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CEYLON AND THE HEALY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION



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INTRODUCTION

The International Marxist Group, British Section of the Fourth International, is pleased to publish this short pamphlet by comrade Jaya Vithana, a Ceylonese revolutionary militant and member of the LSSP(R), Ceylonese section of the Fourth International. Normally we tend to ignore the slanders and lies hurled at us by the leadership of the Socialist Labour League. However the allegations they have been making regarding our comrade Bala Tampoe and the LSSP(R) have been used by other political currents hostile to the Fourth International and its British section. It was therefore felt necessary to produce an answer to the latest batch of slanders to emanate from Clapham High Street.

We hope that this pamphlet will be read by all comrades, including members of the SLL, because in our view the very fact that pamphlets of this sort have to be produced shows the sad state of organisations which in the past were part of the world Trotskyist movement. We have indicated on many occasions that we are always prepared to engage in debates and discussions with all groups on the left. However what we are not prepared to tolerate is the disgusting methods of Slander and falsification which Healy has picked up from the Stalinists and which his old comrades-in-arms Chris Pullis and Robertson have not been able to forget as the case of Ceylon reveals.

Comrade Vithana will be in Europe for several weeks and is prepared to debate with or speak at any meeting on Ceylon and discuss the events of April 1971. Comrades interested can write to him c/o 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1

C. Howard

In the recent past the Healyites of the Socialist Labour League have suffered a series of severe setbacks. Since their grandiose efforts to "reconstruct the Fourth International" in 1966—when Healy tried to form an unprincipled alliance with the Lutte Ouvriere(France), the Spartacists (USA) and the Japanese adherents of State-Capitalism—failed, they have suffered reversal after reversal. The latest debacle which blew up right in Healy's face was the split in the "International Committee" when both factions (i.e. the Lambertistes and the Healyites) attacked each other for capitulating to the dreaded Pabloites. This was the logical outcome of the opportunist politics peddled by the Healy outfit(readers will recall that they gave conditional support to the Indian bourgeoisie when the latter's troops invaded Bangladesh to put the Awami League in power and help to crush the leftist forces). With each of these reversals the Healyites, their backs against the wall of Clapham High Street, have been compelled to use neo-Stalinist methods against their political opponents: lies, slanders and baseless insinuations have become their permanent stock-in-trade. The most recent victim of these methods has been the Ceylonese section of the Fourth International and, in particular, its principal leader, comrade Bala Tampoe. The latter has been singled out for special treatment. The result has been a campaign of vile slanders carried out by the degenerated WORKERS PRESS.

It is of course easy for us to compile a dossier of slanders and rumours that one often hears about the Healy outfit and its leading members. For example the Maoists accuse it of being in the pay of the CIA, its own ex-members accuse it of all sort of degenerated Stalinist practices, etc. We could also use the Vyshinsky method of innuendo and come up with: "It is no accident that when Mr Healy went to Ceylon he stayed at the Galle Face Hotel (the hideout of American businessmen in Ceylon) and only a few doors away from where the notorious CIA agent Straushooper also stayed." We could manufacture many juicy stories about Mr Michael Vanderpoorten(alias Banda). We could dig into Healy's personal and political past and ask him about the days when he was Pablo's political lapdog and leading hatchet man. NO, MR. HEALY. WE DO NOT PROPOSE TO ACCOMPANY YOU TO THE GUTTER. That is why we will concentrate on your opportunist politics.

In this particular article I do not propose to deal with the absurd charge that the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USFI) is responsible for the betrayal of the LSSP in 1964. Healy wants to rewrite history. He wishes to wash his hands off the LSSP debacle by tracing the degeneration of the LSSP to a period after 1953(i.e. to a date after he split off from the Fourth International). Since Comrade Germain has adequately dealt with all these arguments (cf "Marxism vs. Ultra-Leftism") I will confine myself to some of the more brazen lies that have been peddled recently by the Healyite daily paper. One point on which I do disagree with Cde Germain, however, is his characterisation of the Healyites as "ultra-Lefts". I think he would probably agree with me today that always beneath the veneer of ultra-leftism there existed a rightist-opportunism. In my forthcoming book on Ceylon I have attempted to demonstrate that the signs of degeneration could be observed in the LSSP as far back as 1950. And yet Healy raised no criticism of the LSSP at that time. On the eve of the 1953 split Healy's old friend, Mr Doric de Souza (now an official in the Ceylonese government) toured Britain to aid in the struggle against the Pabloites. If the United Secretariat is responsible for the degeneration of the LSSP then Healy shares in the blame. In order to score factional points the Healyites rewrite history. To quote but a few examples:

(a) In the Workers Press of 18.10.72(P.5 col.2) it is stated that "in 1953 LSSP secretary Leslie Goonewardene declared that Mrs Bandaranaike's Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) was in fact a centrist party." This is a pure and unadulterated lie! Why do they print such lies? In order to demonstrate that the degeneration of the LSSP was due to "pabloism" (the Healyites use the connotation "pabloism" in much the same way as the Stalinists use "trotskyism". Its an easy way out as it educates the 'cadre' in demonology rather than politics!) they must prove that this process started in 1953 at the time of the split in the Fourth International.

First: neither Leslie Goonewardene nor anyone else in the LSSP characterised the SLFP as a centrist party in 1953. In fact it was in this period that the LSSP correctly characterised the SLFP as the alternative party of the bourgeoisie; it was in this period that Colvin de Silva wrote *Their Politics and Ours* where he not only characterised the SLFP as a bourgeois party, but also castigated the Communist Party for trying to make an anti UNP bloc with the SLFP ignoring the latter's capitalist class base. Furthermore (just for the sake of accuracy) the SLFP was led at that time by Mr Bandaranaike. His wife only entered politics in 1960 after her husband had been assassinated. Moreover it was at this time that the LSSP led the 'hartal' against the UNP government.

Second: it was not until 1963 that the LSSP right-wing altered its characterisation of the SLFP. Even then they did not call it a centrist party, but referred to it as "petty-bourgeois." That was 10 years after the 1953 split. By slightly altering a few dates, by a casual sleight of hand, the Healyite manages to 'prove' how the USFI is responsible for the degeneration of the LSSP. That is why we call the SLL a bunch of cheats and frauds who disgrace the name of "trotskyism".

(b) In the Workers Press of 20.10.72(P.5 col.1, para5) it is stated baldly that the LSSP(R) minority broke with the LSSP rightwing "without the assistance of the United Secretariat." This is another barefaced lie and Healy knows it. The decision to split with the LSSP was taken on the advice and consultation of comrade Pierre Frank who attended the special conference of the LSSP in 1964. Mr Healy was also in Ceylon at the time, but the raiding operation which he tried to carry out from his suite in the Galle Face hotel misfired. He did not succeed in winning a single leading comrade from the LSSP minority.

We think that it is vital to have a serious political/theoretical critique of the political practice of the LSSP right from the early Fifties to the final phase of its degeneration. Such a critique would be extremely useful for the revolutionary movement as a whole, but particularly for comrades in colonial and semi-colonial countries. Healy of course is not interested in such niceties. The SLL is only interested in trying to score factional points (essentially for the purpose of insulating its membership from the ideas of the evil Pabloites) and to this end they are prepared to manufacture any number of lies, not infrequently with the aid of the bourgeois press. Comrade Germain has dealt with their method fairly adequately in his pamphlet which covers most of their charges against the USFI. I shall therefore concentrate on the more recent events.

Anyone reading the articles published in the *Workers Press* (18–21st October 1972) on the activities of our comrades in Ceylon might be actually led into believing that the repression unleashed against the JVP in April '71 was carried out not by the Bandaranaike regime and its allies, but by the Fourth International and its Ceylonese section. Let us examine these charges and catch the falsifiers at work, but we will not stop there. We will also expose the role of the handful of Healyites that exist in Ceylon during the repression. They have been too modest in relation to the activities of their followers in Ceylon. We will try and fill the vacuum existing in their newspaper on this question.

It is not uncommon for Trotskyists (of all varieties) to be slandered as imperialist or CIA agents by the Stalinists and the Maoists. For decades the hacks of the CP's, unable to answer us politically, have peddled these slanders. Revolutionaries in Ceylon have been branded as CIA agents by their opponents for many years. In fact it is common for the Maoists in particular to hurl epithets at anybody who does not agree with their particular strategy or tactic. As early as August 1970, the JVP was branded as "CIA linked" by both pro-Moscow and pro-Peking groups. In September 1970, when the LSSP(R), the JVP and the Young Socialist Front (YSF—composed largely of Tamil workers) held a joint meeting at Keenakalle, to protest against the shooting of two plantation workers, one Maoist group distributed a leaflet in which comrades Bala Tampoe, Wijeweera and Illancheliyan (a YSF leader) were referred to as "well-known CIA agents". It is not therefore an uncommon practice for political bankrupts of all hues and shades to adopt these methods of polemicising. Now the Healyites have adopted this old Stalinist practice. What evidence does Healy produce to substantiate his vile slanders. It is no more than a mixed bag of downright lies, half-truths and sly insinuations à la Vyshinsky. What is the 'evidence' against comrades Bala and others. It goes as follows:

- (i) Reports alleged to have been made by a 'commission' of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.
- (ii) A statement that Bala Tampoe was allowed to leave Ceylon in April-May '71, i.e. at the height of the repression
- (iii) The insinuation that since Bala Tampoe remained free while between three and four thousand trade-unionists were arrested during the repression, he must be linked to the capitalists and imperialists.

The first of these lies the Healyites borrowed from the Spartacists of the USA, who recently published a series of allegations against comrade Bala Tampoe. They were made by Mr Edmund Samarakkody, a former member of the LSSP(R), who split from the party in 1968. Since then these allegations have been reprinted by the Solidarity group in Britain. Both Solidarity and the Spartacists—the latter in particular—live off this type of politics. Like vultures they wait for the next rumour to come their way, pounce on it, embellish it and then serve it up in their press. The Spartacist grouping has for years now been living off the crumbs of the table of the Fourth International. A bankrupt sect which is totally unable to project any political perspectives off its own the Spartacists spend most of their time slandering the Fourth International. The Solidarity group prides itself on its belief in workers' democracy, proletarian morality and supposedly despises bureaucracy of every sort. So keen are they in their search for the truth that they sent one of their members all the way to Ceylon to interview Edmund Samarakkody, but did not bother to verify his allegations. Nor did our crusading Solidarist bother to ask Bala Tampoe what he thought about these allegations. Could it really be that Chris Pallis has not been able to wash away all the stains of Healyism. No, these gentlemen were not interested in ascertaining the truth. What they wanted to lay their hands on was some dirt to discredit the Fourth International. When they thought they had found some they rushed into print. Beneath the different masks which they wear, the Healyites, Spartacists and Solidarist leaders share a common method.

Was there such a report as Healy and his friends claim? In fact Mr Samarakkody claims that there were two reports, a minority and a majority report. In fact the USFI appointed no such commission. Nor is there such a report or reports. What happened is the following: Mr Samarakkody came to the last World Congress of the FI and made the above allegations and on their basis argued that the LSSP(R) should be disaffiliated from the International and that his group should be recognised as the Ceylonese section. Now Edmund Samarakkody had split from the LSSP(R) 11 months prior to the World Congress after his political line had been defeated at the LSSP(R) convention. At no time before the split nor even for some considerable time after the split did he raise these allegations against Bala Tampoe. And yet most of these allegations refer to incidents that took place some considerable time before the split in the LSSP(R); some of them 2 or 3 years before the 1969 World Congress and at a time when Mr Samarakkody was the Secretary of the LSSP(R). How come these issues were not raised at that time? Why didn't Mr Samarakkody demand the investigation of these charges by the International Control Commission of the Fourth International? Why didn't he, at least, inform the USFI centre about these actions

alleged to have been committed by comrade Tampoe? These are precisely the questions which were raised by the delegates to the last World Congress. It was completely irresponsible for Mr Samarakkody to have remained quiet about these charges (if they were true or could be substantiated) for three years and even more irresponsible to ask a World Congress to disaffiliate a section on the basis of unsubstantiated charges against one of its leaders. In the event the 9th World Congress decided not to disaffiliate the Ceylonese Section and refused to recognise Mr Samarakkody's group. Immediately the decision was announced Mr Samarakkody went up to Bala Tampoe shook hands with him and began to exchange pleasantries! Only a few minutes before he had been accusing comrade Bala of being an agent of imperialism, etc., etc. For Edmund it was all a contest, a game played between two parties. In this game there were no rules. Thus one of the charges levelled against cde Bala was that 'Tampoe indirectly supported the party in power'(and this despite the well-known fact that Comrade Tampoe had the longest ever workers struggle against the UNP government). In order to win his case Mr Samarakkody hurled every possible charge against his opponent, but once he had been defeated and the umpire pronounced against him, like a good cricket captain he went to congratulate the winner

THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST BALA TAMPOE: IS THERE ANY TRUTH IN THEM AT ALL?

Is there any truth in the allegations levelled against Bala Tampoe by Edmund Samarakkody and reprinted by the Healyites and their blood-brothers the Spattacists. Let us examine them one by one:

(a) Was comrade Bala's trip to the United States financed by the Asia Foundation (in turn financed by the CIA) and while he was in the U.S. did he hold a private meeting with MacNamara? (Workers Press, 21.10.72)

The answer is quite simply NO. But let us examine how the Healyites and their strange assortment of bedfellows distort and twist the facts to suit their case. Comrade Bala visited the U.S. at the invitation of Harvard University which had organised a study project on trade-unionism. On receiving the invitation comrade Bala consulted leading comrades in Europe and our comrades in the United States. He also obtained the approval of the party leadership in Ceylon. Many other trade unionists from all over the world had been invited and it was seen as a good opportunity to make contacts, learn about the trade union movements in other countries and put across our views regarding the problems of trade unionism. Did he hold a private discussion with MacNamara? Again the answer is NO. One of the Seminars at this project was addressed by MacNamara and was attended amongst a host of others by cde Bala. The latter furthermore raised extremely strong and effective arguments against the policies of MacNamara. All these facts were included by comrade Bala in a report he gave to the LSSP(R) party leadership on his return to Ceylon. In fact that is how Edmund Samarakkody could distort these facts for factional purposes. Surely this is a rather odd way for a "CIA agent" to behave. In addition cde Bala made no secret of his revolutionary views and publicly declared his opposition to imperialism's war in Vietnam and his support for the struggle of the Vietnamese people. Taking advantage of his trip he addressed public meetings in Boston, California and New York where he strongly attacked US aggression in Vietnam.

Therefore to say that his trip was paid for by the Asia Foundation and he had private discussions with MacNamara is a downright lie. Such attempts to smear his reputation were made by all his enemies in Ceylon, particularly when he was leading important working class struggles, but they failed. Today they are being disseminated abroad by groups claiming to be revolutionary when he is again leading important struggles and is unable to defend himself in Europe because of the present conjuncture of events in Ceylon. Those who make these charges should ponder them well. History has strange ways of unmasking slanderers and liars in the working class movement.

(b) Did comrade Bala and the Ceylon Mercantile Union (CMU) oppose the strike against the 1967 devaluation?

This is a ridiculous charge. The coalition unions who launched this strike had no serious perspective for a struggle. Anyone who knows the history of Stalinist political practice in Ceylon (as elsewhere) should be aware of their strategy, namely, the strategy of paying lip-service to extra-parliamentary struggles and organising token actions; the strategy of using token actions to assist in parliamentary pressure politics. Always a refusal to prepare for a serious struggle. Bala Tampoe and the CMU have always been implacable enemies of these practices. Comrade Bala opposed hasty action designed from the very beginning to dissipate the energies of the working class; action by only a section of the working class—without the participation of the plantation workers, an important section of the working class. When the devaluation took place the CMU made proposals calling for a serious preparation of the struggle against the UNP government and for united action by all trade unions. The unions of the Coalition parties (Moscow CP, LSSP & SLFP) unilaterally and without preparation launched a token strike. Only a fool or an opportunist would have said that the Coalition parties and their leaders wanted to initiate a serious extra-parliamentary struggle. After all it was the CP and the LSSP who had betrayed the '21' Demands struggle three years ago when the entire working class was preparing for a decisive showdown with the capitalist government of Madame Bandaranaike; at that time the CMU was at the forefront of that movement fighting the reformist and stalinists. To say therefore that because the CMU refused to be an accomplice to the treacherous tactic of the stalinists it has aligned itself with the bourgeoisie is absolutely ridiculous. It is even more ridiculous when we consider that during 1965-70, when the UNP was in

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power it was only the CMU that led all the decisive struggles in the Fisheries Corporation, Insurance Corporation and the PORT, where the LSSP union actually blacklegged and was, as a result, isolated and smashed. The CMU has been in the forefront of every anti-capitalist struggle. It will, however, never become a pawn in the hands of the Stalinists and the reformists and be utilised for their electoral charades as long as it is led by the LSSP(R).

(c) Did comrade Bala Tampoe write to Mrs Bandaranaike in January 1966 implying support for the curfew? (Workers Press, 21.10.72.....P.5)

NO. This is yet another lie. At no time did cde Bala during this period either write to Mrs Bandaranaike or support the curfew. Again the Healyites show how adept they have been over the years in learning from the Stalinists.

On 8th January 1966 the Coalition unions called a strike to oppose the amendment to the Official Language Act. This amendment was designed to give certain minimal concessions to the Tamil speaking people such as the use of Tamil for limited purposes in their own areas. The strike was directed AGAINST the Tamil population of Ceylon and designed to oppose the rights of the Tamil minorities. Yes, the CMU opposed this strike and was 100% correct to do so. The strike was merely another attempt by the reformists and stalinists to divide Tamil and Sinhala workers and to reinforce Sinhala chauvinism. Yes, Messrs Healy, Slaughter, Banda, our comrades oppose communalist and racist mobilisation of workers. If you think it is wrong to do so then state it publicly in your press!

(d) Did comrade Bala attend parties at the West German and British Embassies?

Yes. On two occasions cde Bala Tampoe attended receptions at the British and West German embassies as a representative of his union. It is the normal practice of trade unions representing workers of foreign-owned companies to send representatives to such functions. Often they were able to collect vital information which aided their union struggles. Nevertheless it was wrong for cde Bala to attend these functions. We consider that such practices, which were common amongst the LSSP leaders and regarded as 'permissible' can seriously prove damaging for comrades. It is, however, to cde Bala's credit that he acknowledged his mistake and made an open self-criticism of his actions within the party and stated that he would not participate in such functions in future since such actions could be misrepresented to discredit him and the party.

Thus of all the allegations only one of them is even partially true and that too, needless to add, has been presented in such a way that is a distortion of reality. Our Healyite slanderers do not, of course, stop there. They add a few more lies to make the tale a little more spicy. Let us examine these as well:

1. The Workers Press alleges that April-May '71 saw Bala Tampoe being given permission by the Bandaranaike regime to leave the country to visit Australia (P.5,WP 20.10.72). Why did the Healyites manufacture such a blatant lie? The reason is quite obvious. April/May '71 was the period of intense repression; it was the time when the regime killed more than 20,000 youth. At the time severe restrictions were placed on foreign travel. If Bala was allowed to leave the country at the height of the repression he must have been working hand in glove with the Bandaranaike regime. The fact of the matter is that Comrade Bala has not stepped out of the country since March '71. We would defy either the Healyites or their Spartacist and Solidarist co-liars to challenge this assertion. He has not even considered it appropriate to leave the country even to attend important meetings of the Fourth International. Comrade Bala did go to Australia to speak at an anti-war conference on Vietnam, but this was in February 1971, two full months before the "April insurrection." By advancing the dates of his visit to Australia, the Healyites obtain the necessary 'evidence' to 'prove' that Bala Tampoe is a 'betrayal'. If the Healyites want further evidence as to cde Bala's whereabouts during April/May '71 they should ask their Ceylonese followers. These gentlefolk were so scared and disoriented by the repression that they forgot their ritual chatter about 'pabloism' and crawled over to our comrades Bala and Prins Rajasoorya for advice and assistance.

2. The hacks of Clapham High Street further try to reinforce the above lie by raising the question: 'why wasn't Tampoe arrested when over 3000 trade unionists were taken into custody?' The insinuation being, of course, that if he wasn't arrested it was because the government was sure of him. Vyshinsky would have looked on the SLL and its apparatchiks with a certain amount of admiration. However all liars make a common mistake. They tend to forget their own past lies and get trapped by their present ones. This is easily demonstrated in Healy's case.

Firstly, who were the trade unionists that were taken into custody during the April repression? This is in itself an embarrassing question for the Healyites. With one lie they try to accomplish two goals: to smear Bala Tampoe and to cover up their own previous lies. The vast majority of these trade-unionists were members of the JVP. The JVP members had infiltrated most of the CP and LSSP trade unions; they also joined the CMU and in some cases were elected as branch secretaries, etc. A large number of CMU members were arrested, but almost all of them were members of the JVP and others were suspected of being members. Apart from the Maoist leader Shanmugathasan (whose arrest at that time was a sop to the Americans and who has denounced the JVP and supported Peking's line) not one important trade union leader was arrested in this period; in other words comrade Bala was not singled out for special treatment. WATson FERNando (CTUF), Seneviratne (LESWU) Prins Rajasoorya(UCCTU), not to mention the leaders of the plantation workers unions, were not arrested. The reasons are simple: the government did not consider it opportune to take on the working class movement at the time. For instance even much later, in September '71, when

the Petroleum workers (a small group) went on strike, violating emergency regulations, the government did not dare arrest them or their leaders. Since then increasing sections of the working class have broken with the popular frontist ideology of the Bandaranaike regime thus making it even more difficult for the government to arrest trade union leaders. All efforts to single out our comrades (like the 12 comrades including the Assistant Secretary of the Party, who were arrested in April '72) have failed. This did not occur either spontaneously or as a response to a thunderbolt from heaven. Only a blind factionalist would deny the enormous role played by our comrades in preparing and re-educating the working class.

There is, of course, another important fact which the Healyites do not wish to disclose. When the repression was initiated in April '71, the *Workers Press* wrote a series of articles where they depicted the JVP as a 'petty bourgeois' organisation. Apart from repeating government propaganda against the JVP, the Healyites tried to portray them as students who ignored the working class, as communalists, etc. The JVP was in fact blamed for the whole repression! Today the facts are so blatantly clear and the evidence foolproof that ignorant hacks cannot repeat these ridiculous charges.

Nevertheless even today they are not prepared to admit that the JVP managed to win a substantial number of young workers and that they made important inroads into the coalition trade unions.

Yes, dear Anglocentric "trotskyists", the vast majority of the JVP militants who were arrested in April '71 and in the subsequent weeks were workers. Not a single issue of the Healyite press has ever published this fact. It is these charlatans masquerading as Trotskyists who have carefully collected lies, slanders, half-truths, innuendo to attack our comrades in Ceylon.

In April/May '71 the theoreticians in Clapham High Street put the total blame on the JVP for the April '71 massacre. A year and a half later without making any self-criticism of this position the *Workers Press* admit that the massacre was actually initiated by the Ceylonese government. And yet when the *Red Mole* explained this fact we were accused of 'whitewashing' the JVP. Today no serious student of Ceylonese politics (and this includes bourgeois commentators) can deny that it was the Bandaranaike regime which initiated the repression in the middle of March '71. It is also clear that the JVP leadership had no plans to launch an offensive and what occurred on April 5th, 1971 was a series of unco-ordinated actions initiated by the JVP who feared annihilation (the example of Indonesia appears a lot in JVP internal documents!); in other words it was an act of desperation in a situation where the organisation and its leadership couldn't function (cf Trial reports of Criminal Justice Commission). At the time the first article appeared in *The Red Mole* we had very little information. Today there is sufficient information which has been smuggled out of Ceylon to substantiate this fact. This once again proves that it was the opportunist politics of the Healy group which led them into a position where their position on the uprising was little different to that of the Ceylon government.

HEALYISM IN CEYLON: PARODY OF A PARODY

The lengthy articles which recently appeared in the SLL press on Ceylon were significant for another reason as well. There is a conspicuous absence. There is no reference to the Ceylonese supporters of Healy's politics. Why are the accusers silent about their own role? After all modesty is not one of Healy's sins. Could it be that the facts cited below partially explain this uncharacteristic silence:

1. During the 1970 elections the Ceylonese Healyites (Revolutionary Communist League—RCL) supported the Coalition and called upon the workers to support the popular front led by Madame Bandaranaike. Even after our comrades had pointed out that their political position was incompatible with revolutionary marxism it took them nearly three months to change their position. Healy prefers to remain silent on this question.

What was the position of the LSSP(R) led as it is by the 'CIA agent' Bala Tampoe. The party manifesto published in May 1970 (but approved six months before that) clearly understood the political conjuncture. Our comrades wrote: "The bitter truth, which the LSSP(R) considers it essential for the masses to understand, is that whatever parliamentary regime may be established following the general elections of 27th May 1970, capitalist rule and capitalist exploitation will continue, with increasing likelihood of the suppression of the democratic rights of the masses and their complete regimentation in the interests of preserving capitalist rule.....In this social crisis of today, there is no other road, but the revolutionary road...." Our comrades made it clear that there was no real choice between the Coalition and the UNP and called for a boycott.

2. After the repression had begun, the RCL wrote a letter to the Prime Minister pleading with her to lift the ban on their newspaper and citing as a reason the fact that they were the only ones who had consistently attacked the JVP's politics. Given the situation that existed there was nothing wrong in using the tactic of writing letters to Bandaranaike in order to reach the masses. But Healy's Ceylonese friends were more concerned about their own sect and driving a nail in the JVP 'coffin' rather than the mass movement. However both Mrs Bandaranaike and the Healyites have been unable to bury the JVP.

3. While the repression was still going on—in fact was at its height—the leading 'theoretician' of the RCL crawled up to certain government ministers and obtained a government scholarship to Australia. Yes, slanderers of Clapham

High Street, it was not Bala Tampoe who left the country with government permission at the height of the repression. It was your own 'leading theoretician'. No wonder Healy is silent on these questions.

4. At a time when layer after layer within the working class in Ceylon is breaking with the coalition parties, at a time when large sections of the masses consider the LSSP a stinking corpse and at a time when both pro-Chinese and pro-Moscow CP's are in a state of disintegration, the Healyites call upon the CP and the LSSP to form a "workers and peasants government". What is the political justification for this slogan today? Neither the LSSP nor the CP has a base in the countryside. Both parties are heavily compromised as they are part of the government which has carried out the most vicious repression Ceylon has known since 1948. Elections have been postponed for 7 years and there is no likelihood of the 'state of emergency' being lifted by the government unless it is compelled to do so by mass action. The LSSP and the CP have between them less than 26 seats in a Parliament of 151 (the SLFP has 96) and even if they withdrew from the govt it would not precipitate a parliamentary crisis. They have been so heavily compromised by the repression that their departure from the government would not create an extra-parliamentary crisis either as their impact on the working class today is virtually non-existent. Why then do they raise meaningless slogans. Essentially because of their tailist and opportunist politics copied from the mandarins of Clapham High Street.

YES, LET US POSE THE QUESTION: WHO IS BALA TAMPOE?

Since the Healyites and their Spartacist and Solidarist bedfellows have chosen to slander our Comrade Bala Tampoe (it may be useful to recall how the Healyites slandered our Bolivian comrade Moscoso and supported the opportunist Lora. A few months later Lora betrayed the Bolivian struggle and the Healyites were forced to disown him, attach him publicly and finally split with their French co-thinkers on this issue) we think it useful to give some idea about cde Tampoe and his political activities. We make no false claims. We certainly do not consider that cde Tampoe is a super-revolutionary of the Healy, Banda, Pallis or Robertson brand. He is an ordinary mortal and therefore is bound to commit errors of judgement, assessment, tactics or strategy. We also consider that whenever such errors are committed cde Bala or for that matter anyone else must be criticised. Public and internal self-criticism is certainly not alien to the Fourth International. It is the only revolutionary tendency which has made public self-criticisms and admitted its mistakes. We have no hesitation in stating that the entire Trotskyist movement needs to reassess and draw a balance sheet in relation to its inability to come to grips with certain specific and concrete problems relating to the dynamic of revolutionary struggles in Asia. We will do so. But the so-called 'orthodox trotskyists' of the Healy and Robertson brand or the 'purist Marxists, but not Leninists' of the Pallis type cannot even begin to pose the right questions, leave alone provide the real answers. Since these super-revolutionary gentlemen have slandered cde Tampoe's reputation we shall give some facts about him.

Bala Tampoe entered the revolutionary movement during its illegal period in the course of the Second World War, when he acted as a courier for the underground comrades. Under the direction of the party he worked also in the anti-war activities and was particularly involved with the politicisation of British soldiers. After the war he played a leading role in the 1947 General Strike and, as a result, was dismissed from his job as a lecturer in Botany at the University of Ceylon. Although quite a number of militants were victimised during that strike all of them except comrade Bala has either been reinstated or compensated.

In the period which followed he led the struggle against the rightists in the CMU and succeeded in breaking their grip. Since then he has re-oriented the CMU to become not only the most militant, but also the most democratic trade union in Ceylon where all important decisions are made by a General Council consisting of 400 workers. He has also changed the composition of the Union from a largely white collar into a predominantly blue collar workers union. The CMU has been in the forefront of every important struggle of the Ceylonese working class, contrary to the lies of the Healyites. Comrade Tampoe too active part in the famous 'hartal' of 1953, the 1962 Port Strike, the 1963 '21' Demands movement, the 1968-69 wave of strikes.

Comrade Bala is one of the two major trade union leaders of the LSSP who did not capitulate to coalition politics (the other being comrade Prins Rajasooriya, the assistant secretary of the LSSP(R)). In reality both these comrades led the fight against the right-wing of the LSSP and built the 21 Demands movement. These comrades have demonstrated in revolutionary action their dedication to revolutionary socialism.

DID THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL OR THE LSSP(R) MAKE EXAGGERATED CLAIMS?

The hacks in Clapham High Street claim that The Red Mole and other journals of the FI made exaggerated claims about the role of the LSSP(R), particularly in relation to their united front activities with the JVP. Is this true? What was our relationship with the JVP and what role did our comrades play? The April repression of the JVP was sudden and well-organised. However the intimidation and harassing of JVP leaders had started long before that. As early as September 1970 our comrades publicly solidarised with the JVP and wherever possible rendered legal and other assistance. Contrast the attitude of our comrades to that of the Healyites who spent most of their time slandering and villifying the JVP and created a barrier between themselves and JVP militants. Comrades who know how the SLL operates will be able to visualise this quite clearly, but Healy's bizarre rituals in a semi-colonial country is even more grotesque than in Britain. Our comrades on the other hand correctly

appreciated the strength as well as the weaknesses of the JVP. The ossified sectarianism of the Healyites was totally irrelevant to the problems which the JVP were beginning to pose. It was after all not a small movement. It had hundreds of members and thousands of sympathisers. And while it had certain misconceived Debrayist conceptions regarding the working class it is a slander to describe them as being anti working class. By the middle of 1970 they had changed their position and as we recounted above had managed to gain an important foothold within the urban working class (A major article published in 'Janata Vimukti' on the question of trade unions and the task of revolutionaries would make interesting reading even for ossified sectarians. They contain the essential ideas of Trotsky contained in "Trade Unions in the epoch of imperialist decay").

Furthermore the JVP were not communalists. Since a fair proportion of them came from a rural milieu they did to start off with have certain prejudices against minorities, but as soon as these were pointed out most of them were prepared to change their position. For instance the JVP comrades agreed to hold a joint rally with the YSF and the LSSP(R) to protest against the shooting of two plantation workers of Indian origin. Wijewera, speaking for the JVP, clearly expressed the need to unite the oppressed minorities, urban workers and the rural proletariat in order to overthrow capitalism. In other words the JVP was an organisation which was evolving and within it there were a number of currents; in fact within it there was a strong anti-Trotskyist current as well. Our task, however, was not to engage in sectarian mudslinging but to intervene in such a manner so that we could politically influence the best elements with the goal of winning them to revolutionary marxist politics. This is why our comrades engaged in a political dialogue with the best elements of the JVP while at the same time defending them against police harassments. At the same time the comrades of the LSSP(R) tried to bring them into joint struggles and common actions on concrete issues. Our comrades discussed with the most advanced comrades of the JVP on such questions as the Transitional Programme, Permanent Revolution, anti-bureaucratic struggles. It was in the middle of all these developments that the Bandaranaike coalition government unleashed the repression. There is sufficient evidence today to prove that if the repression had not taken place there would have been a split in the JVP and the most uncritical and slavish Maoists would have broken off. It is not an accident that it is these elements who have betrayed the JVP and become witnesses for the government.

At no time did either the LSSP(R) or the Fourth International claim that the LSSP(R) was a big or a mass section. Numerically our section is small. But can anyone deny that the influence of our comrades in the working class movement is completely out of proportion to our numbers. We had only a handful of comrades, for instance, in the Bank employees union, but in February 1972 we captured the leadership and by September 1972—in six months—we prepared the union membership to launch an illegal strike which has now lasted for over three months. The JVP were not mad sectarians. They were prepared to work with us not because we were big or that our sect was the best sect in the Ceylon League of Sects, but because our comrades played an important role in the working class movement.

The Healyites also confuse the issue by the way they refer to the April '71 incidents. We have insisted that the JVP did not launch an insurrection and this is today accepted as an incontrovertible fact. Moreover only a section of the JVP actually took part in the April actions which at best can be characterised as acts of armed resistance. The leadership of the JVP (in prison) asked its members to carry out an organised and disciplined retreat in the face of the repression, but this decision could not be communicated to the membership. There was no question therefore of our comrades taking part in the "insurrection". We neither had the necessary forces nor were we in agreement with the tactic of the JVP. However what our comrades did do was to unconditionally defend the JVP both before, during and after the repression despite our tactical differences with sections of the JVP.

The brave warriors of the SLL try and ridicule the manner in which the opposition to the repression was initiated. They mock the letters written by comrade Tampoe in the name of the CMU to the Ceylonese Prime Minister. They say these letters were "soft". Yes Messrs Healy, Slaughter, Banda & Co., these "soft" letters laid the basis for a reawakening of the working class and reorienting it on a perspective of struggle. Unlike Healy and the SLL our comrades had to carry out this task under a 'state of emergency', where all publications were banned. It was done at a time when the masses had been divided and disoriented, when they had experienced a period of mass killing and mass arrests carried out by a government which included the LSSP and the pro-Moscow CP. Our comrades made a realistic assessment of the potentiality as well as the limitations of the working class. That is why it was our comrades who were able to launch the first mass action, the first important illegal strike and continue these actions today, while the Ceylonese branch of the Friends of the SLL with their so-called "numerical superiority" and their "absolutely correct" political line have done nothing except to carry on the struggle against.....Pabloism!

Yes, our comrades did write letters to the Prime Minister, but they also duplicated them in tens of thousands and distributed them to the members of the CMU. The present security regulations prevent us from speculating as to whether the CMU members retained these letters or whether they were passed on to others including those in the prison camps and the countryside. Yes we wrote both "soft" and "hard" letters. Dear Mr Healy why don't you publish them all in your daily newspaper and let your members judge for themselves what impact these letters would have had in the situation which then existed in Ceylon. Why don't you publish the CMU letter on the war in Vietnam? And as a comparison why don't you publish the letters written by your own followers to Bandaranaike

so that your readers can make a comparison for themselves? The reason you won't is because you are falsifiers, political frauds, bureaucrats and the standard-bearers of stalinist methods.

Why did the Healyites publish these articles at this particular time? May be some of the comrades are not aware of the fact that the repression is still continuing and the state of emergency is still in force (in December 1972 another 150 people were arrested). Comrades are also perhaps aware that at the same time as our comrades our organising the the legal defence of the victims of repression on one hand they are on the other broadening and strengthening the mass opposition to the Bandaranaike regime. In this situation the coalition government has tried to trap our comrades by various means (for instance 12 comrades were arrested last April and one last February) and have attempted to use every means to get them. For instance the Ceylonese bourgeois press printed the slanders contained in NEWSWEEK concerning the Fourth International and cde Ernest Mandel. The Ceylonese High Commission in London regularly buys all material published by the IMG on Ceylon. If the Healyites imagine that we are going to be forced into a position where we might inadvertently aid in the repression of our own comrades, they are in for some disappointments.

We repeat that our comrades in Ceylon as everywhere else would welcome criticisms based on facts and would be prepared to discuss with any critics. What we shall not tolerate is slanders and lies about our comrades. We are proud of our comrades in Ceylon and in particular comrade Bala Tampoe, Prins Rajasooriya, etc., who despite very difficult conditions have played an important role in defending the victims of Popular Front repression in Ceylon. Instead of helping to break the curtain of silence regarding Ceylon in the stalinist and Maoist press throughout the world, the activities of Messrs Healy, Pallis and Robertson have played right into the hands of the Popular Front government and the stalinists in Europe and N. America. It is these activities you indulge in gentlemen which convince us that you will remain where you are—in the political gutter.

London 1st January 1973

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The crisis of the British ruling class has never been so apparent as over the last few years. All its problems have come home to roost. The resistance of the oppressed minority in the Six Counties of Ireland has coincided with a new upsurge of the class struggle in Britain itself. At the same time British imperialism's policies in Africa have stumbled from one disaster to another. This is what partially explains the desperation of those who rule Britain today.

Stalemate

Neither in Ireland nor at home has the British ruling class been able to achieve anything near success. While in the Six Counties, despite the massive use of British troops, the resistance mounted by the armed vanguard of the Catholic population has not been defeated, at home the tremendous victory of the miners and the awareness by the working class of its own strength has made it impossible for British capitalism to inflict a defeat on the workers' movement. It is clear that this stalemate cannot go on for much longer.

Common Market

The capitalist class is now banking on entry into Europe to help defeat the workers in Britain. It hopes that by linking up with the European bosses it will be able to work out a co-ordinated strategy to weaken and smash the militancy of the workers' movement. Already a number of plans are being worked out to implement this strategy on a continental scale. The worst way of combating this offensive would be to preach the virtues of isolationism or of the in-

trinsic merits of exploiters who speak English as compared to the 'foreign' bosses. The real way forward for the British working class is to prepare its response by uniting its struggles with those of its fellow-workers in Europe against the common enemy.

Alternative Press

In Britain as in every other capitalist country in Europe, the press and television is owned and controlled by the capitalist class. We do not need to stress how this monopoly is used against the working class and its struggles. That is why our task should be constantly to build and develop an alternative press, a workers' press which defends the working class and other oppressed layers against their common enemies. *The Red Mole*, in order to serve as a useful weapon in the class struggle, has to become a weekly. Given the strategy of British capitalism the projected weekly newspaper would be able to play a vital and invaluable role in trying to unite the struggles of British workers with those of their comrades in Europe. This is not a utopian pipe-dream. It is necessitated by the objective conditions which exist in Europe today.

Fourth International

The reason we feel that *The Red Mole* will be able to play this role is because it does not exist in a void. It represents the political views of the International Marxist Group, which is the British section of the Fourth International. Since

1968 the growth of the Fourth International has been dramatic. Sections and sympathising groups exist in every single capitalist country in Europe built on the basis of a common programme and participating in a common struggle. It has been this growth of the International which has led the journals of the bourgeoisie in Europe and America (of which *Newsweek* and the *Economist* are but two) to launch slanderous attacks on it, because the ruling class understands better than many on the left the real potential of revolutionary organisations constructed within the framework of one International. The Indochinese revolutionaries have also understood the importance of this fact as they have seen the consistent solidarity work and actions initiated by the Fourth International in support of their struggle in the face of the betrayals of both Moscow and Peking.

European Scale

The fact that *The Red Mole* is part of the International will make its role as that of our other papers in Europe all the more important after Britain enters the Common Market. It will be the only revolutionary paper in Britain capable of fighting on a European scale.

Appeal

That is why the undersigned (in a personal capacity) appeal to all revolutionaries and socialists in Britain to help make the newspaper into a weekly and contribute to the £10,000 Fund Drive.

Pete Crewwell (NUPE shop steward)
 Paul Devlance (UCATT shop steward)
 Dave Elliott (UCATT shop steward)
 May Hobbs (Cleaners Action Group)
 Walter MacLellan (Secretary, West Lothian Trades Council)
 John Marjott (Secretary, Park Royal Branch, ASTMS)
 Francis Martin (T&GWU Convoyer, CAV Luton)
 Simon Martin (Kinross Branch Committee, NEM)
 James Morrison (Divisional Council Vice-Chairman, TASS)
 G. Morrison (T&GWU shop steward)
 M.J. O'Grady (AUEW shop steward, Thornycroft's)
 G.R. Seesay (T&GWU shop steward)
 Rowland Street (Secretary, Stirling Labour Party; Executive Member, Stirling & District Trades Council)
 Ian Stevenson (UCATT shop steward, member Charter Editorial Board)
 Stewart J. Tappett (T&GWU shop steward)
 Donald Watson (TASS Convoyer)
 J. Watts (T&GWU shop steward)

Roger Wells (AUEW Convoyer)
 J. Yusuf (T&GWU Convoyer)
 (This list - the first signatories to the appeal from the British labour movement - includes, apart from those specified, shop stewards or convoyers from British Leyland Services Division, Cowley; Crompton Parkinson, Newport; John Brown Engineering, Glasgow; building sites in Birmingham and Yorkshire; etc. Further lists will appear in future issues.)
 Ande Henry (Convoyer in glass factory, Glaverel Gilly - Belgium)
 Serge Vienne (Shop steward in textile plant, Mouscron - Belgium)
 Werner Langbein (Shop steward at Daimler-Benz AG, Mannheim - Germany)
 Hans Peiffer (Shop steward, OTV [transport and general workers union], Cologne - Germany)
 Vito Biacchi (Central Committee, FIOM - Italy)
 Giorgio Mousi (Roman Committee, teachers union - Italy)
 Dick Arman (transport workers' delegate to trade union Congress, Uppsala - Sweden)
 Olaf Gross (Shop steward in shipyard, Malmo - Sweden)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FUND DRIVE, PLEASE FILL IN THE FORM BELOW AND POST TO: FUND DRIVE, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. (Cheques should be made out to The Red Mole.)

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