in-glove with capitalism, must be stressed at each point.

While we continue to support and defend the legitimate struggles of Irish workers in the six counties against imperialism we must spare no effort in mobilising the British working class to the same ends—and force the immediate withdrawal of British troops, along with the granting of POW status to political prisoners preparatory to an amnesty.

PTA: Labour MPs abstain

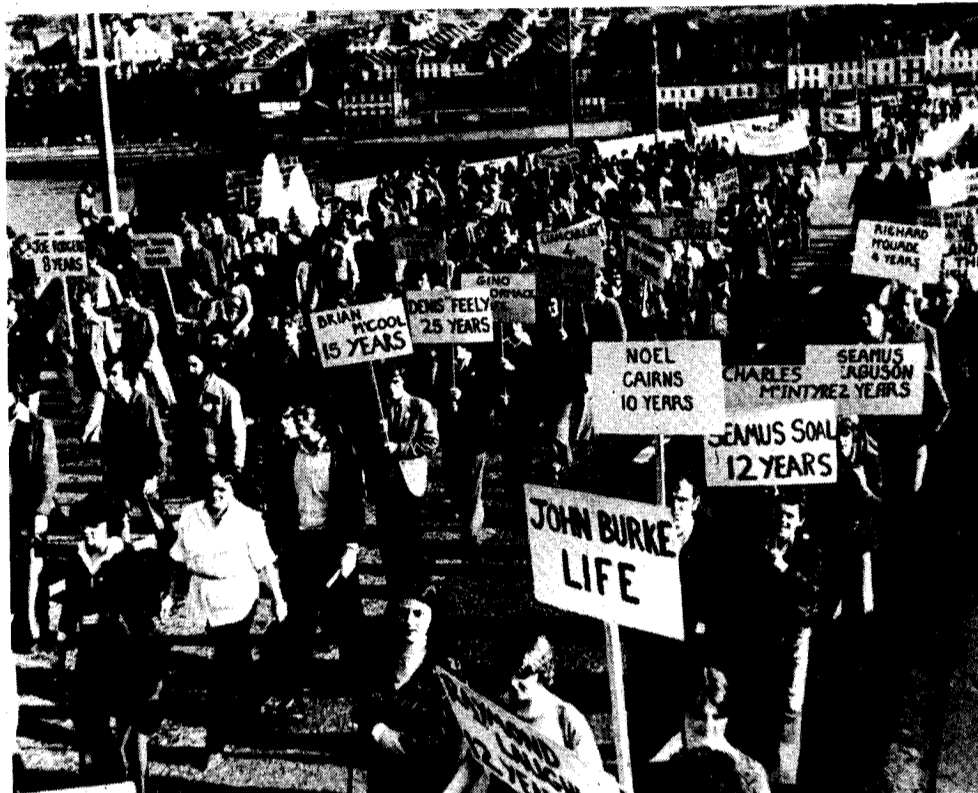
180 Labour MPs abstained despite a two line whip instructing them to vote in favour of a further renewal of the notorious so-called "Prevention of Terrorism" Act last Thursday.

Only 124 Labourites—most of them government ministers clinging on to careers—went into the lobbies to support the renewal, which was carried with the support of the Tories, Liberals, nationalist

and Ulster Unionist votes.

33 Labour "lefts"—a larger number than previously—went so far as to vote against the Act, under which well over 3,000 "suspects" have been held without charge for up to 7 days, only a handful of whom have subsequently been charged with terrorist offences.

Home Secretary Merlyn Rees had earlier scornfully rejected the puny cosmetic changes in the Act proposed by the Shackleton report.



Sinn Fein march in Derry last October takes up defence of 'H' Block prisoners

PHOTO: Eamonn O'Dwyer, IFL

SYL to join 'SUS' law demonstration

DEMONSTRATE AGAINST SUS
Saturday April 7 at 1.00 p.m.
Assemble Camberwell Grove, London SE5

The National Committee of the Socialist Youth League meeting last weekend decided to support the demonstration against the SUS law called by the Labour Party Young Socialists for April 7.

SUS, which enables police to arrest people suspected of being about to commit an offence under a law of 1824, has recently been extensively used by the Special Patrol Group against black youth in London.

Not the least of the crimes of the Callaghan-Healey Labour government has been the attack on workers' basic rights carried out over the last few years.

The use of the SPG as a vicious strikebreaking force and against demonstrators and black youth; the use of conspiracy laws against trade unionists and black youth; the use of the Prevention of Terrorism Act against Irish workers and the use of the Criminal Tresspass Law against occupations clearly reveal the way in which the Labour leaders have overseen the equipping of the capitalist state for the class confrontations which lie ahead.

Not single issue

The fight to defend democratic rights must not just be limited to the question of the SUS law.

The SYL will be marching with the following slogans:

*Repeat the SUS law—end police harassment of youth!

*Disband the SPG—the bosses' strikebreaking terror squad!

*Repeat the Prevention of Terrorism Act! Britain out of Ireland now!

*Defend workers' democratic rights—repeat the conspiracy and Criminal Tresspass laws.

*Kick out the Callaghan-Healey right wing!

Ireland war is no diversion! Letter

Dear Editor,

The article in *Socialist Press* (14.2.79) reporting the Liberation Conference on Iran remarked that an RCG member linked the struggle of the Iranian people to the anti-imperialist war waged by the Irish people against British rule in Ireland "in a somewhat diversionary manner".

Is it diversionary to point out that there was a large Iranian student contingent on January's Bloody Sunday march, called by Provisional Sinn Fein?

They showed their clear understanding of the link between fighting British imperialism in Ireland and the revolutionary struggle in Iran.

Is it diversionary to state that, at the moment when British imperialism finds itself under grave threat from the revolutionary struggles in Iran, Southern Africa and Ireland, the most urgent task of the working class is to build a movement resolutely opposed to the role of British imperialism in those countries?

Such a basis is the only one capable of consistently aiding the struggles of SWAPO, the

Patriotic Front, the ANC and the Iranian people.

The "horror" of Stan Newens appears when his most sensitive nerve is exposed—he claims to oppose the interests of British imperialism in Iran whilst denouncing the Irish liberation movement as fascist and continuing to give full support to the Labour government in its attempt to suppress the Republican working class.

Newens and Kerr are typical of the Labour and trade union leaders who would proclaim "support" for distant struggles whilst steadfastly supporting British imperialism at its weakest point—a war in Ireland which is shaking its very foundations, under the nose of the British working class.

Your fraternally,
Tony Sheridan
(RCG)

WE REPLY: Point taken! The remark in question was unfortunate and slipped through our sub-editing. We would also subscribe to the RCG's characterisation of Newens' selective approach to international questions. [Ed.]

STEP UP CHILE— BLACKING FIGHT

A mere 180 delegates sent for credentials for the Chile Solidarity Trade Union conference at the NUR Hall, Euston Road on Saturday 24 March—a clear sign of the way union leaders have ignored the struggle in Chile.

The morning was spent limply with Chilean TUC speaker Humberto Elgueta, Reg Williams of CPSA and a speaker from NALGO talking about the adoption of refugees.

After lunch in the discussion on the boycott of Chilean goods the conference began to take up questions that reveal what trade unionists can do in solidarity with Chile.

Orlando Letelier's widow spoke and asked for "concrete action" rather than words.

The conference was largely behind the demand for total blacking despite a Liverpool docks steward wanting to limit

the question to merely blacking perishables—such as citrus fruit.

The speaker from Rolls Royce, East Kilbride, where aero engines for the junta were blacked for four years, referred to the scandalous role of AUEW General Secretary Boyd in instructing the members to drop the blacking.

This point was picked up by a speaker from the WSL who pointed out that the capitulation to the courts by trade union bureaucrats in limiting and preventing solidarity actions was no rare phenomenon.

It had occurred in Grunwick with the Cricklewood postmen; by the UPW over the South African week of action; and at the Gamers picket line, where the TGWU officials had concurred with the police in limiting pickets to six.

As for the Labour Party bureaucracy, David Owen, the picket-crosser and lover of the Shah and Pinochet had no place in the labour movement.

He should be kicked out for his anti-working class policies, who said.

Speakers from the IMG and Workers Action then took up the point about the anti-working class policies of the Labour government whether in Britain or Chile.

The conference passed a declaration on blacking calling vaguely:

"to initiate new efforts to achieve the boycott of all trade with Chile, including the imports of food, and to coordinate with trade unionists in other countries, and to call for and respond to calls for action by the appropriate international trade union bodies."

If this is not taken up alongside a struggle against the bureaucratic leaders of the trade union and Labour movement who have blocked previous such moves, it will amount only to a fruitless gesture.

The task is to ensure that such a fight does take place.

EEC: a £5 billion dustbin

Nearly 80% of last year's Common Market agricultural budget of £6,500 million was squandered on storing, dumping and destroying "surplus" food, while preserving ludicrously high market prices.

This is simply the latest of a string of disclosures in relation to EEC agricultural industrial and economic policies that point unmistakably to the total anarchy of capitalism—even where, as in the EEC, governments exert every muscle to 'plan' and 'control' its development.

Market prices for food are kept high because this is the only way in which capitalism can placate sections of small farmers crucial to the electoral support of govern-

ments on the continent.

Yet such inflated prices not only require, but also help to create huge surpluses of unsold food-stuffs.

Guaranteed prices are therefore paid out each year by the EEC Commission for agricultural produce destined only for waste and destruction—while workers throughout Europe find wage packets insufficient to meet the soaring cost of living.

Meanwhile a new tax designed to drain the Common Market's milk lake is being dreamed up by EEC leaders which will benefit the least efficient peasant farmers owning less than ten cows—and fall with greatest severity on large, efficient herds of over 51 cows, affecting nearly every milk producing farm in Britain.

Such crazy attempts to



European heads of state at the recent summit meeting

set the clock back point once again to the complete inability of capitalism in crisis to develop the means of production in the interests of the vast majority of the population.

A Socialist United States of Europe, besides improving workers' living

standards, and thus increasing food consumption, would of course need to adopt policies designed to assist in the special problems of the peasant farmers.

This means providing cheap credit, transport and supplies through nationalised banks, haulage firms and manufacturing industry.

The nationalisation of the food processing industry and distribution monopolies would also ensure the peasant farmer received a fair price for his foodstuffs.

But at the same time a socialist system would in every way possible encourage peasant farmers to come together in more efficient, collective units where mechanisation and modern technology could

ease the burden of labour and draw them into the development of a fully planned, socialist economy, under workers' management.

Any "surpluses" accruing under such a planned economy would be either stored against possible future shortages, or exported in exchange deals with underdeveloped economies elsewhere in the world.

The present EEC structure, however, is not only not socialist, but is designed as a bulwark against socialist revolution—attempting to buttress up the various crisis-ridden capitalist governments in a mutual economic, political, and eventually military embrace.

This year's scheduled

elections to the toothless European Assembly are designed to mask this capitalist alliance under a facade of "democracy"—since there is, in any event, no way at all in which the EEC can be peacefully "reformed" into any kind of progressive body.

The fight for a concerted boycott of these elections must be linked with a struggle for the policy of breaking up the EEC, through forcing the withdrawal of Britain and the other member countries.

The task is not the hopeless one of seeking to negotiate or legislate improvements in the Common Market, but the revolutionary one of the overthrow of capitalism in each European country and the establishment of a Socialist United States of Europe.

Stop the lies on the Camden deal

We reprint below an open letter also sent to *Socialist Worker* and *Socialist Challenge*.

Dear Comrades,

As shop stewards centrally involved in the public sector pay fight in Camden which secured almost the full £60/35 hour week claim, we feel we must come out publicly in opposition to what amount to deliberately lying accounts of the settlement published in both *Socialist Worker* and *Socialist Challenge*.

Both papers claim that there was no political opposition to the acceptance of Camden Council's offer in the week of February 19.

Socialist Worker states outright that:

"Certainly in Camden no-one on the left argued for Camden NUPE to stay out."

The argument should have been put, but there is much strength [sic!] in the argument that not signing a settlement in Camden so near the claim will strengthen the opposition in NUPE to the sell-out".

(SW 17.3.79)

Socialist Challenge (March 1) takes a more roundabout way of distorting the truth.

In an article written by Sikorski and Varnes, and (unusually) endorsed by no less than the Political Bureau of the IMG, *Socialist Challenge* publicly disowns the actions of IMG member and Camden NUPE Branch Secretary John

Suddaby.

But it goes on to report the steps leading to the acceptance of the offer as follows:

"Prematurely assuming that the strike would crumble, they [the strike committee] voted to recommend acceptance to the mass meeting."

In addition, neither at the strike committee nor at the mass meeting did the branch leadership argue the case for Camden to continue to play their leading role by staying out for the full national claim."

The *Socialist Challenge* article dodges any mention of the opposition there was within the Negotiating Committee and within the Strike Committee to accepting the offer.

Instead it minimises the opportunism of IMG member Suddaby by palming off responsibility onto "the strike committee", "the branch leadership", and later even "the Camden leadership".

These terms are designed to give the impression that not only Suddaby but (since no opposition is mentioned) all the leading stewards involved in making the key decisions backed down.

This is simply not true. Indeed in an interview with *Socialist Press* (published 28 February), Cressy Road dustmen's steward John Seymour

described the opposition that existed to the offer among strikers, while pointing out Suddaby's role in pressing for a quick settlement in case the council withdrew their offer.

Seymour argued then, and continued to argue for Camden to press ahead—to win the claim in full for all sections of workers, and to strengthen the national struggle.

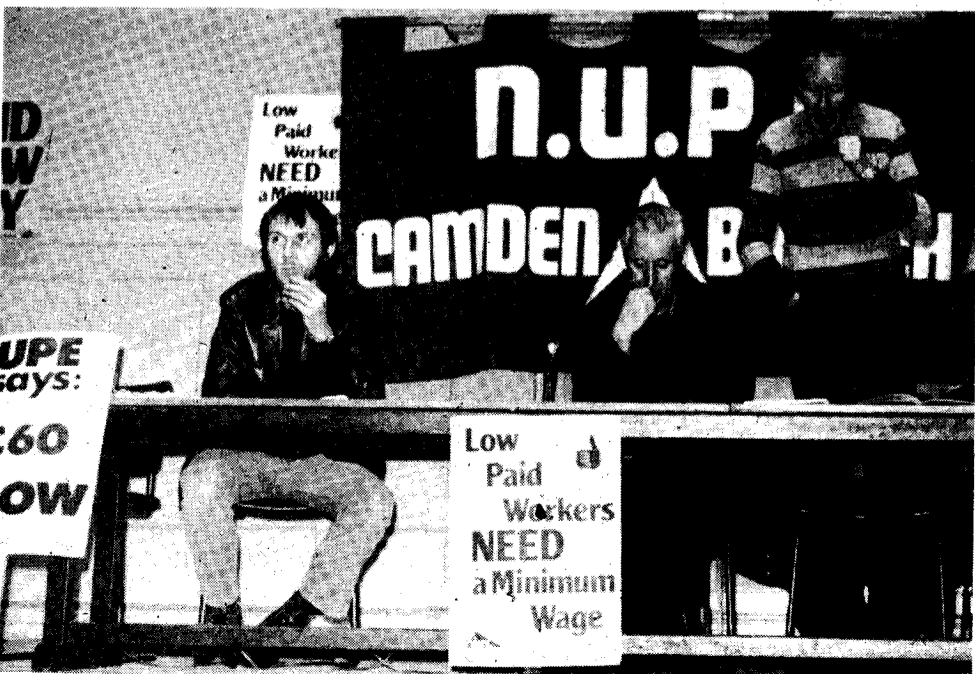
It was Suddaby who from 19 February onwards pressed the case for acceptance—and it was SWP members who actually proposed the mass meeting.

Thursday February 22 on the other hand saw no less than six strike committee members—including WSL members—vote against recommending acceptance.

These six were stewards from sections of dustmen, home helps (whom Suddaby wanted to be exempted from the strike call), lighting, sewers, baths and cemetery workers.

It is a total fraud for the SWP and IMG to ignore this political opposition, led by the WSL within the strike committee—especially when they do so only to cover up the opportunist actions of their own members.

Yours fraternally,
John Seymour, Camden NUPE
C. Cressy, Camden NUPE



John Suddaby (left) on platform during Camden strike

PRESS GANG



Papers in Britain gloomily reported early last week that the morale of the RUC in Northern Ireland had sunk to rock bottom following the publication of the Bennett report.

It is not that RUC officers are unduly thin skinned or sensitive to criticism. But knowing, as they do know, that the torture they hand out to republicans under interrogation is part of the British policy for Ireland, they no doubt felt let down by friends who made tut-tutting noises over their excessive enthusiasm for the job.

Perhaps these fine upstanding examples of the British way of colonial rule will be feeling a little better this week. Certainly the press in Britain has been doing its bit to cheer them up.

The *Daily Mail* has surely earned itself a ringside seat in the RUC control room when plans to start televising interrogations are introduced.

Tribute

Reporter Ian Smith (no relation by blood, but sympathetic in politics) paid his tribute to the forces of law and order in Northern Ireland in a tear jerking centre page piece.

"Pressures from the job are enormous—and constant. An 80-hour working week is average; a gruelling 120 hour seven day week unexceptional.

"The chain smoking, soft voiced detective had three hours sleep the previous night and was wearing the pin striped suit for a frustratingly time consuming 10.00 am court appearance."

(That is the trouble with these court appearances. Frustratingly time consuming. Perhaps it would be possible to dispense with the trials, since everyone is complaining that the Diplock courts are little more than a rubber stamp for confessions extracted under torture.)

Pin-striped martyr

But you must not confine your sympathy for just this one individual pin striped martyr. There are more.

"In Northern Ireland where the Royal Ulster Constabulary are trying to maintain law and order in a province ripped apart by civil war, he is nothing exceptional, just one of the 6,460 men daily subjected to unbearable, unrelenting strain.

"Targets of Provisional IRA gunmen, RUC men never relax, never go to the pub for a drink, never open the door without a gun hidden behind their backs—and always check their car in case it has been booby trapped."

Don't let us mistake this gun-toting teetotal life for one of insecurity. Our pinstriped detective who grins as he throws out mind boggling statistics like charging eleven men with seven

separate murders within an eight day period", is not a bit frightened.

"There is no time to be scared. Besides why should you be frightened of cowards who hide while they are shooting at us and always run away after they have planted a bomb?"

Medals

And there are consolations. The RUC receives more medals from the Queen than any other police force she commands.

"Just a few days ago 16 men flew from Aldergrove airport to Buckingham Palace to collect six George Medals, five Queen's Gallantry Medals and five Queen's commendations... an unprecedented accolade in the history of any police force."

When things look bleak, when lily-livered do-gooders and wreckers seeking to undermine the fabric of their society as they know it start knocking them for excessive enthusiasm with the truncheons, fists and boots, these gallant band of heroes know that the Queen will be waiting for them loaded up with medals.

Mutilated

Or as one RUC man summed up the esprit de corps in the interview from his hospital bed where he lay terribly mutilated:

"If I could lay my hands on the man who did it I'd put my gun behind his ear and pull the trigger"



Hansen with Leon Trotsky in Mexico

Hansen: his life reflected crisis of the Fourth International

By John Lister

After 45 years of struggle—often in the midst of the most heated controversy—veteran leader of the American Socialist Workers Party Joseph Hansen died on January 18 1979.

Hansen had up to his final days played a key role in the journalistic and theoretical work of the SWP and had been the driving force that established *Intercontinental Press* as a serious weekly international magazine reflecting the politics of the SWP and the "United" Secretariat of the Fourth International.

His lifetime of activity within the SWP spans a whole range of political upheavals and developments.

It began with him deciding as a student in 1934 to join the young, struggling US Trotskyist movement, the Communist League of America; but its turning points have reflected not only some of the strengths but also many of the weaknesses of the Fourth International, particularly in the post war period.

His journalistic skills quickly brought Hansen to the front ranks of the US Trotskyists, who at that time were engaged in important work in the organised workers' movement.

By 1936 he had established himself as an active militant in the maritime union, and was helping to edit the union journal

Voice of the Federation.

He went on to succeed James P. Cannon as editor of *Labour Action*, the paper produced in California by the Trotskyist faction within the Socialist Party.

Throwing off an initial unhealthy attachment to the petty bourgeois opposition clique around Martin Abern, Hansen was sufficiently trusted in 1937 to be selected to act as secretary to the exiled Leon Trotsky, then in Mexico.

Assassin

As such, Hansen was on guard duty when Stalinist assassin Ramon Mercader—having won the confidence of the household in preceding weeks—gained access to the building and dealt the death blow to Trotsky with a concealed ice-pick.

This major setback inflicted by Stalinism on the newly-formed and still small Fourth International took shape at the same time as within the US party a group of petty bourgeois forces were launching a very different form of attack on revolutionary Marxism.

University professor James Burnham and journalist Max Schachtman—a founder member of the US Trotskyist movement—had begun to formulate views which challenged not only the Marxist analysis of the Soviet Union and the necessity to

defend it against imperialism, but also rejected the organisational norms of democratic centralism, and the very method of Marxism itself.

A hard-fought factional fight ensued, leading to a major split in the SWP on the eve of US involvement in World War 2. Hansen, emerging as a trusted ally of James P. Cannon, sided firmly with the majority in the struggle for defence of the programmatic and theoretical foundations of the party.

Following the split Hansen was drawn more centrally into the leadership of the SWP, serving both as journalist and as a member of the National Committee.

In the confused period following the end of the war he was to play an important role in the discussion on the changes taking place in the Eastern European 'buffer zone' controlled by the Red Army.

Downfall of Stalinism

The political problem was a real one for the Fourth International. Trotsky and every other leader of the International had anticipated that the War would bring the downfall of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Kremlin—either (hopefully) through the upsurge of political revolution unleashing the nationalised property relations established in the 1917 overturn; or, conceivably, through a

historic defeat if imperialism were able to intervene and reverse these gains, restoring capitalism.

Neither of these eventualities had proven to be the case. Rather Stalinism appeared, if anything, to be stronger than ever—its power now extended into new areas of Eastern Europe, with crisis-ridden imperialism impotent to resist.

Plundered

Yet Stalin at first had no intention of consolidating Soviet control over the 'Buffer Zone'. Instead these countries were used as a source of plundered industrial plant and materials, and as a bargaining counter in negotiating a new counter-revolutionary deal for 'peaceful coexistence' with imperialism.

Thus in 1946 the Fourth International was quite correct to characterise the Buffer countries as still being *capitalist* countries—ruled in each case by bourgeois coalition governments.

But with the onset of the Cold War in 1947 this state of affairs changed rapidly.

Stalin, seeking to protect the borders of the USSR, launched a drive throughout the Buffer Zone for the elimination of the remnants of private industry, the suppression of bourgeois and peasant parties, and the



January 1 1959: Cuban newspaper

takeover of the state machinery by monolithic Stalinist parties under the watchful eye in most places of the Red Army and the Stalinist secret police.

By 1949 therefore—though development was uneven—it was no longer in general correct to regard these countries as capitalist. They had become deformed workers' states—states in which the working class had *never* in any way actually held power in its own hands, but in which a bureaucracy parasitic on the workers' movement had driven out the old capitalist class and installed itself at the head of a bureaucratized state machine.

Hansen in December 1949 argued strongly for such an analysis of the Buffer countries and against those who, in fear of peddling illusions in Stalinism, clung rigidly to the view that they remained capitalist states.

There were strengths in Hansen's approach—which in no way attributed any "revolutionary" or progressive role to the Stalinist bureaucracy, and which looked back to Trotsky's analysis of pre-war events in Finland and Poland.

But there was also one basic *weakness*, which was to have profound repercussions.

That is, Hansen focussed simply on the 'fact' that these states had become deformed workers' states—paying insufficient attention to the details of the *process* whereby that 'fact' had come about.

How was it that a counter-revolutionary national bureaucracy carried through the historically *progressive* step of the expropriation of the capitalists and landlords of Eastern Europe?

In what way if at all, were the masses mobilised to accomplish such a change? Did they at any point reach the level of independent action—or was everything orchestrated and controlled from above?

Hansen, concerned rather with the change itself than the mechanism that produced it, leaves this question only partially answered.

In any event, with the possible exception of Yugoslavia, there was little that even the most empirical observer could seize upon as "revolutionary" about the leaderships of the Eastern European Stalinist parties—so the issue must have seemed of little importance.

Independence

But the way that FI leader Pablo analysed Yugoslavia should have provided a clear warning that it is essential in such struggles to call at all times for the mobilisation of the working masses *independently* of the Stalinist bureaucracy, and to fight for the building of Trotskyist parties.

Carried away with the superficially 'left' rhetoric and populist gestures of the Tito bureaucracy in the wake of the 1948 Stalin-Tito split, Pablo declared that the Yugoslav CP had ceased to be a Stalinist party—and had evolved into a centrist party under "mass pressure".

He devised dreams and schemas of the YCP as a whole being won to Trotskyism; of a whole pattern of similar developments within mass CPs in East and Western Europe; and of a reforming wing of the bureaucracy emerging within the Soviet CP itself.

Such a position offered only abject confusion to the cadres of the FI. But its starting point was a failure to see the necessity for a complete *break* by the masses from the Stalinist bureaucracy, and an independent programme of class action to establish genuine workers' power.

Yet Pablo's positions were not challenged within the FI. Rather, they were endorsed at the Third World Congress in 1951.

Only in 1953, when his policies had developed to threaten the very political independence of established Trotskyist cadres, were they eventually resisted by the leadership of the SWP.

Open Letter defended

Hansen, correctly siding with the SWP majority, defended their unilateral action of publishing an Open Letter in November 1953:

"The open letter, which this [Pabloite] fiat refers to as a 'split appeal'—although it was nothing of the kind—did three things:

(i) On the political level it called the attention of Trotskyists everywhere to the fact that in flagrant violation of the programme of the Fourth International the Pablo faction had covered up and apologised for the Stalinist betrayal of the French general strike in August; had failed to call for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from East Germany when they were used to crush the June 17 workers' uprising against the Stalinist gauleiters; had painted up the treacherous temporary concessions granted by these besieged rulers; had similarly painted up the concessions deceptively promised by the Malenkov regime to allay mass unrest in the Soviet Union; and had projected the possibility of the Stalinist bureaucracy and even the Soviet workers sharing power with it . . ."

(*Trotskyism v. Revisionism*, Vol. 2, p.116)

Hansen went on to point out correctly that Pablo's political line:

"is to liquidate the Fourth International as an independent organisation. To dissolve the FI

bedrock of the economy.

These exports were swiftly taken over by the USSR and China. The Soviet bureaucracy had reasons of its own for furthering an alliance with Castro. And when Kennedy attempted the abortive 'Bay of Pigs' invasion he was easily routed by massive popular resistance.

A few days later Castro declared that the revolution had a 'socialist' character. And, resting on the appearances of events—the 'facts'—the SWP leadership, with Hansen at the forefront, believed him.

Losing track of the 'facts' of the origins of the Castro leadership, and conveniently forgetting the crucial economic and military support given to his regime by the Soviet Union, the SWP increasingly developed the theory that a 'natural' evolution towards Marxism independent of Stalinism was taking place in the Castro leadership—one that had produced not a deformed, but a healthy workers' state.

The 'fact' that there were no organs of working class power in this "healthy" workers' state, and the 'fact' that the counter-revolutionary Communist Party, true to the requirements of Moscow, was seeking close links with Castro, were brushed aside with a schema echoing Pablo at his worst:

Mass pressure

"The Cuban Communist Party is not exempt from this ferment... The fact is that the Cuban Communist Party supports the revolution. If a rift were to occur between Cuba and the Soviet Union, it can be taken for certain that the loyalties of a decisive section of the Communist party, if not the party as a whole, would remain with the Cuban revolution. The experience in Yugoslavia speaks eloquently for such an outcome."

(Draft Theses on the Cuban Revolution, December 1960).

Accordingly, since they envisaged both the Castroites and the Stalinists transformed under "mass pressure" into revolutionary forces, the SWP,

simply reflect the facts, just the facts. The fact that the capitalists have been expropriated in Cuba. The fact that a planned economy has been started there. The fact that a qualitatively different kind of state exists there...

Starting from such 'facts' rather than the necessity to develop the political independence of the working class through the fight to construct Trotskyist parties is the hallmark of the Pabloite method.

Pablo himself drew from these same "facts" the conclusion that the Cuban events were the pattern for the future of the colonial revolution:

"What is new for Revolutionary Marxism in relation to this experience is this: that we pass from the appreciation of the revolutionary role of the peasantry (!) and the necessity of the workers' and peasants' alliance to the understanding of the possibility of beginning and carrying through for a whole period the Revolution in a number of colonial and semi-colonial countries by the armed struggle of the revolutionary peasantry."

Pablo was not alone in this view. He was joined by the formerly "anti-Pabloite" SWP, and especially by Joseph Hansen who, like Pablo, cherished illusions that the Algerian revolution would also follow the "Cuban Way".

Peddling illusions

1962 saw Hansen in Paris writing a string of articles for the SWP *Militant* which peddled the grossest illusions in the "socialist" character of the petty bourgeois nationalist Ben

Only if this process were understood would it be possible to combine on the one hand principled defence of the historically progressive nationalised property relations and on the other to put forward a clear programme for independent working class action for the overthrow of the Castro bureaucracy and establishment of genuine workers' power.

Both tendencies failed this "acid test".

Marxism as a science must begin not from Hansen's notion of the 'facts'—regarded as fixed, wooden entities—but from the material process of the conflict of opposing social classes which actually produces the 'facts' that we empirically observe.

Only this can furnish the key to intervention to change the world.

Thus while Hansen and the Pabloites were able to rest for a period during the 1960s on the apparently left wing, internationalist rhetoric of the Castro bureaucracy as "proof" of their analysis, the processes of the world class struggle served increasingly to highlight the real subordination of the Castro bureaucracy to the reactionary foreign policy of the Kremlin.

In 1965 the Cuban Communist Party was formed—through the merger of the Castroites with the Stalinists—as a totally bureaucratic formation, which held no congress for 10 years.

And 1968 saw Castro defending the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the Cuban press abstain from criticism of the Stalinist sabotage of the French general strike.

Today, even empirical evidence reveals Cuban forces as the tool of Kremlin diplomacy

though attempting to preserve the USFI's basically false position on the Castroite forces.

The struggle in the USFI was to sharpen and broaden to the point of the declaration of public factions.

In a number of countries these factions ran competing newspapers, argued opposed policies, recruited independently and, in Portugal in 1975-6 came near to hand-to-hand combat as the Mandelites sided with the Stalinists and the Armed Forces Movement regime while the Hansenites tailed behind the anti-communist demonstrations run by the witch-hunting Socialist Party leadership.

The belated "self-criticism" of their guerrillaist policies by the Mandelite International Majority Tendency however offered an opening in late 1976 for the SWP-backed Leninist-Trotskyist Faction to heal the breach.

This took place with added urgency because there were growing signs of opposition to the SWP's positions among Latin American USFI supporters around Nahuel Moreno that had formed the bulk of the LTF.

Nothing resolved

Thus in 1977, though none of the contentious issues that had divided the SWP leadership from the Mandel-led majority had been resolved, the SWP's 29th Annual Convention voted unanimously for a resolution calling for the dissolution of the two tendencies—effectively a new, no-discussion "reunification", with even more guilty secrets to hide than the original reunification in 1963.

adopted political positions as bad, if not worse than those of Pablo by sucking up to the reactionary Middle East despotisms of Libya and Iraq, uncritically defending the petty bourgeois leadership of the PLO, and even producing eulogies in praise of the late Algerian dictator Boumediene!

It is hard to imagine a more squalid political device than cynically branding your opponents as police agents while yourself adopting policies more opportunist than anything they have proposed.

It is clear that we in the Workers Socialist League have considerable political disagreements with Joseph Hansen, which must colour the way in which we view his achievements over the past 45 years.

Strengths

For there are real strengths from which we can learn.

In my view, whatever his political weaknesses, Hansen's dedication to the building of a revolutionary movement was and remains an example to all those turning to revolutionary politics.

All too few of the "old Trotskyists" have repelled the pressures of careerism and self-gratification for as long as Joseph Hansen. For many the lure of seeking well paid jobs or even starting small businesses was too great.

There is no wealth to be made as a Trotskyist leader: but Hansen lived all his life in a modest style and devoted himself to the political struggle. We must respect such a quality.

Secondly there is Hansen's consistent attention to international questions—his

report Batista's flight to exile

politically it is necessary first to break up its cadres by expelling them, or reducing them to silence if not acquiescence".

(p.121)

But, in keeping with the remainder of the SWP leadership, Hansen made no serious effort to work back through the essential political, programmatic and theoretical differences and problems that the split with Pablo uncovered.



Hansen

Instead, as a sympathising section—prevented by reactionary US legislation from affiliation to the new-formed International Committee—the SWP began from 1956 onwards to drift towards a similar political method to that of the Pabloites.

As a result, the issue of the political independence of the working class, which had at first appeared of comparatively little significance in 1949, and then emerged as a major question in the 1953 struggle against Pablo, emerged once again in the limelight with the Cuban revolution of 1959.

The petty bourgeois nationalist July 26 Movement headed by Castro successfully overthrew the tottering Batista dictatorship—only to seek out a coalition deal with remaining elements of the bourgeoisie.

But as the Castroites carried through a programme of land reform and expropriation of American capital the regime encountered mounting economic pressure from US imperialism—culminating in the breaking off of the US agreement to buy Cuban sugar, the

led by Hansen, dropped any call for the building of a Trotskyist party in Cuba.

Introducing the *Theses*, and demonstrating that illusions in Castro were the starting point of the SWP's view of the 'facts', Hansen pointed out that the reason why they had held back before describing Cuba as a workers' state was:

"the absence of a manifest socialist consciousness on the part of the leadership of that revolution. We simply could not give them a blank political cheque when they came to power and say 'Well, obviously because of the mentality you have, your programme, your consciousness, you're going to make Cuba into a workers' state (...)' It remained to be seen in the struggle itself what the final course would be in Cuba."

But Hansen waited only until late 1960 before extending to Castro the blank political cheque that the Havana regime is still cashing in on to this day.

Explaining his method, Hansen proclaimed that: "Our characterisations

Bella regime in Algeria—a position maintained even while that regime moved in to crush the independent trade union confederation UGTA and consolidate deals with French and US imperialism.

How was this false approach fought by the remaining sections of the International Committee?

British SLL leader Gerry Healy, certainly started off on a more correct footing—insisting on the necessity to struggle within the Cuban events for a conscious revolutionary leadership, a Trotskyist party.

But in arguing the case for this view Healy based his approach not on showing how the need for such a party flowed from the actual process of development in Cuba, but on descending to a futile argument centred on disputing Hansen's 'facts', and denying that Cuba was now a workers' state.

From the wrongheaded debate sprang the political split between the SWP and the SLL, based on the documents "Trotskyism Betrayed" (SLL) and "Cuba: The Acid Test" (SWP).

Yet the judgement of whether or not Cuba was a workers' state was not in any way the "acid test". Nor was there any disagreement about the need to defend the Cuban regime—whatever its precise character—against imperialist attack.

Process

The acid test was really whether the Trotskyist movement was capable of grasping the process of the development whereby a petty bourgeois regime in alliance with the Soviet bureaucracy had carried through the expropriation of capitalism without permitting the emergence of independent organisations of the working class.

and military strategy in Africa, propping up the petty bourgeois Neto regime against working class resistance in Angola; holding back the Zimbabwe liberation struggle; and manning artillery and giving advice for reactionary Ethiopian efforts militarily to crush the Eritrean liberation struggle.

Yet still Hansen maintained to the very end and the SWP continues to argue that Castro's Cuba remained a "revolutionary", "internationalist" regime.

Hansen bolstered this by carrying selective 'left' quotes in *Intercontinental Press* from the Cuban press—while conveniently omitting recent witch-hunting anti-Trotskyist tracts that have appeared.

The Confusion on Cuba served to split the International Committee, and also paved the way for the SWP's "reunification" with the Pabloites in 1963.

Diplomatic

Hansen helped to draft the diplomatically-worded reunification documents which carefully avoided any examination of the unresolved problems that had produced the 1953 split, and conceded entirely to the political positions of the Pabloite International Secretariat.

But, not unexpectedly, the confusion lingered on. By 1969 the majority of the new 'United' Secretariat had drawn the most opportunist lessons from their impressions of the Cuban Revolution, and taken up a strategic perspective of guerrilla warfare throughout Latin America.

This went too far even for Hansen and the SWP leadership to swallow.

A factional fight erupted, and Hansen emerged as the main spokesman for the comparatively "orthodox" line of building independent revolutionary parties in Latin America—



1959 rally hits Mass mobilisation called by Castroites in struggle against imperialist pressure

Hansen was forced for the final four years of his life to contend with a particularly vicious slander campaign against him in the press of the British Workers Revolutionary Party and the remnants of the International Committee.

Various charging Hansen with being a "proven agent of the FBI" and an "accomplice of the GPU"; the slanders began in response to a particularly stinging polemic by Hansen against the political positions and internal party regime of the WRP and IC in the wake of the removal of Tim Wohlforth, formerly General Secretary of the Workers League, the US sympathising section of the IC.

They developed into a full-scale vendetta in which Hansen was charged with aiding and abetting Mercader in the murder of Trotsky, and with subsequent illicit collaboration with the FBI.

Yet Hansen was of course one of the twelve plaintiffs in the SWP's marathon \$40 million lawsuit against the FBI, which has so far uncovered reams of hitherto secret files detailing state infiltration and disruption of the US workers' movement.

That lawsuit remains now blocked by the categorical refusal of US Attorney General Griffin Bell to comply with a court order to make available files detailing FBI agents currently active within the SWP.

Healy's cover-up

Yet, if WRP leader Healy is to be believed, it is not the US capitalist state that is the obstacle—but "FBI agent" Joe Hansen!

It is hard to imagine a more convenient political cover-up for the US state machine.

Meanwhile, though attacking Hansen's political integrity and using this as a means of attacking the SWP and the USFI, Healy has in fact himself

insistence upon seeing the struggle within the USA in the context of the international developments of the class struggle.

This strength, flowing over into the production of *Intercontinental Press* is an essential quality to be fought for within the Trotskyist movement.

Thirdly we must look at the type of leadership established in the SWP—a collective leadership in which a whole number of leading members are capable and called upon to take key responsibilities.

The opposition to any kind of "star" system by both James P. Cannon and by Hansen—each of whom had the historical standing to dominate the movement had they chosen to do so—stands in marked contrast to the concept of leadership as a tight-knit exclusive clique as seen in Gerry Healy's WRP.

However, this said, there is still no substitute for a struggle for a correct programme and perspective, and such a struggle is necessary not only against Healyite revisionism but also against the revisionism of Joe Hansen and the SWP.

Joe Hansen's life's work in short reflects all of the initial strengths and the subsequent problems and disorientation of the Fourth International.

His undoubted journalistic and theoretical talents could only have reached their full potential in a fight to return to the principles and the method of the Trotskyist programme.

Rejecting that course in 1963, Hansen himself became willy nilly a component in the continuing crisis facing the Trotskyist movement.

That is one 'fact' that neither he nor the USFI leaders or Healy have ever properly understood.

Strange bedfellows defend Vietnamese Stalinists

By John Parker

The Fourth International was founded in the long struggle of Marxists against the betrayals and crimes of world Stalinism.

Trotsky and the forces of the International Left Opposition fought to build a new international as a revolutionary leadership for the historic struggles of the working class along the road to socialism.

But in the forty years since its founding, the Fourth International has been torn apart by splits, 'reunited' by unprincipled fusions and no longer exists in a concrete form.

Stalinism

The task for revolutionaries today is to reconstruct the Fourth International from sections of the groupings that remain and from any other elements that can be won to the living struggle for the continuity of Bolshevism.

In every crisis of the post-war International, it has been the nature and actions of Stalinism which have been at issue.

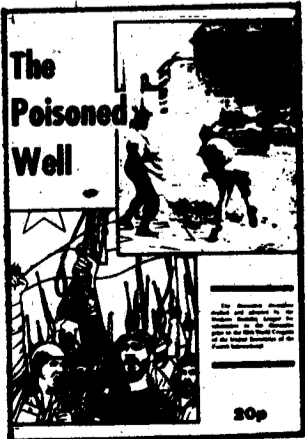
Nowhere was that more clearly the case than in the major split of 1953.

Then the forces of the International Secretariat (led by Pablo) were publicly attacked by those forces which were to form the International Committee (led by Cannon, Healy and Lambert) because they pursued policies that would have liquidated the Trotskyist movement in a belief that sections of Stalinism would begin to abandon their counter-revolutionary history and move towards revolution.

Heirs of split

The principal heirs of that split in Britain today are the International Marxist Group (section of the now 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International) and the Workers Revolutionary Party (principal section of the crisis-ridden International Committee).

But in their positions on the recent wars in south-east Asia, these two groups have shown yet again how they are still wandering about, lost in the fog of confusion



NOW OUT! The WSL discussion document adopted for submission to the USFI XIth World Congress. Price 20p plus 10p p&p from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

Stalinists



Chinese artillery in use against Vietnamese forces

created by the lack of clarity in the 1953 split.

Indeed in 1979 their paths have converged, and nowadays it is even the International Committee—formerly the rigid bastion of 'orthodoxy'—which has made the bigger accommodation with Stalinism.

"Differences"

The sectarians and the opportunists are united in their emphasis on the supposed "differences" between the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea (Cambodia) and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam.

In *Socialist Challenge*, no less an "authority" than Tariq Ali put his name to the following piece of analysis.

"There is no equation between what happened in Kampuchea and the Chinese invasion: the overthrow of Pol Pot was undoubtedly a step forward for the masses of that country.

"The regime over which he presided had become a blot on the international workers movement. There was a serious danger of imperialism returning to Phnom Penh.

"It would have been much better if the Kampuchean people themselves had been able to remove Pol Pot and his cohorts. In the event they could not do so without Vietnamese help.

"The latter should now begin the task of withdrawing its troops from Kampuchea."

Usurped

Undoubtedly the Pol Pot regime was a 'blot on the international workers movement'.

It was the dictatorship of a Stalinist bureaucracy that had usurped the leadership of the anti-imperialist struggles of the Kampuchean workers and peasants.

That dictatorship of the bureaucracy had to be overthrown by a political revolution to establish the unfettered dictatorship of the proletariat, based on the independent class organs of

true soviet power.

The methods of Pol Pot's dictatorship—reflecting partly the dire economic contradictions and acute backwardness of the Cambodian state—were almost certainly more vicious than those employed by any other ruling Stalinist bureaucracy today.

But it was not an isolated 'blot'.

In all essentials, it was identical with the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of eastern Europe, China, Cuba, and Asia—including Vietnam.



Tariq Ali

The overthrow of Pol Pot was not, in itself, necessarily an advance for the masses of Kampuchea. The essential question is how that regime was overthrown and what replaced it.

Ali suggests that in Kampuchea there was some form of popular uprising, supported by or spurred on by 'Vietnamese help'. There can be little doubt that the Kampuchean masses wished to rid themselves of Pol Pot.

Whether they wanted the 'help' of the Vietnamese bureaucracy in that is another matter altogether.

Bureaucrats

The "Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation" was formed by a group of Stalinists within the ruling bureaucracy who were hostile to specific policies being followed by the Pol Pot leadership.

Far from representing an

independent proletarian alternative, it was very clearly and closely allied with the Vietnamese bureaucracy—a force every bit as counter-revolutionary as its Kampuchean counterpart.

Imposed

Nor did this new leadership come to power through a political revolution. Instead it was imposed from above as a new dictatorship by the arms of the invading Vietnamese army.

For the workers and peasants of Kampuchea, it did not represent a step forward but a step sideways.

In these new conditions, their struggle for socialism will be directed against a different bureaucratic caste, one with different methods of preserving its dictatorship.

Yet the central task of political revolution to overthrow the parasitic bureaucracy remains.

The arrival of Vietnamese troops has not only not brought its realisation nearer by a day, but, by creating the possibility of the struggle taking a purely nationalistic form, may well have retarded it further.

No evidence

But in passing Ali throws in a different argument to defend the Vietnamese bureaucracy in their exploits in Kampuchea—that the distorted gains of the Vietnamese revolution were "threatened" by developments under the Pol Pot regime.

Unfortunately, like every other supporter of this thesis, he produces no evidence to back his extravagant claim that there existed "a serious danger of imperialism returning to Phnom Penh".

The 'orthodox', 'anti-Pabloite' Workers Revolutionary Party however, far from combating such notions, has followed a similar line of argument with more enthusiasm.

After first ridiculing any suggestion that the Vietnamese army was play-

ing any substantial part in the military overthrow of Pol Pot, the *Newline* was forced to make some concessions to reality.

Then, on February 24, *Newline* published a statement from the International Committee, saluting "the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people and government" (our emphasis) to the Chinese invasion:

"The International Committee critically supports the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. It ended the pro-imperialist provocations of Peking and Phnom Penh.

"Like the Soviet Red Army intervention in Georgia in 1920-21 the Vietnamese invasion must be seen in the context of the overall defence of the conquests of the Vietnamese revolution."

This argument opens up a series of major issues. Even leaving aside the

complexities of what took place in Georgia in 1920-21 and assuming that the Red Army intervention was carried through in a straightforwardly correct manner, the IC's analogy raises more questions than it answers.

In the struggle within the American SWP against the state capitalist positions of the Burnham-Schachtman faction, Trotsky took up the example of Georgia in relationship to the Red Army's moves into Poland and Finland.

Central to his argument was the 'profound difference' between the revolutionary Soviet Republic of 1921 and the bureaucratized USSR of 1939.

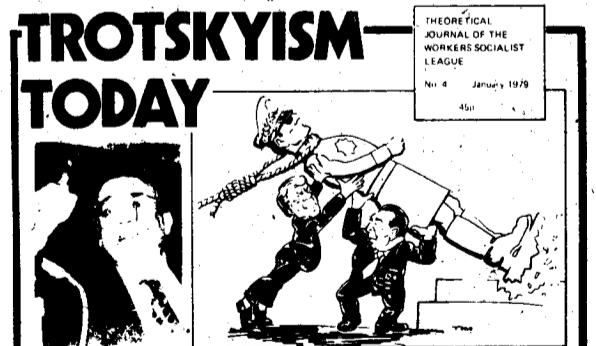
Profound difference

It was impossible for Burnham and Schachtman to understand the Polish and Finnish events because they were unable to grasp the source of that 'profound difference'—that is, of the history and character of Stalinism.

The 1953 split within the International showed, on both sides, a similar failure to understand the post-war developments within world Stalinism.

Today, both the IMG and the WRP adapt their 'Trotskyism' to one supposedly 'progressive' section of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Next week's article will look further at the issues at stake in S.E. Asia, and the political positions of other international tendencies including the American SWP.



INSIDE: • Mandel's dance with Stalinism
• The significance of the Transitional Programme • The U.S. SWP 40 years on.



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Vietnamese soldier with Chinese prisoners

Abortion fight needs a socialist leadership

By Terry Smith



PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Social service and NHS cuts intensify oppression of women

The attacks now being waged on abortion rights in Britain are different in form from previous attacks.

They are not actually embodied in reactionary Private Members' Bills in Parliament aimed at turning back the clock

to the days of back-street exploitation and misery: rather they are embodied in the all-round programme of cutbacks in spending on the Health Service being carried through by the Callaghan-Healey government.

For many women abortion is

already harder to obtain and a greater physical ordeal than before because insufficient NHS facilities are available for the use of modern day-care techniques.

But this is linked to other aspects of the crisis within the NHS: the growing waiting lists; the closure of hospitals and

specialist departments; the lack of kidney machines and other life-saving equipment.

In fighting for the extension of abortion facilities, women must therefore join the fight to halt and reverse this systematic and deliberate destruction of the level of care in the Health Service as a whole.

This is true not only of the abortion fight but also of other struggles involving women's basic rights.

All-out fight

The struggle for adequate child care facilities at a time when the Labour government is axing education spending, and forcing the closure of even existing nursery facilities means squarely confronting the necessity for an all-out fight to defend the education system, and to remove those bureaucratic "leaders" in the trade unions and Labour Party who are prepared to allow social services to go to the wall in order to boost the profits of private industry.

Indeed at a time when Callaghan is preparing to launch a desperate election campaign in which a central plank will be stressing Labour's commitment to the values of "the family", the struggle for reforms which will liberate women from domestic oppression and drudgery becomes even more obviously an all-round political task.

By "the family" Callaghan means the individual social unit in which domestic labour—cooking, clothing, and caring for children, elderly relations and male workers alike—continues to fall onto the shoulders of individual women confined to the home, and denied economic independence.

Intensify oppression

Callaghan's policies of massive unemployment levels, combined with closures of nurseries, social services, and geriatric care, help to perpetuate this situation, and actually intensify the oppression of women in the home.

Labour leaders, dedicated to preserving and strengthening the capitalist system, also reject out of hand any socialist perspective

of providing the kind of communal catering and laundry facilities that could relieve the burden of individual domestic labour in the home.

Capitalism needs to preserve the oppressive family unit—both as a captive market for its sales of consumer goods, and as the economic unit which most cheaply supplies and reproduces the workforce needed to run private industry.

And it needs to preserve the family's oppressive police role as an upholder of bourgeois authority over youth—not for nothing does every reactionary proponent of "law and order" from the National Front to the Labour right wing, call for "parents" to crack down on young "vandals" and "hooligans" who rebel against their living conditions in capitalist society.

Only an uncompromising political struggle on every level against the exploitation and oppression inherent in the capitalist system can lay the basis for the emancipation of women from the oppression of the home, and offer them instead the right to economic independence, social equality, and the right to control their own bodies.

This is why in critically supporting this week's National Abortion Campaign demonstration the Workers Socialist League stresses the complete inadequacy of the demonstration's central demand—a call for

Parliamentary legislation to "oblige" the NHS to provide sufficient abortion facilities in every area.

We insist that the fight for abortion rights is an integral part of the struggle against the cuts, and against the existing reactionary trade union and Labour leaders who collaborate day in, day out, with capitalism.

In our view such a fight requires not the separation of the fight into "single issues", but the construction of a revolutionary party to unite working class men and women in the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a planned socialist economy.

*Stop the Cuts! For free abortion on demand on the NHS!

*Open the Books of the AHAs—expose the planned cut-backs and the profits made from the NHS by private contractors and suppliers!

*Fight for a planned, nationalised health service!

*For workers inquiries into the need for nurseries, communal catering and other facilities in each area. Demand a programme of public works to provide them, under workers' management!

*Kick out the Callaghan-Healey leadership! Demand Labour's 'left' wing either take a stand or reveal themselves to be empty windbags.

*Build a revolutionary leadership! For a planned, socialist economy!



PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Ellis, CPSA full time officer, says:

"Many, many women who decide to work for the Civil Service, or anyone else, simply do not want to have to drag their young children in all weathers every day of the week over the same, often miserable journey they have to make themselves to get to work.

"Nor are they convinced whilst recognising the benefits of having their children close at hand in the case of emergencies, that this form of day care is in the best interests of their children.

"It is in any case invariably better for the mother to go home to a child that has become unwell or had an accident than to have to

take the child home over the same long journey."

This emotive claptrap is Ellis's personal opinion and has no basis in CPSA policy.

Within the CPSA and the other Civil Service unions a fight must be made to get the unions to immediately withdraw from the Family Day Care Scheme.

Implement report

Demands should be made on the Civil Service union leaders that they take a clear stand against the cuts, fight for the defence of existing nursery provision, and campaign actively for the implementation of the TUC report on "The Under Fives".

CPSA's nursery sell-out

By Marie Campbell

The 1971 Report on the "Employment of Women in the Civil Service" recommended the setting up of a day nursery "for an experimental period" for the children of civil servants.

The first ever Civil Service workplace nursery was opened in 1973 at the Inland Revenue site, Llanishen, (Cardiff).

A second nursery was planned at Croydon to be opened in 1976. Because of the government's public spending cuts the Civil Service Department cancelled the opening of the Croydon nursery and closed the Llanishen nursery in April 1978.

As an alternative, the CSD decided to look for a cheaper form of child care and this report is the result.

The report outlines proposals for a "self-financing" "Family Day-Care Scheme" to be set up by the Civil Service.

The Scheme would be run by a joint union-employer committee.

The committee would employ a paid organiser and a team of childminders to care for civil servants' children in their homes.

The childminders would look after the under fives and would also have school-age children in the school holidays.

The minders would be trained and have access to toy libraries and safety equipment.

They would also be encouraged to use local playgroups.

It is obvious that "Family Day Care" is merely a glorified form of childminding which depends on the continuing exploitation of women—both as childminders and as parents.

The childminders, euphemistically called "care parents" in the report are to be paid only £10 a week for each child.

The organisers' job would only be part time and

the report proposes that it be phased out eventually.

The self-help principle also means that apart from the initial setting up of the scheme the full cost of the organiser and childminders' wages are to be met by the parents.

The Civil Service Department are also anxious to evade all responsibility for the workers employed by the scheme.

"Care must be taken not to provide conditions which would lead to a position whereby the Committee and hence the department could be regarded as the care-parents' employer, which would bring many consequences to the detriment of the scheme's viability."

There is even a let-out clause which enables the committee to "phase out" the scheme if it is not financially viable.

The leaders of the Civil Service unions have all cooperated fully with the CSD in the preparation of the report.

In the case of the CPSA, the bureaucrats have blatantly ignored union policy, which is opposed to Family Day Care.

Motion 889 passed at the 1978 CPSA Conference called for the CPSA to withdraw from Family Day Care and instead to fight through the National Staff Side and the TUC to force the government to provide full local authority nursery provision.

It also called for the union to actively assist all CPSA branches fighting for creches at the workplace.

CPSA's present support for Family Day Care also goes completely against the recommendations of the TUC working party report "The Under Fives" which is highly critical of childminding.

CPSA bureaucrats cynically try to cover up their own treachery in selling out the campaign for workplace nurseries by blaming the membership.

In a recent circular John

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Solidarity with Garners strike

After 14 months on strike Garners workers battling for union recognition were supported last Saturday by 800 who marched through London in solidarity with their fight.

Delegations included shop stewards from Jarrow and a group from Liverpool Trades Council.

The lone Communist Party contingent numbered half a dozen, while certain self-styled "Trotskyist" groups—particularly the IMG and the WRP—were conspicuous by their absence.

The police were well prepared. Vanloads of cops guarded the key Garners restaurants and imposed a march route that passed the busy Oxford St. centre and meandered round the plush bourgeois Mayfair area.

Back to picket lines

But once again the demonstration ended on a militant note. Rather than wander down towards the pleasant scenery on the banks of the River Thames, the mass of the march followed the 150-strong Workers Socialist League contingent back to the picket lines.

There they turned away potential customers sporting special 'cheap meal' vouchers issued by the employer in a bid to break the picket lines.

Outside Whitcomb St. Garners, the crowd chanted for mass pickets and the action necessary to win the strike.

Arrests

A couple of arrests were made, and it was not possible to actually hold a mass picket directly outside the restaurant due to the heavy police presence.

However, the problem of the 'scabs in blue' could be overcome.

The main danger to the strike comes not from them, but from within the union.

During the speeches in Hyde Park at the beginning of the march TGWU National Organiser Ron Todd claimed that mass pickets "wouldn't help the strike".

He attacked the membership of the union for "failing to respond" to Garners.

Then he put forward the ludicrous notion of a 600-strong picketing rota that could cover all Garners restaurants 24 hours a day—no doubt hoping that failure to meet these

impossible targets would create further demoralisation and thus bring the end of the strike closer.

Met with jeers from the crowd Todd claimed that "those people shouting at me don't know the structure of the union".

The situation was not helped when Habib Rahman—chairman of the Strike Committee—failed to put forward a single demand of the Strike Committee which he purports to represent.

Instead he merely warned against "confrontation with the



WSL supporters on the March 24 demonstration NAC supporters on sit-down protest

police" and bemoaned the "failure" of the rank and file of the unions to respond.

Racist Tribune MP Sid Bidwell was greeted with derision and hostility by the crowd and was unable to finish his speech. His Parliamentary colleague Jo Richardson had nothing to say at all.

Central problem

The central problem for the Garners strikers remains the treacherous leadership which is the main barrier to carrying out

the correct demands of the strike committee and mobilising mass support.

The union leaders had made it clear they would use a failure of the Day of Action to attempt to call off the strike.

The Day of Action could hardly be called a failure, but the words of Todd about "lack of support" had an ominous ring.

The bureaucracy is clearly searching for any excuse to break the heroic fighters at Garners.

Under these conditions the policies of a WSL leaflet distributed last Saturday are more

urgent than ever:

"No more deals with the police! For mass pickets on the Days of Action and regular delegations from all sections to the picket lines. Set the date for the next Day of Action now.

*No to starvation strike pay! For a realistic wage after 14 months.

*Full blacking now! An end to the scandalous deliveries by TGWU-organised firms.

*A national TGWU delegate conference to organise the victory of the strike! The call must go to the whole TGWU membership."

Frantic bid for sell-out on low pay

The NUPE bureaucracy are now under intense pressure from the government to kill off what remains of the low pay campaign as quickly as possible.

The threat of an early general election makes it crucially important for Callaghan to end the struggle against wage restraint in the public sector.

It is now obvious that the NUPE leadership have been instructed to force through acceptance of 9% and a comparability deal amongst Health workers and ambulance drivers—the two groups who voted overwhelmingly to reject the offer and continue fighting for the full claim of £60/35 hour week.

These pressures were apparent at a rally of London ambulance drivers held in Friend's Meeting House on Friday evening, March 23.

Intensify action

Despite the fact that ambulance drivers voted by 7 to 1 to reject the 9%, and the rally was called to discuss ways of intensifying the action, NUPE national officer Bob Jones spent almost an hour spilling out a series of ridiculous promises and downright lies about the virtues of the comparability scheme.

He stressed repeatedly that there was no chance whatsoever of winning a higher claim, that the comparability study would take into account the special needs of ambulance drivers, and, most important, that there was no guarantee that a Tory government would honour any promises made by a Labour administration.

From this he declared that the package should be accepted as soon as possible, in order to increase Labour's electoral chances!

Jones' approach was obviously part of a planned move to steamroller through acceptance of the 9% within the next few days, possibly before the no confidence vote in the Commons on Wednesday 28

March.

The fact that the NUPE EC recommended rejection of the offer and the Health and ambulance sections followed their recommendation by voting to continue the action seemed to be completely ignored by Jones.

He announced that an emergency EC meeting was taking place the following morning, and indicated that a series of national council meetings during the week would be likely to reverse these decisions.

Failed miserably

If Jones was hoping to intimidate ambulance drivers into ending their action—which is obviously an embarrassment to the NUPE bureaucracy, then he failed miserably in his objective.

Speaker after speaker from the floor spoke against the 9% package, and argued that the only answer was to maintain and spread the action that was already taking place.

Speakers from the SE division, who brought a strong contingent of about 60 workers to the rally, stressed that if there would be no guarantee from a Tory government to honour the comparability study as Jones had stressed, then this was more reason to reject the offer and step up the action.

Other speakers asked Jones why it was that the EC had agreed to escalate the action following the vote for rejection, and then had spent all their time trying to get ambulance drivers back to normal working.

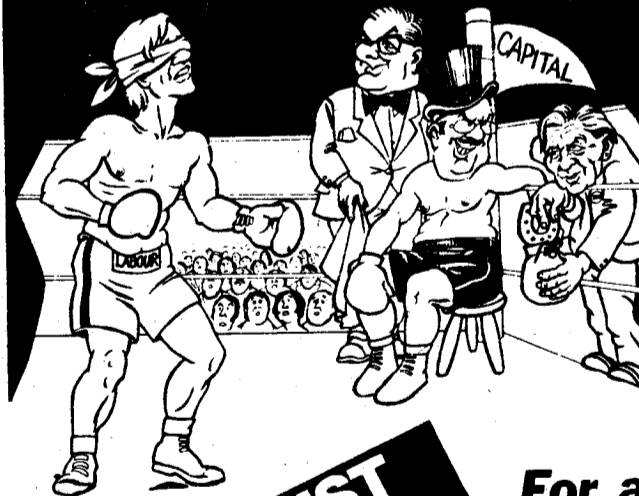
Not answered

Neither Jones nor the full-timers present could answer these questions.

The way forward for ambulance drivers is to begin a strong campaign for all-out, indefinite strike action for the full claim.

Their militancy and determination has put them once again at the centre of the fight against the treacherous betrayals of the public sector union leadership in the low pay campaign.

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WSL: we offer a lead

Whichever way you look at the struggles and problems now facing the working class throughout the world, one thing stands out above all: the necessity for a principled leadership capable of leading the struggle for state power and the establishment of a socialist society.

The massive revolutionary upheaval that has now toppled the seemingly impregnable might of the Shah of Iran and which is now already coming into conflict with the restrictions placed upon it by its Islamic "leaders" serves as a vivid reminder that socialist revolution is not only possible, but essential if the apparatus of capitalist repression and exploitation is to be destroyed once and for all.

But such a revolution requires a conscious Marxist leadership. And the fight to construct such a leadership is inseparable from the fight in the day-to-day struggles of the working class internationally for the principles, method and demands of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme. The Workers Socialist League has time and again proved to be the only movement in Britain that fights patiently and relentlessly on such a perspective.

We alone are the movement that does not shrink from even head-on battles with the existing leaders of the working class — whether these 'leaders' be open right wingers, 'left' talking Labourites or Stalinists of the Communist Party.

Of course this policy has made us no friends in the trade union and Labour bureaucracy, or amongst the opportunists and centrists of the British 'left'. But it has meant that the WSL has consistently offered the most powerful lead to workers in struggle.

In each struggle we set out to prove to workers both in theory and in practice the necessity of a new, revolutionary leadership and for a programme of transitional demands which, starting from today's problems and today's consciousness within the working class, lead workers in struggle to grasp the need for socialist revolution.

This is why the WSL has featured at the forefront of pay struggles in British Leyland and the public sector, in the fight against redundancies and closures, in struggles against the cuts, unionisation fights, and the fight for democracy in the labour movement.

This method of approach — rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy or concession to the labour bureaucracy — is of course essential not only in Britain but internationally.

In taking up international issues in the labour movement the WSL stresses not only the obligation of British workers to support the Irish liberation struggle and revolutionary struggles such as those in Iran and Southern Africa, but also the necessity for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International as the organising centre of the world party of socialist revolution.

The WSL is not the biggest movement on the left in Britain; but its approach to both theory and practice make it the only really serious revolutionary movement.

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NGA must fight court attack

Within hours of the High Court issuing a temporary injunction against the NGA for blacking advertisers who use the Nottingham Evening Post, the NGA general secretary, Joe Wade, was sending desperate telegrams to his members throughout the country instructing them to call off their action.

The injunction is clearly a prelude to a permanent ban on what is being called 'secondary blacking' and is the latest example in a series of decisions from the High Court and Court of Appeal aimed at drastically curbing the right to take industrial

action in support of other workers. It is therefore vital that this action is challenged—by keeping the blacking on.

Recognition

Blacking was ordered as part of an NGA/SLADE campaign for union recognition rights at the Nottingham Evening Post. The campaign was also being linked to the sacking there of 28 journalists for taking part in the provincial journalists' seven week pay strike.

The blacking first took place on national newspapers and the Newspaper Publishers Association immediately reached for its lawyers.

Then the provincial newspapers—which is the logical focus for action—were also affected as NGA chapels obeyed their executive's instruction.

Blacking was applied to all those firms which refused to withdraw their advertising from the Nottingham Evening Post—a list of a dozen firms including Trust Houses Forte and Boots.

Provincial newspaper owners joined the court action against the NGA.

Without such blacking action, backed up by NUJ strike action, the jobs of the 28 journalists at Nottingham are sunk, and the chances of union recognition for any of the print unions are non-existent.

For years the print union leaderships have held back from taking any action against the T. Bailey Foreman management.

Now their first shots have hardly been fired when they are retreating from the battle field on the orders of a capitalist judge.

If this ruling is not challenged by the trade union movement by the only method that counts—defying the court—then rights to black or strike in support of other workers will quickly be removed.

Strike

Any attempt to sequester funds or imprison officers of the union must be met with an all-out strike to uphold the rights of workers to take action.

NGA chapels must take matters into their own hands by refusing to call off the blacking and by calling on journalists and other printers for support.

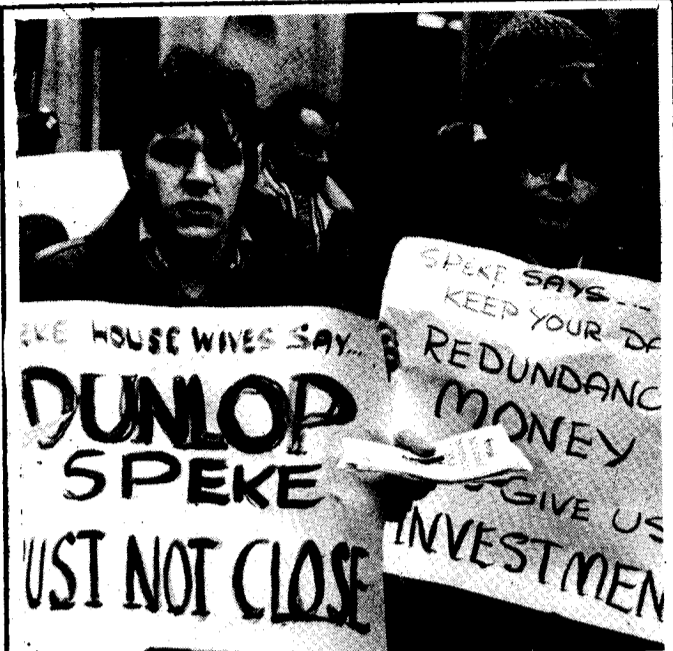


PHOTO: Laurie Sparham, IFL.

Dunlop—the chips are down

As the countdown to closure ticks relentlessly on, convenors at Dunlop's Speke factory remain determined to give no lead whatever to the fight against the massacre of jobs on Merseyside.

Last week saw yet another demoralising mass meeting at the plant in which the central question of a policy of occupying the plant was consciously evaded.

Two weeks

TGWU General Executive Council chairman Stan Pemberton spoke optimistically about a Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting which he hopes, in two weeks time, will discuss the Speke closure.

Workers in the meeting were more concerned with reports that the convenors at the Fort Dunlop plant had allowed orders from Fords to be diverted there instead of Speke—thus blacklegging on the struggle even before it gets seriously underway.

No concessions

And last week's talks with management revealed no concessions whatever.

For Speke workers, the chips are down. They must defy their convenors and vote at once to occupy the plant, demanding all-out support from the unions involved in Dunlop and the motor industry.

Skilled workers to meet

The new Leyland Craft Committee, with delegates from 15 factories is holding a further meeting for all Leyland skilled stewards on Saturday March 31 in Birmingham.

According to Roy Fraser, the AUEW convenor at the Cowley Body Plant the resolution of the committee will put to the meeting is for strike action from April 6.

This is after the company has finally agreed to pay the nationally negotiated premium rates, but yet again come up with productivity strings before parity payments are made.

This particularly affects the skilled men, who know which grade they will be on—the top grade—and therefore know how much a week they are losing. In Cowley, for example, it is £10 a week.

The company has offered to pay the parity if either all of Leyland achieves the production figures the company wants for four consecutive weeks or if an individual plant achieves them for eight consecutive weeks.

Even the right wing dominated National Joint Negotiating Committee put this back to the company.

The other conditions for making the parity payments is agreement by everybody on the new five grade structure which is so contentious that some plants have still not even formed the committees to slot each group into its grade. This is bound to produce disputes.

EGA-Ennals moves in for the kill

A delegation of union leaders, hospital workers and doctors from the EGA heard Health Minister David Ennals last week express his determination to close down the hospital, which has been resisting closure since 1975.

Over recent weeks the determination of the Labour leaders to push through the cash limits in the health service has been

shown not simply in their efforts to keep down the wages of health workers, but also in new rounds of cuts.

One recent victim of this is St. Columba's at Hampstead Heath, where a fight continues against the latest planned cuts in North London.

Go-ahead

On 14 March St. Pancras North Labour MP Jock Stallard initiated a Parliamentary debate on the EGA only to hear junior health minister Rowland Moyle express a determination to go ahead with the EGA closure.

The delegation the following week heard the usual stalling from Ennals in relation to the famous 'working party' he set up last year to discuss 'other sites' for the EGA.

This proposal is of course rejected by the Unions, and also by the doctors.

Broken lift

Ennals tried to cloud the issue further by talking of providing private finance for the hospital's broken down lift, a proposal completely opposed by the unions and against all the principles of the NHS.

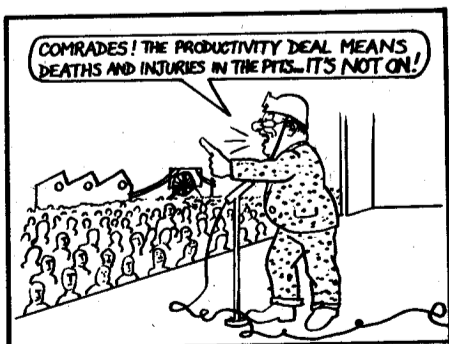
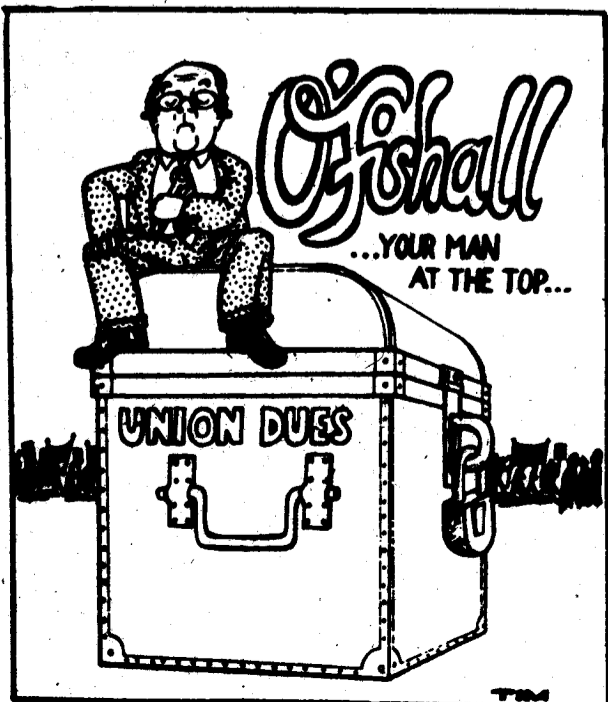


PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Ennals

Garners fines

A good initial response to our appeal for cash to help those fined on the Garners picket line has brought in £149.95. But WSL members who have been at the forefront of this struggle have been fined large sums—one a total of £200—and so more cash is urgently needed. Donations should be sent to Garners Fines Appeal, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.



SOCIALIST PRESS



Crowds run from CRS tear gas attack



MASSES MARCH ON PARIS

An on-the-spot report by Socialist Press correspondent Henry Phillips.

The "March on Paris", called by the Stalinist-led CGT on March 23, revealed more of the deepening contradiction in France between the intentions of the labour movement leaders to hold back struggle and the determination of hundreds of thousands of workers to carry it forward.

The occasion for the march was the bitter fight in the steel-making areas of northern and eastern France against the crisis-torn steel companies' efforts to sack thousands of workers.

Workers on strike and in local demonstrations have been savagely attacked by the CRS—the heavily armed riot police.

Provocations

The CRS provocations have led embittered workers to become increasingly insistent that their trade unions—in particular the CGT and the CFDT—take decisive action against the proposed sackings and against the anti-working class policies of the Giscard-Barre government.

Last week's Cantonal (county) elections revealed that a decisive majority of the French people wish to see the end of the present reactionary government.

The Stalinist and reformist leaders, however, feel not strengthened but threatened by the rising tide of working class anger against the regime.

Hold back

Unwilling to move a step outside the narrow confines of bourgeois parliamentarism, they know that they must hold back this tide while at the same time appearing to give a lead to the mass movement.

Both the CGT's noisy sponsorship of last Friday's march and the CFDT's equally noisy refusal to have anything to do with it were both tactics

designed to allow the rival bureaucracies to fulfil their difficult and contradictory role.

The division between them allowed them both to attack each other from the "left".

Georges Seguy of the CGT said the CFDT was inactive; Edmond Maire of the CFDT said the CGT was organising diversions without paying attention to the concrete needs of the shortly-to-be-sacked workers.

Of course, both are right and their twin betrayals combine to form a joint strategy to head off and confuse the workers' struggle.

None of the tactics designed to defuse the militant anti-government, anti-bureaucratic content of the demonstration succeeded.

They could not stop the march becoming a vast demonstration of 150,000 workers, students and youth.

They could not stop the shouting of slogans against the Giscard-Barre regime.

They could not stop the national teachers' union, FEN, from mobilising for "their own" march at the same time and place.

Youth

They could not stop the presence on the demonstration of workers and youth from an enormous range of industries and struggles who arrived not merely in solidarity with the steelworkers but also to link their own struggles and demands with those of the tens of thousands of steelworkers who, prominent in red work suits and safety helmets, driving large industrial vehicles, dominated the vast march.

Among many other groups of workers, I spoke to several groups of teachers—and to a group of workers at British Leyland's distribution centre at Argenteuil near Paris, whose struggles at present concern the unionisation of the plant (only a minority of the members are yet unionised) and a wage demand which the Leyland

management has rejected out of hand.

The bureaucrats of the CFDT also could not stop tens of thousands of their members from joining the march in defiance of their own leadership.

A CFDT member told me: "We do not understand the attitude of the leadership in calling for non-participation in the march. We condemn this attitude. There are many members in the rank and file of the CFDT who have come today despite orders".

I also spoke to one of the CGT steelworkers from Denain who bitterly described the pickets and demonstrations which had been attacked by the CRS.

Not confined

He, too, said that CFDT members from the region had come with the CGT members to the march because they saw clearly that the struggle was not, as their leaders claimed, confined to jobs in the steel industry.

Even a small delegation of policemen, members of the CGT, also joined the demonstration with a banner and leaflets supporting the fight of the steelworkers and putting forward the slogan: "Too many police outside the factories; not enough to carry out public safety duties."

Both during the march and especially at the dispersal point, the Place de l'Opera, however, their colleagues of the CRS were carrying on a new series of provocations, dispersing demonstrators with baton charges and volleys of tear gas grenades.

Bloody clash

However much the bureaucrats had tried to disguise the political content of the demonstration, they failed to prevent what they planned as a picnic ending in a bloody clash between tens of thousands of workers and the forces of capitalist oppression.

The bureaucrats want mass action to end here and to go off to the bourgeoisie's drawing rooms to sell out some jobs, get a symbolic few rescued and declare a victory.

The size, militancy and repression of the march now makes this more difficult for them to do.

But the future of the mass struggle against the capitalist class and capitalist government in France depends now more than ever on the building of a Trotskyist leadership.

Only such a party can confront the bureaucracies and put forward policies which give an answer leading beyond the existing needs of the working class to the strategic aim of socialist revolution, the first step towards which requires the immediate overthrow of the reactionary Giscard-Barre government and its replacement with a Socialist Party-Communist Party government.

It is therefore important for us to evaluate the record of the main organisations in France claiming to adhere to the Trotskyist Transitional Programme.

The LCR—French section of the "United" Secretariat of the Fourth International, was like Lutte Ouvriere, present on the demonstration in some force.

Its weekly (until recently daily) newspaper *Rouge* offered some criticism of both the CGT for limiting the action and the CFDT for boycotting it.

Rouge was however unable to divine the overall diversionary and counter-revolutionary strategy behind the line of both bureaucracies.

Correct demands

Nonetheless their leaflet for the demonstration *did* make a series of relevant demands including factory occupations against closures and redundancies, work sharing with no loss of pay, a general strike to bring down the Giscard-Barre government and the setting up of a SP-CP government.

At least on paper the LCR was presenting some alternative to the Stalinist CGT leadership even if it completely failed to point out that the demands it presented implied a life and death struggle to dislodge and destroy that leadership.

On the other hand the policy towards the demonstration pursued by the OCI, which is claimed to be the largest Trotskyist organisation in the world, was nothing less than a scandalous one of abstention.

Abstain

Neither in their weekly paper *Informations Ouvrieres*, nor in their semi-internal thrice weekly *Letter*, did they tell their militants and supporters whether to go on the march or not, or whether to support their union sections going on the march or not.

Members were told to propose against the Stalinists a *different* march and to abstain on the Stalinist proposals!

In the event 150,000 workers and youth marched through Paris, were subjected to the propaganda of the Stalinists, Pabloites, Maoists and every other left tendency imaginable—except the "Trotskyist" OCI which just let them get on with it.

This line of the OCI actually *reinforces* the treachery of the Stalinist and reformist leaderships when the only "leadership" it itself has to offer consists of confusion and abstention.

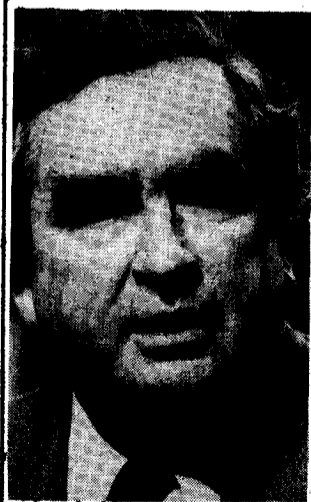
Healey scorns civil service claim

Even in what seems certain to be its dying last gasps in office, the Callaghan-Healey government has continued to show its hatred and contempt for the organised working class that put it in office.

Then, with only two days to go before the crucial vote of confidence in Parliament, Prices Secretary Hattersley and Lord Privy Seal Peart went out of their way to insult leaders of the nine civil service unions—representing over 600,000 civil servants—with a derisory 7% pay offer.

Even the government's own civil service Pay Research Unit has proposed rises of between 26-36% in order to restore comparability with private industry.

And the militant record of civil servants has been graphically demonstrated in a week in which over 250,000 had been involved in selective strikes and protests over the pay issue and in support of 39 victimised colleagues at the Scottish Office suspended for refusing to scab on computer staff.



Healey

To offer a puny 7%—with an undisclosed second installment in another year's time—is therefore tantamount to a straightforward challenge to the unions to take all-out action.

It has been coupled with rushing through Parliament special measures designed to facilitate blacklegging on further Civil Service strikes.

The union leaders, who walked out of Monday's "negotiations" with the government are due to meet to discuss further action as we go to press.

Civil servants must fight to ensure that this takes the form of all-out strike action, to sweep away the last remnants of wage control in the public sector and regain lost living standards.

FUND

With less than a week to go to the end of the month we still need £102.82 to complete our £600 fund. With the possibility of a general election campaign over the next few weeks we will need every penny we can get if we are to provide adequate coverage and enable Socialist Press to be used to win new forces to the fight against the right wing Labour leadership and to the struggle to build a revolutionary alternative within the British labour movement.

Every donation, however big or small, will help us in that fight.

Contributions should be sent to:
Socialist Press Monthly Fund
31, Dartmouth Park Hill
London NW5 1HR.