

Trotsky: four-page appreciation inside

# Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

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## PRICES— THE BIG LIES

THE GOVERNMENT'S 'bovver boys' are warming up for autumn. Lord Stokes, chairman of British Leyland, screams abuse at 'his' workers. Martin Jukes, director general of the Engineering Employers' Federation, declared last week that prices should rise while wages were restrained to make industry 'competitive'.

Wages, they say, are rocketing as high as 15 per cent, outpacing prices which are increasing at 5-6 per cent and causing inflation. This is the cause of all 'our' economic difficulties, they wail.

No one should swallow this insult. In the real world, the situation is exactly the reverse.

The employers transfer their incompetence onto the workers' attempts to control their own lives.

For a start, high wages are not British problems. Out of all the large capitalist nations (Russia does not provide statistics) Britain is second only to the USA in getting the lowest wage increases.

And America is in the middle of an economic recession!

Yet every country in the world has inflation. So it can't be the fault of wages Mr Jukes.

The answer is in Table 1. While British companies lose out to more effective overseas competition, the profit rates of British industry as a whole slide lower and lower (column a).

What was to be done? Remember Wilson's devaluation speech? Devaluation is the chance for British industry to modernise and win new export markets. The British housewives must suffer the consequences for 'patriotism's' sake.

### GUFF

The very people who could have gained, the employers, treated it all as a load of guff. Ever since devaluation, they have invested less and less on new plant and machinery (column c) but consumed more as shareholders and financiers living on easy money (column b).

What patriots our leaders are! To keep up their wasted profits, they raise the price of the workers' products. Not only are these people capitalists, they are bad capitalists at that!

The state reacts by keeping the supply of money below the level of expansion of the economy, in the hope that companies will make savings by modernising their equipment.

Instead, the big monopolies, assured of a domestic market, raise their prices to increase their cash flow which is restricted by the Bank of England. And so the government measures to dampen down inflation merely make it worse.

Working class pay claims are bunched into the autumn months and so appear larger than price increases, which rise gradually

Table 1  
WHAT THE BOSSES HAVE DONE TO BRITISH INDUSTRY

	(a)	(b)	(c)
	Gross trading profits of companies as % of total domestic income	Dividend and interest payments as % of total company income	Gross domestic expenditure on plant and machinery as % of total domestic income
1964	15.7	33.2	7.2
1965	15.2	36.0	7.2
1966	13.5	39.1	7.4
		36.1	7.3
1967	13.5	38.9	7.4
1968	13.7	37.7	6.8
1969	12.9	38.7	6.3
1970*	12.7	39.1	6.1

\* Estimate

Table 2  
HOW BRITISH WORKERS' WAGES HAVE CHANGED

	(1955 wage level - 100)	
	Average Hourly Wage Earnings	Basic Hourly Rates of Wages
1967 (October)	207.9	181.4
1968	222.6	193.5
1969	240.6	204.1

over the whole year. The present so-called 'wage explosion' is merely making up for what has been the 12 month 'controlled explosion' in prices.

We say so-called, because bosses have a habit of treating pay settlements as equivalent to wage rates. The trouble is—and this is where many may be caught out—a lot of pay settlements award increases for dirty work or overtime work, but not upon the basic wage rate.

### RUSE

The recent dock strike is an example. In Table 2 it can be seen that this ruse is general to the workers in Britain.

Instead of the basic wage rates going up for all workers, the wage earnings for some workers doing certain jobs are going up at around 15 per cent. The basic rates are actually going up at around 8 per cent.

The bosses are not too alarm-

ed by this, for they know that special categories of work, including overtime, are either done away with or tamed by job evaluation and shift work under productivity deals.

On top of that, the steady increase in unemployment firmly nails the blame on the employers. Average unemployment in the 1950s was 200,000. In the 1960s it was 400,000. And in the early 1970s it will be 600,000.

The message of the government and its industrial henchmen is that wage increases must stop. What they don't say is that company profits this year will be over £5000 million and that £3,500 million is to be wasted on dividend and interest payments.

The message of Socialist Worker is that wages must go up. Real wage explosions are the order for the autumn months.



## Remember Czechoslovakia

TWO YEARS AGO, Russian tanks rumbled into Czechoslovakia and the people of Prague demonstrated and defied the invaders. Now Czechoslovakia is firmly under the Stalinist jackboot. In a world of continuous upsurge and revolt, it is easy to forget. But the events of two years ago should not be forgotten. Czechoslovakia is part of the world-wide struggle against the bully-boys of East and West.

## Bombs — press hushes up truth

THE POLICE have now admitted that the Irish Republican Army was not connected with the bomb explosion on Sunday evening which seriously injured two young people. They believe the bomb was planted by a crank protesting against the 'permissive society'.

The police statement has been ignored by the millionaire press which headlined the 'IRA outrage' for several days. As ruling class hysteria mounts over the Irish issue, it is vitally important for the labour movement in Britain to stand firm and declare its total solidarity with those fighting British imperialism throughout the 32 counties.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Public meeting

# Trotsky and Trotskyism

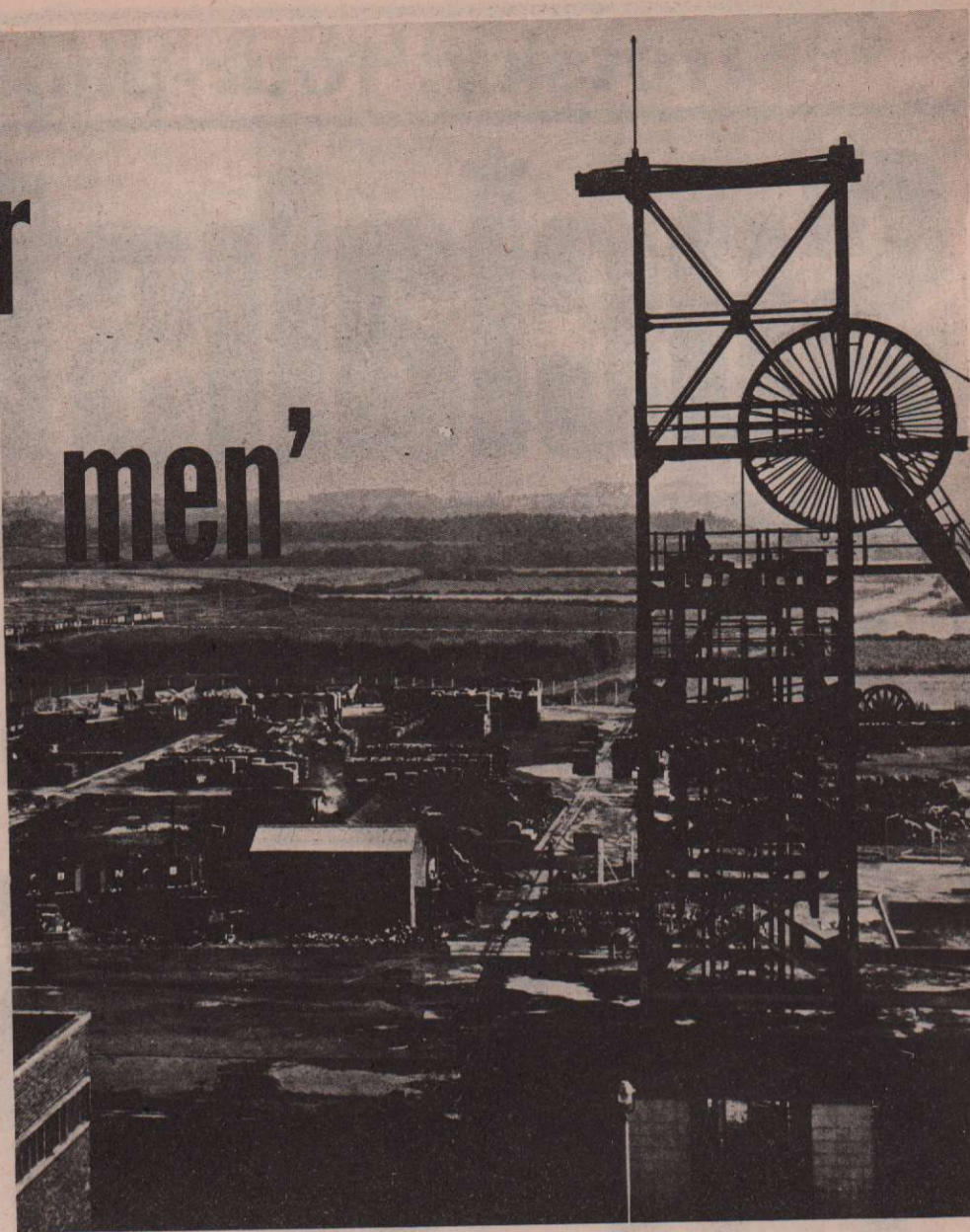
Speaker: Duncan Hallas

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Friday 28 August 7.30pm

AS MINERS PREPARE FOR A NATIONAL STRIKE,  
A GRIM PICTURE OF WORK IN THE COAL INDUSTRY

# Anger and despair for the 'forgotten men' of the mines



**BILL BATES is 59. For most of his 44 working years, he was a pitman at the Handon Hold Colliery near Chester-le-Street, Co Durham. He was a branch official of the National Union of Mineworkers for nearly 30 years.**

Almost three years ago the National Coal Board closed his pit. As Bill was over 55, he was declared redundant. He received a lump sum of £450, nine-tenths of his average pay for three years and will get a pension of 30s.

After the first six months he lost his rent allowance and free coal. The severance pay is now about to run out and Bill will 'celebrate' his 60th birthday on the dole. His income will be cut by two-thirds immediately.

With unemployment in North West Durham running at 5.9 per cent and 15 men chasing every vacancy, he expects to spend the five years to 'retirement' pottering about his allotment. In his own words, 'They've left us to rot on the scrap heap. We're the forgotten people.'

But, even Bill, with his excellent health, would feel himself lucky beside Tommy Smith of Throckley, Newcastle. When he died at the age of 61 in June he had only done odd jobs since his pit closed in the late 1950s.

On and off the sick list for nearly 15 years, his income for nearly a quarter of his working life had been two-thirds below what he had every right to expect. Crippled by arthritis for his last few years, the cause of his death was the miners' curse, pneumoconiosis.

Jock McBride went to the Barnsley area from Fife in 1962—uprooting part of his family in the process. Last year he experienced his third pit closure and this time he's over 50.

He has decided reluctantly to stay in the pits. As he says, 'You can't teach an old dog new tricks'.

He's reluctant, because each closure has brought him a serious cut in income. In Fife he was a top face worker taking home well over £20 per week. At the pit bottom in Barnsley he topped to about £15 and now he can expect only about £13 as a surface worker.

Rent increases, price rises and now travelling expenses have changed his life completely. When he was in Scotland his wife did a

by  
**JOHN  
CHARLTON**

few hours work to help pay for the car.

Now she works full time in an electrical goods factory and her money is vital, 'to keep the home together. Social and family life is very difficult,' says Jock. 'We are both a bit too tired to enjoy ourselves... anyway shift working means we don't see each other much, though we always try to get out a bit at weekends.'

You may say that it is always possible to turn up cases of individual hardship. If so, you should certainly read a recently published report, *Ryhope: A Pit Closes: A Study in Redeployment* (Stationery Office, 42s). Commissioned jointly by the Department of Employment and Productivity and NCB, this report is a detailed record of a closure and its consequences for those involved.

The yards of statistics and the official prose do nothing to hide a picture which confirms that the individual cases are of general relevance. It also shows a stark lack of concern from the NCB bosses, trade union incompetence and complicity and from the workers themselves a mixture of anger, despair and fear for the future.

The Coal Board repeatedly referred to the pit's inability to make itself pay and that there were plenty of opportunities available elsewhere for 'those fit and ready to move'.

## Crucial period

The attitude of the union will be familiar to any miner ever threatened by closure. In the crucial period when the rumours were beginning to fly around, Sam Watson, then leader of the Durham Miners said, '...it will need a concerted effort from every man and boy at Ryhope, from the highest managerial post, down to the trainee face worker, to increase the efficiency of the pit, to improve the output... and to gradually eliminate those practices and customs which are helping to keep the pit in the red.'

This is what the miners have been up against for the 20 years since contraction began. With one or two honourable exceptions (mostly Communist Party members with little backing from the party) you will look in vain among the speeches of NUM officials at national or local level for an attempt to pin responsibility for the miners' plight upon the policy makers of government and the Board—or of course on the real culprit, the capitalist system.

Neither will you find any attempt to develop a counter attack, such as a demand for alternative employment or full pay to retirement, backed up by industrial action in the vulnerable sections of the industry.

Most of the men under 55 were offered alternative employment in Durham or on other coalfields. Most transferred to other pits in Durham. This immediately brought a serious drop in earnings, since at their new pits Ryhope men were at the end of the queue for face work and overtime.

Many were also obliged to pay travelling expenses of 6s per week. Travelling put an extra hour or more on the working day and drastically affected the village domestic and social life.

At closure the NCB declared a 23 per cent redundancy. These men were launched onto a labour market on Wearside, where by March 1970, 54 men were pursuing every vacancy compared with the United Kingdom ratio of 5 to 1.

After six months only 7 per cent of them were in regular employment and 12 months later only 60 per cent had had any work at all. Even for those in work, earnings dropped by the staggering amount of £5 per week.

More startling still is the fact that 75 per cent of the redundant men were in some degree sick. In a House of Commons debate in 1967, the then Minister of Power said: 'The fact has to be faced that many miners (over 55) whilst not registered disabled persons within the meaning of the law are persons whose health is at best indifferent compared with the generality of workers.'

There is no reason to believe that the picture which emerges from

Ryhope would be very different for the hundreds of other mining communities destroyed in the last 20 years. With over 70 Durham pits closed in the last 12 years, a modest estimate of those permanently unemployed would be 6000 under retirement age.

In the Ryhope Report, the local Labour Party is never mentioned. The 'party of the working class' had absolutely nothing to say on a question which directly affected the lives of hundreds of its members and constituents.

Joe McBride, a loyal party member and worker from his teens until five years ago, confirms that in this respect Ryhope Party was little different from any other. 'During the closure period the only mention of it at party meetings was the fear that the local party might not be able to carry on as the secretary and treasurer were considering the move to another coalfield. Looking back I realise that it would have never have occurred to us to see the party as an instrument of our defence... political and industrial questions were always kept separate.'

## Relentless urge

The more one looks at the problems of the miners in the last 20 years, the greater is the impression that a trade union fight alone could only have ended in failure. Faced by the relentless rationalising urge of modern capitalism, the miners could only have turned the tide by waging, in the company of other groups of workers, a total political fight against the vicious system which, to quote Bill Bates again, 'left us to rot on the scrap heap'.

But it is no use lamenting what might have been. The Pilkington fight, the Ottery and Centrax struggles in Devon, the growing tide of militancy among rank and file miners and the countless other signs of resistance show there is a new spirit of class solidarity abroad.

We owe it to Bill Bates, Tommy Smith and the millions like them to see that this spirit is not wasted but channelled into building a new working class political alternative.

# Socialist Worker

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CAPITALISM has nothing to offer mankind but exploitation, crises and war. The ruling classes of the world — a tiny minority — subordinate the needs of the vast majority to the blind accumulation of capital in the interests of competitive survival.

Imperialism condemns two-thirds of mankind to famine and calls forth movements of national liberation which shake the system and expose its essential barbarism. The constant and mounting preparations for war and the development of weapons of mass destruction place the survival of humanity itself in the balance.

The increasing intensity of international competition between ever-larger units drives the ruling classes to new attacks on workers' living standards and conditions of work, to anti-trade union and anti-strike laws. All of these show capitalism in deepening crises from which it can only hope to escape at the cost of the destruction of all its independent organisations.

The only alternative is workers' power — the democratic collective control of the working class over industry and society

# WHERE WE STAND

production. Only thus can the transition be ensured to a communist society in which the unprecedented productive forces thrown up by capitalism can be used to assure an economy of abundance. Only the working class, itself the product of capitalism, has the ability to transform society in this way, and has shown its ability to do so in a series of revolutionary struggles unprecedented in the history of all previous exploited classes.

The working class gains the

struggle against the ruling class through the mass organisations thrown up in the course of that struggle.

To overcome the unevenness with which this experience is gained, to draw and preserve the lessons of past struggles and transmit them for the future, to fight against the pressure of bourgeois ideas in the working class, and to bond the fragmentary struggles against capitalism into a conscious and coherent offensive, a revolutionary Marxist party of socialist militants is required, embracing the vanguard of the working class.

The struggle to build such a party is only part of the wider struggle to create a World Revolutionary Socialist International, independent of all oppressors and exploiters of the working class, whether bureaucratic or bourgeois.

International Socialists therefore fight for:

Opposition to all ruling-class policies and organisations.

Workers' control over production and a workers' state.

Opposition to imperialism and support for all movements of national liberation.

Uncompromising opposition to all forms of racism and to

# Leon Trotsky



Trotsky  
as Commissar  
for War  
addressing  
the  
Red Army

Thirty years ago Leon Trotsky was murdered in Mexico by an agent of the Russian dictator Stalin. Brilliant marxist, a leader of the Russian Revolution and creator of the Red Army, Trotsky is one of the great figures of international socialism. In this special feature, **DUNCAN HALLAS** analyses his life and his achievements



## TROTSKY'S TESTAMENT

MY HIGH (and still rising) blood pressure is deceiving those near me about my actual condition. I am active and able to work but the outcome is evidently near. These lines will be made public after my death.

I have no need to refute here once again the stupid and vile slander of Stalin and his agents: there is not a single spot on my revolutionary honour. I have never entered, either directly or indirectly, into any behind-the-scenes agreements or even negotiations with the enemies of the working class. Thousands of Stalin's opponents have fallen victims of similar false accusations. The new revolutionary generations will rehabilitate their political honour and deal with the Kremlin executioners according to their deserts.

I thank warmly the friends who remained loyal to me through the most difficult hours of my life. I do not name anyone in particular because I cannot name them all.

However, I consider myself justified in making an exception in the case of my companion, Natalia Ivanovna Sedova. In addition to the happiness of being a fighter for the cause of socialism, fate gave me the happiness of being her husband. During the almost forty years of our life together she remained an inexhaustible source of love, magnanimity, and tenderness. She underwent great sufferings, especially in the last period of our lives. But I find some comfort in the fact that she also knew days of happiness.

For forty-three years of my conscious life I have remained a revolutionist; for forty-two of them I have fought under the banner of Marxism. If I had to begin all over again I would of course try to avoid this or that mistake, but the main course of my life would remain unchanged. I shall die a proletarian revolutionist, a Marxist, a dialectical materialist, and, consequently, an irreconcilable atheist. My faith in the communist future of mankind is not less ardent, indeed it is firmer today, than it was in the days of my youth.

Natasha has just come up to the window from the courtyard and opened it wider so that the air may enter more freely into my room. I can see the bright green strip of grass beneath the wall, and the clear blue sky above the wall, and sunlight everywhere. Life is beautiful. Let the future generations cleanse it of all evil, oppression and violence, and enjoy it to the full.

February 27, 1940, Coyoacan.

# Trotsky – a life devoted to the struggle for world-wide socialism



Above: barricade in Petrograd during the 1905 revolution

IN MAY 1940 Leon Trotsky wrote an article entitled 'Stalin Seeks My Death'. It was an accurate forecast. Three months later, on 20 August, the Stalinist agent Ramon Mercador, alias Frank Jacson, drove an icepick into Trotsky's brain in Coyoacan, Mexico.

The assassination was the last of the wholesale murders by which the Stalinist bureaucracy destroyed the Bolshevik old guard. Rykov, Lenin's successor as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, was shot. Zinoviev, President of the Communist International in Lenin's day, was shot.

Bukharin and Piatakov, 'the most able of the younger members of the Central Committee', according to Lenin's Testament, were shot. Rakovsky and Radek all perished.

Tens of thousands of old party members disappeared for ever in Arctic 'labour camps'. The militants who made the October Revolution were practically annihilated.

Only one of the leading figures of the years of revolution and civil war survived. Joseph Stalin, the man Lenin proposed should be removed from office as General Secretary, now ruled Russia more despotically than Ivan the Terrible had ever done.



Tsarist secret police pictures of the young Trotsky.

Trotsky was born in the Ukraine in 1879, the son of a Jewish farmer. At that time the labour movement did not exist in the Tsarist empire. In fact an industrial working class hardly existed.

There were a few great nobles, a more numerous lower nobility who officered the army and the state machine, a middle class of merchants, lawyers, doctors and so on and a vast mass of peasants. That was the Russian Empire of the time, and over it the Tsar ruled as absolutely as Louis XIV had ruled France.

There was no parliament, no free press, no freedom of movement, no equality of citizens before the law. Until 1861 the great mass of the Russian people—the peasants—had been legally unfree, serfs, unable to leave the estate they were born on, bought and sold by their masters along with the land.

Russia was backward, medieval, so backward that in many ways it was more like France before the great revolution of 1789 than the capitalist countries of western and central Europe.

**But a great change was coming. In the years of Trotsky's boyhood and youth industry was developing fast in Russia, fuelled by foreign loans and foreign technicians. New classes were developing, a capitalist class, still much weaker than in the west, and a real industrial working class.**

## Militancy

The growth of these classes meant, in the long run, that the Tsarist regime could not last. As late as 1895 the Tsarist minister of finance could write: 'Fortunately Russia does not possess a working class in the same sense as the West does; consequently we have no labour problem.' He was already out of date. By 1887 there were already 103,000 metal workers in Russia, by 1897, 642,000. By 1914 there were 5,000,000 workers out of a population of 160,000,000.

This young working class developed a militancy and record of mass struggle unparalleled since the heroic period of the British working class in the 1830s and 1840s. In the early years of this century a wave of mass strikes shook Tsarism to its foundations, leading to the explosion of 1905.

A new form of working class self-government, the 'Soviet' or workers' council, was invented by unknown Russian working men. For a time there was a 'dual power', the power of the workers organised in Soviets confronting the panic-stricken government of the Tsar.

The whole regime tottered. But in the end it was able to re-establish its power. The revolutionary

workers confronted the peasant army and the peasants were still loyal to the Tsar. A murderous repression followed.

Trotsky grew up with the movement. While still in his teens he joined a revolutionary group in Nikolayev, the South Russian Workers Union. In 1898 he was arrested and kept in various jails until, in 1900, he was deported to Siberia.

In the summer of 1902 he escaped and by the autumn he had joined Lenin in London. By this time Trotsky had become a marxist and a writer of some fame. Lenin welcomed him and proposed that he join the editorial board of Iskra (the Spark), the socialist party paper which was printed in London and smuggled into Russia.

The proposal was vetoed by the senior member of the board, Plekhanov, one of the founders of the party and a future Menshevik. For the split in the Russian socialist party was only a few months ahead and relations between Lenin and some of his co-editors were already tense.

The party at that time consisted of a handful of emigres in London, Zurich and other European cities and a number of illegal groups of workers and students in some of the Russian industrial centres and in Siberian exile.

The split, which came at the second congress held in Brussels and then London in 1903, was on the face of it about a comparatively unimportant organisational question. In fact the underlying differences were of vital importance.

## Overthrow

Lenin and his group (who became the Bolsheviks, or majority) stood for a tightly organised revolutionary party, able to survive illegality and repression. They believed that only the working class, in alliance with the peasantry, could overthrow Tsarism and 'supplant it by a republic on the basis of a democratic constitution that would secure the sovereignty of the people, i.e., the concentration of all the sovereign power of the state in the hands of a legislative assembly composed of the representatives of the people'. (Lenin's Draft Programme of the Social Democratic Party of Russia, 1902).

The minority (Mensheviks) were moving towards the view that the Russian capitalist class could lead

this struggle and consequently tended to favour a looser organisation oriented to semi-legal work. Neither side supposed that a socialist revolution was possible in a country as backward and underdeveloped as Russia. That would come later after a period of capitalist economic development under a democratic republic.

In 1903 the differences were not as clear cut as they became later. Not everyone fully understood the implication of the choice they were making. Plekhanov, later leader of the extreme right wing of the Mensheviks, sided with Lenin. Trotsky opposed Lenin. It was a decision he was later to call 'the greatest error of my life'.

## Murder

In 1905 the revolutionary exiles were able to return. Trotsky, now a Menshevik, played a big part in the unsuccessful revolution. Towards the end of the year he became President of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers Deputies, then the most important workers organisation in Russia.

Its liquidation by the reviving Tsarist military and police machine marked the turning point in the revolution. Trotsky was imprisoned

Below: Members of the Petrograd Soviet of 1905. Trotsky seen from left, front row



## Terror

Trotsky's final verdict on these events was written in the year before his death. 'Stalinism had first to exterminate politically and then physically the leading cadres of Bolshevism in order to become that which it now is: an apparatus of the privileged, a brake upon historical progress, an agency of world imperialism'.

The hopes of the October Revolution had been buried by the Stalinist terror. There had been no simple counter-revolution. The landowners, capitalists and courtiers of Tsarist times had not recovered their possessions.

Stalin founded no dynasty and the leading members of the bureaucracy acquired no legal title to the 'public' party. Yet the working people, the officially proclaimed 'ruling class', were deprived of all political rights, even minimal rights as they had won under Tsarism.

The trade unions had become a machine for disciplining the work force. And what a discipline. On 28 December 1938, Stalin signed a decree which laid down that 'workers or employees who leave their jobs without permission or are guilty of grave offences against labour discipline are liable to administrative eviction from their dwellings within 10 days without any living quarters being provided for them'. The conditions of a 19th century company town were imposed on the workers in the 'workers state'!

The same decree abolished the right of a worker to a paid holiday after five and a half month's employment and dealt with bad time-keeping as follows: 'A worker or employee guilty of coming late to work, of leaving for lunch too

## Tradition

Out of the first successful nationwide workers' revolution had grown a society that reproduced the inequalities and oppression of capitalism and was ruled by an iron dictatorship, a dictatorship not of the working class but over the working class.

The whole of the latter part of Trotsky's political life was spent in fighting this reaction, in analysing it and explaining its causes and in struggling to keep alive the revolutionary socialist tradition against the crushing pressure of Stalinism in Russia and internationally.

# Second only to Lenin as the moving

# Commissar for War: Trotsky at the height of his fame



tion'. Its central idea was that the coming revolution in Russia could not stop at the stage of a 'democratic republic' but would spill over into a workers' revolution for workers' power and would then link up with workers' revolution in the more advanced capitalist countries or be defeated.

It was not so very different from Lenin's later conception, but his distrust and dislike of Lenin prevented him from joining forces with the only real revolutionary organisation—the Bolsheviks.

On 4 August 1914 the world was transformed. The long predicted imperialist war broke out and the leaders of the big social democratic parties forgot about their marxism and internationalism and capitulated to 'their own' governments. The Socialist International broke into pieces.

In every belligerent country, the movement split between the renegades and the internationalists. In September 1915, 38 delegates from 11 countries met at Zimmerwald in Switzerland to reaffirm the principles of international socialism. Trotsky wrote the internationalist manifesto issued by the conference.

There were both revolutionaries and pacifists at Zimmerwald. They were soon to split. The revolutionary nucleus became the forerunner of the Third (Communist) International.

## Wavered

Revolutionary opposition was growing in all the warring states but it was in Russia that the break came. In February 1917 mass strikes and demonstrations overthrew the Tsar. It was the working class militants of Petrograd—many of them Bolsheviks—that led the movement.

From the beginning the leaders of the Soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers deputies were in a position to sweep away the crumbling façade of the 'Provisional government' and take power. But they did not do so, because they were, in the majority, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (the peasant party) who believed that a 'democratic republic' was necessary to permit the growth of capitalism so as to lay the basis for socialism in the distant future. This meant continuing the war and 'disciplining' the workers and peasants.

Even some of the Bolsheviks wavered, notably Kamenev and Stalin, the two central committee members who had escaped from Siberia to take charge of the party in Petrograd. But when Lenin returned in April he would have none of this.

'Down with the Provisional government', 'Peace, Land and Bread' were his slogans. At first a minority in his own party, Lenin won first the party and then the majority of the Soviets for his revolutionary position. It was essentially the same as Trotsky's 'permanent revolution' and in July Trotsky, together with a group of ex-left wing Mensheviks, entered the Bolshevik Party.

By the autumn the majority of the workers were supporting the Bolsheviks. Under the slogan of 'All power to the Soviets' the Provisional Government was overthrown. In Petrograd hardly a hand was lifted to support it.

The next years were the years of Trotsky's greatest fame. First as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs and then as People's Commissar for War, he was second only

to Lenin as the moving spirit of the revolution.

These were the years of revolutionary optimism. Everything seemed possible. Though the Soviet government had to fight desperately against massive foreign intervention—the armies of 14 powers fought against the revolution—and against foreign armed and financed White armies, the whole of Europe seemed on the verge of revolution.

Revolutionary Soviet regimes were actually established in Hungary, in Bavaria, in Finland, in Latvia. The German Kaiser, the Austrian Emperor, the Turkish Sultan were all overthrown.

The whole of Germany seemed on the brink of red revolution. In Italy mass strikes and violent demonstrations paralysed the capitalist state.

Even the sober Lenin could write in 1918 'History has given us, the Russian toiling and exploited classes, the honourable role of vanguard of the international socialist revolution; and today we can see clearly how far this revolution will



The last of the Romanovs: the Tsar after the Bolshevik Revolution

go. The Russians commenced; the Germans, the French and the English will finish and socialism will be victorious.'

For Trotsky there were no doubts. The 'final conflict' was now. When the Third International was founded in 1919 he wrote in its first manifesto 'The opportunists who before the world war summoned the workers to practice moderation for the sake of gradual transition to socialism... are again demanding self renunciation of the proletariat... If these preachments were to find acceptance among the working masses, capitalist development in new, much more concentrated and monstrous forms would be restored on the bones of several generations — with the perspective

## Къ Гражданамъ Россіи.

Временное Правительство низложено. Государственная власть перешла въ руки органа Петроградскаго Съѣзда Рабочихъ и Солдатскихъ Депутатовъ Военно-Революціоннаго Комитета, стоящаго во главѣ Петроградскаго пролетаріата и гарнизона.

Дѣло, за которое боролся народъ: немедленное предложеніе демократическаго мира, отмена помѣщичьей собственности на землю, рабочій контроль надъ производствомъ, созданіе Совѣтскаго Правительства — это дѣло обезпечено.

ДА ЗДРАВСТВУЕТЪ РЕВОЛЮЦІЯ РАБОЧИХЪ, СОЛДАТЪ И КРЕСТЬЯНЪ!

Военно-Революціонный Комитетъ при Петроградскомъ Съѣздѣ Рабочихъ и Солдатскихъ Депутатовъ

25 Октября 1917 г. 10 ч. утра.

Military Revolutionary Committee announcement of overthrow of the Provisional government

of a new and inevitable world war. Fortunately for mankind this is not possible.'

In fact the success of the German revolution hung in the balance. The opposing forces were nearly equal. Success would have changed the course of European and world history. Failure meant the eventual triumph of reaction not only in Germany but also in Russia.

For the civil war ruined the already backward Russian economy and dispersed the Russian working class. The White counter revolution was beaten because the great majority of the Russian people—the peasants—knew that the revolution had given them the land and that a restoration would take it back again.

## Starving

Yet by the end of the civil war the workers had lost power because, as a class, they had been decimated. By 1921 the number of workers in Russia had fallen to 1,240,000. Petrograd had lost 57.5 per cent of its total population. The production of all manufactured goods had fallen to 13 per cent of the already miserable 1913 level. The country was ruined, starving, held together only by the party and state machines developed during the civil war.

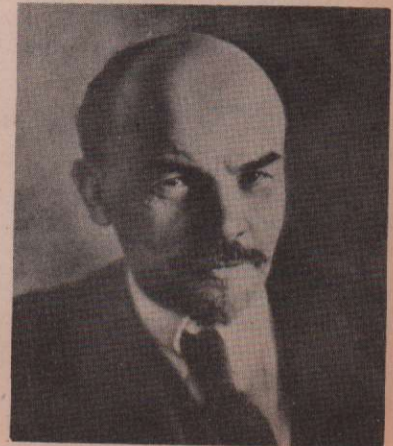
It was a situation that had not been foreseen. At the time of the Brest Litovsk peace with Germany in 1918 Lenin wrote: 'This is a lesson to us because the absolute truth is that without a revolution in Germany we shall perish.' For, of course, there could be no question of the Russian working class, a small minority with a weak economic base, maintaining a workers' state for any length of time without integrating the Russian economy with that of a developed socialist country.

## Perish

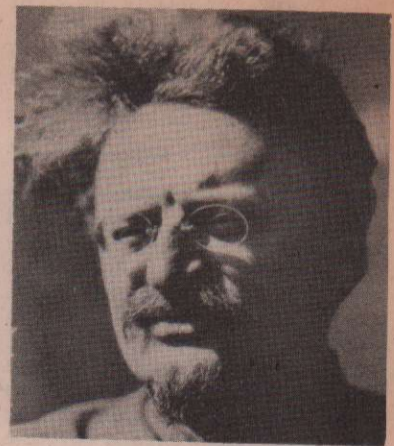
Later at the third Congress of the Third International in 1921 Lenin returned to the point: 'It was clear to us that without aid from the international world revolution, a victory of the proletarian revolution is impossible. Even prior to the revolution, as well as after it, we thought that the revolution would occur either immediately or at least very soon in other backward countries and in the more highly developed capitalist countries, otherwise we would perish.'

'Notwithstanding this conviction, we did our utmost to preserve the Soviet system, under any circumstances and at all costs, because we know we are working not only for ourselves but also for the international revolution.'

By 1921 the international revolution had been beaten back and the communist regime in Russia faced another desperate crisis. The



LENIN



TROTSKY



STALIN

Two architects of revolution, one gravedigger

sant masses, freed from the fear of landlordism were moving into violent opposition. Peasant riots in Tambov, the Kronstadt rising and the strikes in support of it showed that the regime no longer enjoyed popular support. It was becoming a dictatorship over the peasantry and the remnants of the working class.

A retreat was essential. The New Economic Policy, from 1921 onwards, recreated an internal market and gave the peasantry freedom to produce for profit and to buy and sell as they wished. Private production of consumer goods for a profit was also permitted and the publicly-owned large-scale industry was in-

Turn to next page

again. Put on trial for his life, he defied the Tsar from the dock: 'The government has long since broken with the nation... What we have is not a national government but an automaton for mass murder.'

The still smouldering revolutionary movement made the government cautious. The main charge — insurrection — was dismissed. But Trotsky and 14 others were sentenced to deportation to Siberia for life with loss of all civil rights.

In the years of reaction after 1906, the revolutionary organisations, harassed by police spies and unremitting repression, withered and decayed. The Menshevik organisations in Russia virtually disappeared. Even Lenin's Bolshevik group, now split into two, a left and a right (with Lenin on the right), shrank into a shadow of its former strength.

In the emigre circles bitter factional disputes developed. Trotsky escaped again from Siberia in 1907 and soon found himself nearly isolated. Repelled by the Menshevik drift to the right and unable to overcome his hostility to the Bolsheviks, he became a lone wolf.

His one positive achievement in these years was the elaboration of his theory of 'permanent revolu-



# spirit of the revolution...

# Fighting on against lies and terror

structed to operate on commercial principles.

The result was a slow but substantial economic recovery, together with mass unemployment — never less than a fifth of the slowly reviving industrial working class — and the development of a class of capitalist farmers, the kulaks, out of the ranks of the peasantry.

By the middle 1920s the economic output levels of 1913 had been reached and in some cases passed. By that time the balance of social forces had altered fundamentally.

What sort of society was emerging? As early as 1920 Lenin had argued 'Comrade Trotsky talks about the "workers' state". Excuse me, this is an abstraction. It was natural for us to write about the workers state in 1917 but those who now ask "Why protect, against whom protect the working class, there is no bourgeoisie now, the state is a workers' state" commit an obvious mistake. . . . In the first place, our state is not really a workers' state, but a workers' and peasants' state. . . . But more than that. It is obvious from our party programme that . . . our state is a workers' state with bureaucratic distortions'.

Since then the 'bureaucratic distortions' had grown enormously and the ruling party itself had become bureaucratized. In the absence of a working class with the strength, cohesion and will to rule, the party had had to substitute for the class and the party apparatus was increasingly substituting for the party membership.

## Alarmed

A new group of 'apparatchiks' had grown up alongside the kulaks and the 'nepmen' (petty capitalists). Trotsky, in one of his most striking phrases, described politics as 'the struggle for the surplus social product'. Between these three groups such a struggle developed over the heads of the mass of the poorer peasants and against the working class.

The struggle was reflected in the ranks of the now bureaucratized party, especially among its leaders. Trotsky, by now thoroughly alarmed at the rightward trend, became the chief spokesman of a tendency that took up the fight, started by Lenin in the last months of his life, for the democratisation of the party and the revival of the Soviets as real organs of the workers and peasants.

An essential part of the programme of the Left Opposition (as Trotsky's group was called) was the more rapid and planned development of Russian industry. For marxists it was out of the question for democratisation to succeed without an increase in the numbers, self confidence and 'specific weight' of the working class.

## Ambition

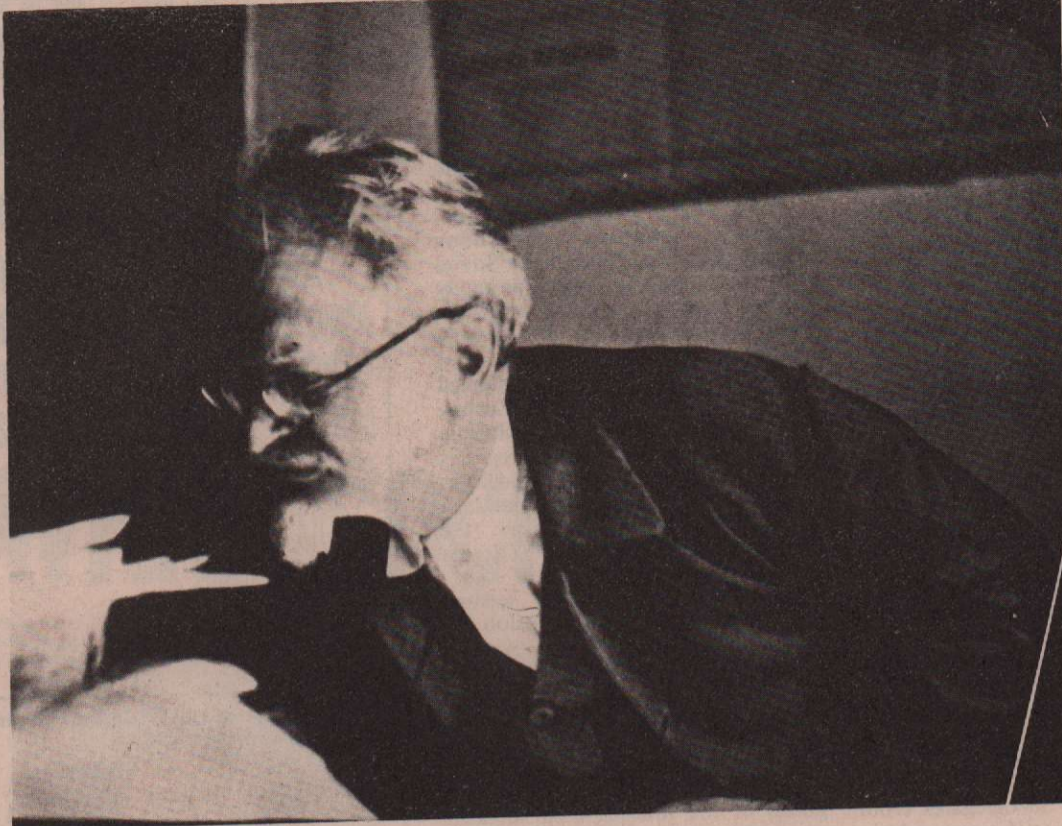
Opposed to the left was a right wing tendency for which Bukharin became the spokesman. This argued for stability, for accumulation 'at a snail's pace', and for giving priority to keeping the peasantry happy, including the kulaks.

There was a third tendency, 'the centre', representing the apparatchiks, the bureaucracy. It was then allied to the right. Its leading figure was J. V. Stalin, an old Bolshevik, a capable organiser and a man of unbounded ambition and iron will.

Stalin was welding the bureaucracy into a class, conscious of its own interests and with its own ideology — 'Socialism in a single country'.

The perspective of the opposition was one of peaceful reform. The pressure of events and of the opposition could reform the party and the country, it thought.

In the event, the extent of the bureaucratic degeneration was shown by the ease with which the



Trotsky at work in Mexico during the last years of his life

included some of the most distinguished members of the party and was joined, after 1926, by the group around Zinoviev, Lenin's closest collaborator in exile, and Krupskaya, Lenin's widow, as well as by the 'ultra-left' democratic centralist group, it was overwhelmingly voted down in party meetings packed by Stalin's yes-men.

In October 1927 Trotsky and Zinoviev were expelled from the party. Soon they and thousands of other oppositionists began the journey into exile. The opposition had been smashed and from their places of exile its leaders predicted a dire danger from the right.

The Soviet 'Thermidor', the overthrow of the party by the representatives of the kulaks and nepmen, was imminent. And indeed the regime did face a danger from



Hitler: helped to power by Stalin's lunatic policies

the right. In 1928 the kulaks, encouraged by the liquidation of the left, engineered a 'grain strike', a hoarding operation which faced the cities with starvation. The sequel showed how grossly they — and the opposition — miscalculated the strength of the rival forces.

The bureaucracy executed a violent change of course. After years of appeasing the rich peasants they resorted to forced collectivisation, to the 'liquidation of the kulaks as a class'.

Under the guise of one-party rule, a narrow clique of bureaucrats ruled Russia. And they were soon to become the puppets of one man. By 1930 was Stalin the new Tsar, in fact if not in form.

With the forced collectivisation came a frenzied programme of forced industrialisation. Schemes far exceeding the most ambitious plans of the most optimistic members of the opposition were put in train, only to be superseded by others still more far reaching. 'Fulfill the five year plan in four years' became the slogan.

The man who yesterday ridiculed the moderate plans of the opposition as utopian now wished to 'catch up and outstrip' the advanced capitalist countries in a few years.

The first five year plan did suc-

ceeded. It did so on the basis of the most brutal exploitation of the workers and peasants.

Real wages fell drastically. The draconically regimented 'free' workers were supplemented by an army of slave labourers, mostly ex-peasants, employed on large scale construction jobs under appalling conditions. All vestiges of democratic rights disappeared. A fully fledged totalitarian regime emerged.

These events disintegrated the exiled opposition. Many of its most prominent members made their peace with Stalin.

At the other extreme, many rank and file oppositionists came to agree with the 'democratic centralists' that a new revolution was necessary. 'The party', wrote Victor Smirnov, a democratic centralist leader, 'is a stinking corpse.'

## Abandon

The workers state had been destroyed years earlier, in his opinion, and capitalism restored. Trotsky would accept neither of these positions. Against the capitulators he insisted on the need for Soviet democracy. Against the left he insisted on the possibilities of peaceful reforms.

It was an unreal assessment and Trotsky was to abandon it 18 months later. The impetus for the change came from events in Germany. The left opposition had been concerned at least as much with the International as with Russia.

The Third International in its early years had been far from being the tool of Moscow. But with the receding of the revolutionary mood in Europe the parties became more attached to the one surviving 'Soviet' regime and more dependent on it.

Advice from Moscow became the most important source of their political ideas. Increasingly the Russian, and hence apparatchik, dominated executive of the International began to interfere with the internal life of the parties.

The myth of the 'Soviet Fatherland' became more and more important to European and Asian Communists. Gradually the more independent spirits and the more serious marxists were eliminated from the leaderships. It took 10 years to reduce the world movement to the position of Moscow's foreign legion. By 1929 the process was complete.

While the right-centre bloc ruled Russia the policy of the International was pushed to the right. Semi-reformist policies were promoted and they led to a num-

berous united front was possible. But they were beyond reason. The only voice they heard was that of Stalin intoning: 'Social democracy and fascism are not antipodes: they are twins.'

The German workers' movement was smashed. The Communist Party surrendered without a fight. Hitler came to power and preparation for the second World War began.

This terrible defeat caused Trotsky to break with the International. 'An organisation which has not been awakened by the thunderbolt of fascism . . . is dead and cannot be revived.'

Soon after he abandoned his reformist position on Russia. A new revolution was necessary to remove the bureaucratic dictatorship.

Yet he did not modify his view that Russia was a 'degenerated workers' state'. For the few years left to him he clung to that abstraction — a 'workers' state' in which the workers were not only not in power but were deprived of the most elementary political rights. It was an error that was to have a lasting and pernicious influence on the revolutionary left.

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## Denounced

Trotsky was now nearly alone. Soon after the German catastrophe the great purges began in Russia. Stalin consolidated his personal rule by the mass murder of the former capitulators, of the former rightists and of most of his own early supporters.

All alike were denounced, along with Trotsky, as agents of Hitler, counter-revolutionaries, spies and saboteurs. A series of grotesque 'show trials', at which prominent leaders of the revolution in Lenin's time were made to confess their guilt — and that of the monster Trotsky.

A climate of opinion was created in which it was impossible for Trotsky to influence left wing workers. 'The Stalinist bureaucracy had actually succeeded in identifying itself with marxism . . . Militant French dockers, Polish coalminers and Chinese guerrilla fighters alike saw in those who ruled Moscow the best judges of Soviet interests and reliable councillors to world communism.'

The Comintern was now swung rightwards again. Stalin's foreign policy required an alliance with the 'western democracies'. The 'popular front' — the subordination of the workers' parties to liberals and 'progressive' Tories — was the new line.

## Towered

It enabled Stalin to strangle another revolution — Spain. Trotsky called the Spanish defeat 'the last warning'. All his energies in the last years of his exile, in France, Norway and then Mexico, were spent in trying to create the nucleus of a new International, the Fourth. Its founding conference took place in 1938 under the shadow of multiple defeats for the working class. Trotsky now had less than two years to live.

It was his imperishable achievement to keep alive the tradition of revolutionary marxism in the decades when it was all but extinguished by its pretended supporters.

Trotsky was far from infallible. Lenin had written in his testament of Trotsky's 'too far-reaching self-confidence' and it was his misfortune, in his last years, that few among his adherents were capable of independent thinking.

That he towered over his associates was at once his strength and his tragedy. Perhaps no other man could have withstood isolation and attack as he did. His contribution to revolutionary socialism and to the working class movement was unsurpassed. He was one of the handful of truly great figures the movement has produced.



RACIALIST POLICE HOUND IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY

# BLACK CURFEW IN W LONDON

**Ginny West nails press lies about 'black violence' in Notting Hill**

**IT'S AN 11pm curfew for black people in the Notting Hill area of London.**

This curfew is self-imposed out of fear of police harassment. If a black man is found walking on the streets at 11pm he is thought to be 'suspicious'. He is usually stopped and searched for drugs, and is often held on trumped up charges.

And in South London, young West Indian boys, when they see a policeman approaching, cross to the other side of the road out of fear.

These are the results of the alleged 'hunt the black' game played by the police for far too long now. The aim is to humiliate and demoralise the black people in London.

A perfect example of police harassment in Notting Hill is the continual hounding of the owner and customers of the Mangrove Restaurant in All Saints Road. This culminated in a demonstration in Portnall Road two weeks ago.

The Tory press screamed blood and thunder and accused black power organisations of plotting against the police in organising the demonstration.

'In fact,' said Mr Jeff Crawford of the West Indian Standing Committee, 'the demonstration was not organised by any black power or panther group, but was community inspired.'

### Unpleasant

For a long time, people in the area had been harassed by the police. The Mangrove Restaurant was the main centre of attack.

The owner of the restaurant, which is the local night spot for West Indians and white people, said that there had been three raids this year alone.

'Thirty policemen came in without a warrant each time, searched customers for drugs but never found any, and were generally unpleasant', he said.

When the owner rang up Notting Hill police station about the raid, they denied all knowledge of it. Scotland Yard also denied the raids, he said.

The owner then wrote a letter to the race relations board who suggested that there could be no interference with the duties of the police.

Complaints to the local Tory council have also been ignored, he said.

In fact the council has hindered rather than helped. They stopped the Mangrove opening after 11pm by



The Mangrove: better than going home

saying that it didn't have the proper toilet facilities and fire precautions.

Attempts were made to get the local Labour MP, Douglas Mann of West Kensington, interested in the plight of the black people. 'During elections he came round to the restaurant and seemed sympathetic, he hasn't been seen since round here,' I was told.

Other cases of police harassment were mentioned. 'Groups of black people on the street are always broken up by police. I know a couple who were holding a wedding party, and the police swooped in and arrested the bride and groom,' said the restaurant owner.

The situation in Notting Hill is bad. The area is drab and there are few social amenities. The pubs are dull and ugly.

People like to go to the Mangrove because, as several put it, 'There is nothing worse than going home'.

Home is often a tumble-down, damp terraced house. It is not surprising that people like to meet together in the warm atmosphere of the Mangrove, with its colourful interior of West Indian art.

### Posters

Two weeks ago the situation reached fever pitch. People spoke of how they had been arrested and beaten up by police, of how out of 10 arrests made by police, eight of the arrested would be black people.

Posters were put up to advertise these facts, to get people interested in what was going on, but they were ignored. And so the people of West London decided to demonstrate.

And when they did demonstrate against police brutality, they were viciously criticised.

Various reports of how many were involved were given, but the probable number was somewhere around 100, including a handful of

white people.

Trouble began when these people reached Portnall Road on their way to the police station. A policeman is alleged to have called one of the demonstrators 'nigger', and then the fighting broke out.

Similar events occurred in the Caledonian Road nearly a month ago. Black people living in the Islington area had suffered similar harassment by the police.

Mr Everard Bastien, who is an articulated clerk with a firm of solicitors in West London, spoke of cases which he has had to handle concerning police brutality.

One incident involved a man called Calvin St Louis who is a West Indian. He was charged with threatening behaviour while in a travel agents shop in Kentish Town.

Police came and took him to the police station where, it was claimed, they beat him up. After the police surgeon was called, Calvin was taken to Whittington Hospital at Archway.

There the police spoke to the doctor. Calvin was then examined and discharged.

In considerable pain, he went to his own doctor, who advised him to return to the hospital. This he did. There two West Indian doctors examined him, and found that he had six broken ribs.

When Calvin appeared before the magistrates Court, the police tried to deny the charges, but the doctors proved the case, and Calvin was given a conditional discharge. He is now taking proceedings against the police.

### Charged

The Caledonian Road incident which hit the headlines, got Mr Bastien himself into trouble with the police.

A youth had been charged on the afternoon of the incident with theft. Many people with the boy at the time said this was yet again a 'trumped up charge'.

Mr Bastien was approached by the parents of the youth to act as counsel. However, when Mr Bastien went to the station in order to see his client, he was not allowed to. Excuse after excuse was given. When Mr Bastien insisted, he was charged with 'obstructing the police in the course of their duty'.

Now Mr Bastien has been told by the Law Society that if he is found 'Guilty', there would be serious consequences.

'I have to walk round with an identity card because the police don't believe that I am a qualified solicitor. It is the colour of my skin.'

He condemned certain magistrates courts as being nothing more than protection rackets for the police. 'South Western and Acton are notorious for their handling of cases where black people are charged,' he said.

Jeff Crawford warned only last week that people can only be driven so far, then they are likely to explode. These people need all the support they can get from socialists and trade unionists.

## Cottons Column.

DID YOU shed a tear for all those patriotic Tories who, in the good old 'national interest', gave up lucrative jobs in the City to take on ministerial responsibilities?

Well, shed no more for Reggie Maudling, genial gruppenfuhrer at the Home Office. Moving into a government home for the duration, he has rented out his Mayfair pad for a cool £240 a week. (Yes, you read that right: £240 a week.)

If the new tenant gips over the rent, Reggie is in quite a strong position to send the bailiffs round.

As for the rest of the merry Tory crew, they are just as unlikely as Maudling to have taken any real drop in income. They will have noted the neat dodge of Ernie Marples, Transport Minister in the days of yore, who transferred his holdings in Marples, Ridgway (a firm which, by a strange coincidence, builds motorways) to his lady wife.

As the man said as he watched a pack of wolves at work, the family that preys together, stays together...

used industries who received a wage increase of £48 a week, taking their pay from £17,500 to £20,000 a year. The pay of their deputies is also to go up from £12,000 to £13,500.

The pay of the state bosses has now risen by 60 per cent in two years. Some freeze! Some crisis!

### Young Tories see red

AT THE Dover Carnival earlier this month, nurses from the local Buckland Hospital entered a float with the theme of the multi-racial nature of hospital staff. They decorated the float with various national flags - Irish, African, and so on - plus a large red flag borne by an IS sympathiser. The float carried the slogan 'Nurses of the world unite'.

The theme of the local Young Conservatives' float was Al Capone and his Chicago gangsters. Feeling that gangsterism and Toryism are apt bedmates, the nurses heckled the YCs with 'So that's how you get your money!'

GRAPHIC 70, journal of the printing union SOGAT, has grudgingly admitted an error in its June issue. Some error it was too.

A review of Ken Coates' and Tony Topham's book Workers' Control carried the astonishing headline: 'Workers - Beware of CIA 'Revolutionaries''

The implication in the review was that Coates and Topham were in the pay of the American Central Intelligence Agency. A letter to the journal, signed by several trade union leaders, including Jack Jones, Lawrence Daly and Hugh Scanlon, demanded that the accusation should be denied.

Graphic 70 refused to publish the letter and ran instead a statement admitting the 'error' and suggesting that the reviewer - one Jeff Walsh - would not be used again.

Sad to record, in this week of all weeks, that there are still those with a 'Trotsky-fascist' mentality around.

### Keep 'em on the streets

THE LATEST trendy scene in American social science is something called 'social psychiatry'. Its adherents believe mental disturbance is really the result of social stress and that therefore efforts should be made to treat it out in the community.

And what more obvious proof of this than that furnished by the black ghetto riots, where the participants go so far in demonstrating their 'insanity' as to burn down supermarkets - insane, of course, because it hurts themselves economically.

Hence the recent move of scores of these concerned 'social psychiatrists' into the ghettos, where they set up open shop to cater for the sick people. Despite recent cut-backs in spending on the 'urban renewal' programme, it is widely believed that the administration is still falling over itself in its desire to lavish money on this humanitarian project on behalf of the blacks' mental health.

Please do not adjust society, there is a fault in your reality.

READERS of the new printed-with-mud style Morning Star (alias the Daily Worker) strained their poor old eyes on Monday as they turned to that rib-tickling cartoon strip, Pif.

Was this a new Chinese or Russian version? they pondered as they tried to decipher the strange text in the characters' balloons. No, it was a straightforward British cock-up - the strip had been printed back to front and you needed a mirror to read it.

The Star has dismissed as a filthy Trotskyite slander a story that a deputation of readers has asked for the whole paper to be printed in the same style.

### Many happy returns, m'lord

THAT OLD ADAGE 'one law for the rich and one for the poor' still holds good in our property-owning democracy. While Lord Stokes, pukka boss of the British Leyland combine, regularly castigates his workers for ruinous strikes, he is guilty of a flagrant breach of the law.

The Board of Trade has the power to impose daily fines on companies which break the Companies Act by not filing annual returns. Needless to say, it rarely uses its powers, particularly where the big boys are concerned.

One such company is Pressed Steel Fisher, an important components subsidiary of British Leyland. Under the Act, companies must make an annual return to the Board of Trade each calendar year - and that return must be filed within 28 days of its being completed.

Pressed Steel Fisher's last return was dated 31 December 1968 - and it was not filed until 30 April 1969.

What was that about anarchy, Lord Stokes?

### Boom at the top

READERS who believe that wealth should be more fairly distributed will be pleased to learn that it was not just the bosses of the national-

### LETTER

## CLAIMANTS UNION

WE READ with interest your interview with Joe Kenyon of the Claimants and Unemployed Workers Union (25 July) and we welcome yet another addition to the ranks of the growing claimant movement.

It would be as well to point out to your readers that for six months there has existed the National Federation of Claimants Unions, and the Birmingham Union was founded over 18 months ago and has over 500 members. There are six federated unions, in Stoke-on-Trent, Manchester, Brighton, East London and West London. We are linked on the basis of bona-fide claimants unionism and minimum political objectives:

1. The right to an adequate income without means-test for all people.
2. A free welfare state for all with its services controlled by the people who use it.
3. No secrets and the right to full information.
4. No distinction between so-called 'deserving' and 'undeserving'.

Clearly Joe Kenyon's thoughts reflect those which we have grappled with from the outset and you will be pleased to know that we have come up with some answers. Our unions do not admit purely insurance claimants into membership nor do we fight insurance claims. No challenge at all can be presented to the Social Security system, or to the capitalist order, by organising on such a basis.

Looking at the pre-war unemployed workers movement, it is really quite remarkable that this

movement sunk without a trace. It must have been the main preoccupation of the Communist Party at the time, 80 per cent of whom were unemployed.

It seems that much effort must have been wasted in futile campaigns, and insufficient effort put into building an economic basis for the organisation which (as Joe Kenyon indicates) would have comprised something the working class would have considered worth preserving. At the same time it seemed to have very limited political objectives, which means it ended up as rather reformist in content. Once the mass unemployment disappeared it had no further tasks.

Most important of all, it appears that there was no firm base in the 'stable non-employed' - the single-parent families and long-term sick and disabled, and the womenfolk in general. It is now no longer viable to repeat this historic failure, because the NAB has provided us with a totally integrated means test in which we are all lumped together.

It also lumps us with certain other important sections of the working class, i.e. the dependants of strikers, to which we pay particular attention.

The NFCU would be pleased to assist any group of claimants who are or have recently claimed Supplementary Benefits, if they could get in touch with us.

W. BUCKNALL, Birmingham Claimants Union, 74a Stratford Rd, Sparkbrook, Birmingham 11.

## Join the International Socialists

There are branches in the following areas

#### SCOTLAND

Aberdeen; Clydebank; Dundee; Edinburgh; Glasgow; East Kilbride.

#### NORTH EAST

Durham; Newcastle upon Tyne; Teesside (Middlesbrough and Redcar)

#### NORTH

Barnsley; Bradford; Derby; Doncaster; Hull; Leeds; York; Selby; Sheffield.

#### NORTH WEST

Lancaster; Manchester; Merseyside; Preston; St Helens; Stockport; Wigan.

#### MIDLANDS

Birmingham; Coventry; Northampton; Leicester; Oxford; Potteries.

#### WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath; Bristol; Cardiff; Exeter; Swansea

#### SOUTH

Ashford; Brighton; Crawley; Folkestone; Portsmouth; Southampton.

#### EAST

Cambridge; Grays and Tilbury; Harlow; Ipswich; Lowestoft; Norwich; North-east Essex.

#### GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

Acton; Angel; Camden; Chertsey; Croydon; Dagenham; Deptford; East London; Enfield; Erith; Fulham; Greenford; Hampstead; Harrow; Hemei Hempstead; Hornsey; Ilford; Kilburn; Kingston; Lambeth; Merton; Reading; Richmond; Stoke Newington; Tottenham; Walthamstow; Wandsworth; Watford; Victoria (SW1).



Please send further details of the meetings and activities of the International Socialists to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send to IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

# Socialist Worker

## New Ottery battle over jobs

SW Reporter

**OTTERY ST MARY:-** The Ottermill Switchgear strike is over after 15 weeks of bitter struggle.

The strikers clocked in on 12 August. Many echoed strike committee chairman Jim Moore's comment that punching their cards was the most difficult thing they had had to do for 20 years.

Ken Baker, national industrial officer of the General and Municipal

Workers Union, sent in to settle the dispute, did his dirty work well. With his approval, some 25-30 men - including a GMWU shop steward - planned to strike break after a mass meeting on 10 August had overwhelmingly rejected a recommendation to return to work.

The strikers were demanding a 4s 4d an hour increase on the basic rate and a full return to work. But

full time officials of the GMWU, the Sheet Metal Workers and the Electricians suggested the management's proposals of a 1s increase on the bonus rate and 'only' 25 redundancies was the best deal they could get.

They were prepared to surrender to the management even though they knew that the blacking of Ottermill parts was about to cause the lay-off of thousands of Ford workers. Shareholders, worried by lost orders of £200,000 were also planning trouble at the company's annual meeting.

Faced with a major split in the strike, the committee had no alternative but to call another mass meeting last week and recommend a return to work.

But they forced the management to agree to a guaranteed 'fall back' rate for three to four months of £19 for unskilled and £24 for top skilled on a working week reduced from 44½ to 40 hours.

### Bonus with strings

After the three or four months period, the management's new bonus scheme will come into operation. This will include productivity 'strings'. These have not yet been discussed but it is clear that the Ottermill struggle is far from over.

The immediate problem facing the strike committee is the question of redundancies. They are meeting management all this week in a bid to shut the loopholes opened by the full-time officials. The management is determined to victimise leading militants.

The 150 strikers from a notoriously low-wage area demand the respect and admiration of trade unionists everywhere. They have fought press, police and union officials and a firm famous for price-fixing, South African connections and a Tory minister - Geoffrey Rippon - as a director.

Strike committee chairman Jim Moore this week asked that blacking of Ottermill parts should continue so as to act as a lever while redundancy negotiations are taking place. Donations to: P Coward, 83 Slade Close, Ottery St Mary, Devon.

# 'BLACK PILKINGTONS' CALL AS GLASS STRIKE GOES ON

by Ray Challinor

**ST HELENS:-** The Pilkington Rank and File Strike Committee has issued an appeal to workers throughout the country to black glass produced by the giant monopoly.

The response so far has been encouraging. The committee stress the importance of building and car workers taking up their call.

The dispute arose as a result of a short, three-day stoppage after 600 workers withdrew their labour when the new Glass and General Workers Union was refused negotiating rights. The company retaliated by issuing wholesale dismissal notices.

The Rank and File Committee's appeal says: 'Pilkington's "get tough" provocation is in line with the ruthless policies planned by employers' associations and the government in the face of the big wages movement.

They seek to strike fear into workers - fear of the sack for militancy; fear of unemployment; fear of legal action which the government is planning against the trade unions. The General and Municipal Workers Union officialdom has worked hand in glove with our employers.

### 'Fundamental right'

'But the issue is not one of unions, but of the fundamental right of workers to withdraw their labour and defend militant organisation in days when employers and government are seeking to destroy militant trade unionism everywhere.

'If you allow us to go down the road without a fight, then you may be next. Other employers are watching closely the tough policy of Pilkington.

Pilkington Brothers have definitely been tough. Among those sacked is an old man who had only four months to serve before retirement. He had worked for the company for 52 years, ever since leaving school at the age of 13.

Financial hardship has forced some men to return to work. One of them described conditions in the factory as 'something like a police state'.

Men are liable to be dismissed for talking to each other, mentioning the dispute or for associating in leisure hours with members of the Glassworkers Union.

### Harsh discipline

Officials of the GMWU are fully co-operating with Pilkington Brothers. Inside the factories they are helping to impose harsher industrial discipline.

Since the company is making membership a condition of employment, it means that the GMWU has the right to determine who works and who does not. One of its leaders, Bill Bradburn, is reported as saying: 'We will be quite ruthless'.

Despite the combined efforts of Pilkington and the GMWU, the Rank and File Committee intend to continue the struggle against what is one of the biggest sackings of militants since the last world war.

Communications and donations to: Pilkington Rank and File Committee, 10 Greenfield Rd, St Helens, Lancs. Tel: St Helens 25925.

ON WEDNESDAY, a Glassworkers Union spokesman told Socialist Worker that Merseyside dockers had lifted their blacking of Pilkington glass. They had been encouraged to do so by a TGWU official who said a Pilkington director had told him that all the strikers would be reinstated if they applied.



THE GEARBOX OF THAT TWENTY-FIVE TONNER SOUNDS A BIT DODGY TO ME, HENRY...

## R-R draughtsmen locked out over no-strings claim

**COVENTRY:-** 960 draughtsmen at Rolls-Royce factories have now been locked out for five weeks and their union, DATA, have made it an official dispute.

The men put in a claim for a substantial increase without productivity strings in place of an agreement which expired on 1 July to meet the rising cost of living in the Coventry area. The company completely ignored all the factors included in the claim and offered 7 per cent. They also insisted that this apply to all DATA members in the combine.

A mass meeting rejected the offer and told the company that from 1 July the members would feel free to use any methods to convince them that 7 per cent was not enough. 25 members went on strike and all overtime was banned.

The management sent threatening letters saying that all members

would be suspended unless normal working was resumed. A mass meeting decided to stand firm and on 14 July they were locked out.

A determined picket has successfully slowed Rolls-Royce production. A strike spokesman said: 'We've only just started. We can last out longer than the company'.

They have received encouraging gestures of support from DATA members all over the country and from the Clerical Workers Union, who have lent them a club near the factory as strike headquarters.

This is an important strike for the Rolls-Royce combine. If Coventry loses then the combine loses.

The strikers' demands are:

1. All areas reject 7 per cent.
2. All areas ban overtime.
3. All areas collect money in support.

### NOTICES

**LIVERPOOL:** demonstrate in solidarity with arrested building workers. Islington Square, 10.30am, Monday 24 August.

**IMG Trotsky memorial meeting.** Fri 21 Aug, Conway Hall, WC1. Spkrs: Pat Jordan, Bob Pennington, Robin Blackburn

**IS members in transport industry:** meeting to discuss policy at 6 Cottons Gardens, 11.30am Sun 20 September. Information on town planning and public transport is needed for special features for SW. Contact Chris Davison, 22 Cedar Rd, Teddington, Mdx. 01-977 4662.

**SWANSEA IS:** Amos Moulds (AUBTW) on Swansea in the 1930s. Red Cow pub, Fri 21 August.

## LONG FIGHT LIKELY AT WELSH METAL WORKS

**SWANSEA:-** Eight storeroom men in the toolroom at Alcoa Manufacturing are out on official strike. The factory, employing 1500, is part of the Alcoa USA empire, the world's largest aluminium company with an annual revenue of £550 millions.

Management refuses to honour a consolidation agreement of 1964 giving mates 80 per cent of craftsmen's rates. They now claim that this agreement did not necessarily apply to storemen who are classed as toolmakers' mates.

One of the few remaining company spokesmen who were in on the agreement, admitted at a joint meeting that it was specifically intended to include storemen and that a later agreement in 1968 made this even plainer.

### DIGGING IN

Fitters and toolmakers have come out in sympathy and were joined by the electricians after staff boys began lubricating machinery. Management are digging their heels in. They know that to pay up will make a mockery of the productivity deals being forced through.

The determination of the lads suggests this could be a long struggle and a call to make this fight official for the workers who are out in sympathy should be pressed.

A start must be made now to contact the six other factories in the combine and factories receiving components from Alcoa (ranging from car trim and bottle closure strip to sheets for lithographic printing) asking for full support.

### SECRETARY BACK

IS national secretary Tessa Lindop has recovered from her recent illness and is now back at work at 6 Cottons Gardens.

### STRIKE ON AGAIN

**OTTERMILL** workers were back on strike again on Wednesday. On Tuesday, the bosses demanded the sacking of 25 of the 30-strong strike committee, plus four of the five shop stewards. This would have left union representation solely to the GMWU. A mass meeting voted to walk out.

## Guard dogs threat to pickets

**THORN AUTOMATION**, part of the giant electronic group, has brought in security guards and dogs to intimidate a successful picket by ASTMS technicians at the Rugby (Staffs) plant.

After a long history of unrest, work-to-rule and attempt to break white collar unionism by a lock out, ASTMS has declared the strike official.

The strikers have taken a militant attitude by picketing all entrances to the plant. The TGWU have co-operated by not breaking the lines to bring in electronic engines and equipment assembled in the plant.

The works are slowly clogging up despite Thorn's appeals for non-union blackleg labour in the Test department. Service engineers and ASTMS members in the Thorn Group have blacked any work getting out by night.

Security guards have been brought in to 'protect the firm's property and the picket itself'. This shows that while Thorn had a record 73 per cent increase in profit last year and are doing well with a full order book, they are determined to deny a modest £3 a week claim.

## Strike as TGWU militant is sacked by car parts firm

by Dave Spencer

**COVENTRY:-** Workers at Arden Products, Kenilworth, are on strike over the sacking of Transport Workers Union convenor Dave Edwards.

The reason for his dismissal was given as 'intimidation of colleagues'. What really happened was that during some skylarking Edwards chopped up a workmates' docket. The man concerned has joined the strike.

The management were looking for an excuse to sack Edwards and

better wages and conditions. They have raised their rate by £6 a week in the last 18 months.

The factory is typical of many component firms on the outskirts of Coventry which supply the large car plants. Outside the Coventry and District rate, pay is low and conditions poor.

for their poor safety record. But chopping workers' fingers off on the presses is nothing compared to chopping up a work docket, it seems.

The sacking has made workers at Arden even more determined to protect their union organisation and to spread the fight to other factories in the area, where interest has been shown.

As one striker with 20 years' experience at the firm said: 'We'll make this into another Pilkingtons'.

Money is urgently needed. Send