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FRANCO KILLS FOR CAPITALISM

The murder by firing squad of the young Spanish militants last Saturday is Franco's response, on behalf of international capitalism's massive investment in Spain, to the strength and forward movement of the working class on a European and world scale.

The enormous wave of protests and revulsion internationally at these murders, together with the development of opposition within Spain, threaten the very existence of the Franco fascist regime and represent a major point in the resurgence of the Spanish working class and an important stage in the development of the European revolution.

As the struggle has gone ahead over the past few days two distinct tendencies have emerged in the protest movements.

In the forefront of the demonstrations, riots strikes and blackings has been the class response of workers throughout Europe both to the courage of Franco's victims and to the open barbarism of the Spanish fascist regime.

FEAR

But there are also noises of protest being made by figures who have the greatest fear of the revolutionary mobilisation of the working class to overthrow Franco. This is what underlies the recalling of ambassadors, the ministerial pronouncements, and the calls for "clemency" from "respectable" sections of the European bourgeoisie.

Even the Pope, mainstay of the Franco regime since its foundation, has attempted to dissociate the Church from the shootings, anxious not to lose control of Spanish workers incensed at Franco's repressions. For the European bourgeoisie the main preoccupation is to foster the lie that Franco's regime alone rests on brute force, while they themselves maintain their huge standing armies and police forces to repress their own working class. Thus the British Labour leaders hypocritically denounce Franco while presiding over internment, torture, assassination squads and military repression in Northern Ireland. The real feelings of the British ruling class are shown by Tory MP John Page, who called on Britain to follow Franco's example, and the *Sunday Telegraph's* defence of the shootings.

EMBARASSED

While the capitalist class and its embarrassed spokesmen try to separate themselves from Franco, the leaders of the working class movement are themselves frightened by the strength of working class reaction to these latest killings. This reaction is certainly increased by the blatant manner in which the five were convicted. They were guilty of nothing, but condemned

during prolonged torture by the fascist 'security' services.

They showed exemplary courage as they stood up in court to denounce the torture they had undergone - in the face of judges who ruled such evidence 'out of order', and who expelled the defence lawyers of those tried on September 17th.

COURAGE

Their courage continued right up to the executions, as one young Basque went to his death giving a 'victory' salute and singing the Basque liberation hymn. No amount of police terror will defeat such a movement - only treachery within the working class movement itself can mislead the heroism of its best fighters and preserve the Franco regime.

The working class has shown clearly it is willing to fight to end Spanish fascism. In Spain itself thousands have risked arrest, beatings and police bullets in demonstrations and to her campaigns against the executions. In San Sebastian - centre of the Basque country - the families of two of the victims led a 5,000 strong protest march in defiance of Franco's state of emergency, followed by a march of 30,000 on Sunday night.

GENERAL STRIKE

In the small town of Algorta near Bilbao 1,000 marched through the streets - to confront the rifle fire of the fascist Guardia Civil. A 48-hour general strike has been called in the Basque country where already banks and shipyards are at a standstill. Demonstrations have also taken place in other areas of Spain. Nor is the resistance confined to this issue alone - this year has seen a huge wave of illegal strikes over wages and jobs throughout Spanish industry.

Internationally the workers movement has shown its solidarity with the struggles in Spain. Huge demonstrations throughout Europe in the weeks before the shootings gave way over the weekend to all-out riots in Geneva and the burning to the ground of the Spanish embassy in Lisbon. In Italy dockers of all the major unions blacked ships to and from Spain. Given leadership, this movement could impose an economic blockade on the Franco dictatorship, and massively strengthen the fight of the Spanish working class.

But this leadership is withheld by the social-democratic and Stalinist leaders who want at all costs to avoid the revolutionary overthrow



Police hold back demonstrators outside Spanish embassy in London

revolution.

These people hope that the "nasty" sides of Franco's regime such as the executions will go away and that he will peacefully hand over to a regime that allows a few democratic reforms.

NO CONCESSIONS

But Franco and his fascist friends see this differently - they see the danger of anything which can be seen as a concession to the movement of the working class. They fear the kind of explosive momentum of a movement developing such as that in Portugal. This is why they are taking a hard line.

In the face of this reformism has no answer. The social democrats, with their all-out support for the capitalist Common Market fear the break down of attempts to bring fascist Spain closer into the EEC. The trade union leaders, refusing to give any focus for working class struggle, fearing their rank and file might feel their strength in action, hold back from official action.

In Britain the clearest example of this is the cynical, empty rhetoric of Jack Jones' speech on Spain to the Labour Party Conference. Both his proposals were a fraud.

He called for a boycott of Spanish holidays - while knowing full well that a number of trade unions, including ASTMS, run package tours to Spain through an operator with offices in Transport House - the T&GWU's own national headquarters!

He then called empty for "spontaneous" actions to "delay and harass" Spanish trade, while himself having the power immediately to impose an official black which could bring Spanish goods to a standstill throughout the country - through T&GWU action on the docks, in road haulage, warehouses and factories.

Alongside Jones' cynicism goes the international treachery of

BENN AIDS WILSON'S JOBS FRAUD

Last week Harold Wilson and Denis Healey launched a two-pronged attack designed to ensure that this week's Labour Party Conference endorses their policy of using deliberately-created mass unemployment as a weapon to drive down the living standards of the working class.

Last Thursday ex-'left', Energy Minister Antony Wedgewood Benn voted with Wilson and Healey on the key unemployment resolution at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Labour Party.

This resolution gives the initiative to the right wing of the conference and virtually ensures that Wilson's policies will be endorsed. It has the advantage of being garnished with 'left'-sounding phrases, making a call for the reactionary policy of selective import controls.

THREAT

This policy resolution, forced through by Wilson's arrogant threat that the Cabinet Ministers on the NEC would refuse to sign any resolution critical of government policy, thus splitting the Executive.

Wilson's tactics of gaining the support of the 'lefts' at NEC level and then using them as a cover against any opposition at the conference means that oppo-

had announced the other prong of the attack - a rag-bag of so-called measures against unemployment.

The £170 million package was entirely aimed at the conference and calculated to give the right wing something to argue and the left wing somewhere to hide.

It is clear that as measures against unemployment the proposals are worthless - they will not even significantly alter the rate of increase - but they do raise important questions of principle.

PUBLIC WORKS

Wilson consciously avoids financing the necessary programme of public works - schools, hospitals, council housing, etc., to create new employment at full union rates. Such a programme must be under the management of the workers and contained completely within the nationalised sectors.

Instead, the £170 million which made available is to be handed out not to the nationalised industries or to the social services, but paid straight into the bank accounts of private employers in the form of cash bonuses if redundancies are avoided.

This shows the wholly reactionary nature of the Wilson leadership, who act entirely for capitalism. Social services are cut and the money cynically handed to private industry as a manoeuvre to ensure that the Labour

THE CRISIS — FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

The obstacle to renewed capital accumulation in the United States "are formidable, perhaps insuperable".

That is the conclusion of a detailed supplement on "Capital crisis" in the September 22nd issue of the influential American weekly magazine *Business Week*. The supplement foresees that "prolonged business upswings [will be] impossible, but prolonged recessions easy" and that "social unrest and class conflict would become endemic because income gains will be thin to non-existent".

Business Week attributes this crisis for capital accumulation to the dramatically falling rate of profit - collapsing from around 16% in 1965 to little more than 5% today.

This collapse has forced companies increasingly into debt. In 1965 they borrowed 50 cents for every \$1 invested from their own profits; today the ratio is \$1.50 of outside finance to every \$1 of internal finance. Inflation and the slump are making it more difficult to supplement declining profits in this way. Industry by industry, the supplement tells the same story of "underinvestment and over-borrowing". The problem is magnified by the simultaneous soaring borrowed for state spending which rose from 7% of the national income in 1954 to nearly 12% last year.

Business Week warns that the "universal nature of the crisis" is "sobering". Its solution is "more savings", achieved by less government spending, higher total taxes but lower taxes on capital (ie much higher taxes on workers). Behind this bland language lies a clear message: capitalism's need to launch merciless attacks on the working class.

They show clearly the beginnings of a break by rank and file soldiers and the working class from the Armed Forces Movement, the officer corps who hold the real reins of power, and from the treacherous leaders of the Communist Party and Socialist Party who follow behind their coat tails.

Now, surely, is the time for revolutionaries in Lisbon to fight for the setting up of a city-wide organisation of workers, tenants and rank and file soldiers who alone can safeguard the future of the revolution, and who will struggle against the actions of the new military security force.

These new developments confirm the correctness of the policies put forward by the WSL on the London demonstration on 20th September in solidarity with the Portuguese revolution. Only the WSL clearly called for a break from the Armed Forces Movement and the defeat of the new provisional government.

Although the demonstration was dominated by the popular front policies of the Stalinists and the dangerous, ultra-left and anti-working class slogans of the International Socialists, it was essential to intervene to bring out these issues.

The ex-Trotskyists of the *Workers Press* who in their issue of 20th September declared that a Soviet Socialist Portugal was an "immediate" perspective seem not only to have forgotten the need to put forward any policies to achieve this end, but have also begun to send blind and deaf reporters onto demonstrations.

They took a picture which appeared in their issue of 22nd September showing some of the WSL section of the march, carefully obscuring our banner which said clearly: PORTUGUESE WORKERS MUST BREAK FROM THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT.

The fight for such policies remains urgent and recent events have confirmed that they can be carried through. For our part, we will continue to put them forward in every possible working class forum.

talking of alliances with NATO and the EEC.

It was in this situation that a new organisation was set up in the barracks called Soldiers United Will Win. (SUV) This body did not meet with the approval of the Army Commander in Chief Fabiao, who had two of its members arrested on 19th. September for possession of leaflets in support of it.

This provoked the biggest military demonstration yet in central Lisbon on 25th. September, with over 20,000 soldiers, supported by workers committees and left-wing political organisations chanting 'Portugal will not be another Chile'.

When the demonstrators met at the end, it was proposed to have a further meeting the next day at the prison at Trafaria, a few miles away, where the soldier prisoners were held. Then the proposal came, 'why not go there now?'

The demonstrators at once went to a nearby bus station and got the agreement of the bus workers that they should drive their buses across the great Tagus suspension bridge to the island fortress of Trafaria.

On arrival, the soldiers erected barricades and demanded the immediate release of their comrades. The commander of the fortress summoned parachute regiments and marines to enforce his refusal to do so.

This was a situation where the power of the working class in and out of uniform came to the fore. Workers from the nearby town of Almada got out of their beds and blocked the bridge over to the island. The marines never came in any case because they simply refused to obey the orders of their commanding officers.

Faced with this situation, the prison commander was forced to release the two imprisoned soldiers, who came out and addressed the crowd.

The possibilities opened up by such events as these are enormous.



PORTUGAL ARMY SPLITS

Workers' power or Chilean-style reaction? These are the stark choices now facing the working class of Portugal after a series of events last week in which rank and file soldiers showed their increasing independence from the officer corps, increasing identification with the working class and increasing strength and confidence.

The new Army Intervention Group whose establishment was announced on 26th. September is a

clear response to the independence of the men, and an attempt to hold back the revolutionary process and assure the defence of capitalism.

The increasing move to the right of the Armed Forces Movement, particularly as shown in the policies of the new sixth Provisional Government has caused disquiet among the ordinary soldiers.

The new government includes those who have continually insisted that army discipline must be respected. The old slogan 'Soldiers always on the side of the people' began to wear somewhat thin when some of the superior officers were

ARGENTINA TROTSKYISTS MURDERED

On the evening of 4th September five members of the Argentine Trotskyist group Partide Socialista de les Trabajadores (Socialist Workers Party, sympathising section of the "Unified Secretariat") disappeared on their way to the Petroquimica Sudamericana factory in the region of La Plata.

Their bodies, full of bullet holes and mutilated by torture, were discovered in a car the following morning. Three of their comrades were kidnapped that afternoon as they left local party headquarters: they, too, were found murdered.

Such killings - not to mention kidnappings, beatings and assorted intimidations - are commonplace in Argentina, where bands of fascist thugs roam the streets with the

obvious acquiescence of the propertied classes. According to *Avanzada Socialista*, the weekly newspaper of the PST, about twenty other victims of murder gangs were reported during July and several persons, including some of their own comrades, had vanished without trace.

Government-sponsored terror by the right began in Argentina in the Spring of 1974, less than a year after Peron took office. Pressure from the working class in response to this and to the desperate economic situation led Peronist trade union leaders to call a general strike earlier this year, which forced Social Welfare Minister Lopez Rega out of office and ultimately out of the country.

With the exile of this government official who was so closely connected with the most active murder gang, the AAA (Argentine



Murdered: Adriana Zaldúa

Anticommunist Alliance), an end to such killings was hoped for. But the assassinations have continued.

The 8th September issue of *Avanzada Socialista* commented on the change of political climate since May 1974, when a similar massacre was followed by a massive wave of protest:

"For one thing, opposition [to the government] of the bosses, who



Murdered: Lidia Agostini

at that time feared that the brutal methods of one wing of the government might be turned against them, now feel stronger and condone violence against the left and the labour movement".

[This should serve as a lesson for the advocates of Popular Front politics!]

They also claim that advent-

urist acts by guerrillas in the name of the left have led to confusion in wide sections of the population and made easier the task of those who try to dismiss fascist terrorism as merely sectarian violence. "Finally, reactionaries have created a climate of terror in La Plata, threatening the life of a socialist leader of workers at Petroquimica Sudamericana and spreading rumours about a [planned] "third batch" of murder victims".

The tragic events in Argentina point up the pressing need for armed workers' defence squads to protect the labour movement in a situation where the police can be trusted, if at all, only to assist right-wing attacks.

British workers must take heed of what could occur, even here, if fascist tendencies such as the National Front are not checked at every turn by the organised strength of the working class.

We salute the comrades in Argentina who gave their lives in the struggle for socialism, and call upon the working class movement to take up internationally the condemnation of their murder.

ZIMBABWE ZAPU BETRAYS STRUGGLE

The failure of the Conference between Smith and the African National Council (ANC) at Victoria Falls last month has led to an open split in the ANC.

Some right-wing elements around the old ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo are trying to break the 'united front' and conclude a peace deal more acceptable to Smith, and so betraying the national liberation struggle.

Nkomo has attempted this by deliberately going ahead to hold the ANC conference in Salisbury in the full knowledge that the militant elements around ZANU leader Sithole will not be able to attend for fear of arrest by Smith.

It is not altogether unexpected that such a split would come to the surface at the present time. The original split between ZAPU and ZANU (Zimbabwe African Peoples

Union and National Union respectively) is generally attributed by bourgeois commentators to 'tribalism', ie as a reflection of the 'backwardness' in the African masses rather than having a political basis.

In fact, at that time there was a political difference in emphasis between Nkomo who, although participating in the guerilla movement after UDI until 1970, wanted to place more reliance on bringing international governmental pressure (notably that of Britain), to bear on Smith, as the main 'weapon' in the Nationalist arsenal.

It was Kaunda of Zambia who forced the two movements to come together again under the umbrella of the ANC to conclude what he and Vorster of South Africa thought was going to be a quick solution as a quid pro quo to Vorsters putting pressure on Smith. Kaunda has shown where he

stands on the ANC split by refusing to let Sithole and Muzorewa (the official president of the ANC) hold a press conference in Zambia announcing their expulsion of Nkomo.

Smith not unnaturally has exploited the growing divisions in the ANC to play for time. A secret Rhodesian Government document that got into the hands of the London 'Observer' makes Smith's intentions quite clear.

He seeks to 'divide and rule', by exploiting the differences between the nationalist groups while at the same time trying to foster a right-wing pro-government 'voice' among the tribal chiefs, notoriously government stooges. The document concludes:

"We must not fall into the trap of offering, say, eventual black majority rule when by all our actions we clearly indicate that we have no intention provided of course we can devise some other way of granting him (the African) the status that he seeks".

In other words, when Smith makes vague noises, as he did last week about 'eventual' black

government, sending waves of panic among the settler backwoodsmen of his Rhodesia Front party, his 'about turn' has to be seen in the context of the split in the nationalists and the fact that the government is making every effort to foster tribal nationalism and division among the different ethnic groups that make up the African population within the borders of Rhodesia.

For the African masses the real issue is not that in the long run Smith will not find some formula for a compromise, aided by Nkomo's willingness to sell-out.

NO FORMULA

The issue is that there can be no 'acceptable formula' of compromise with a racist regime that controls all the fertile agricultural land in the area and maintains the industrial resources under capitalist private ownership which in the context of the world economic crisis cannot develop them in any way for the benefit of the mass of the population.

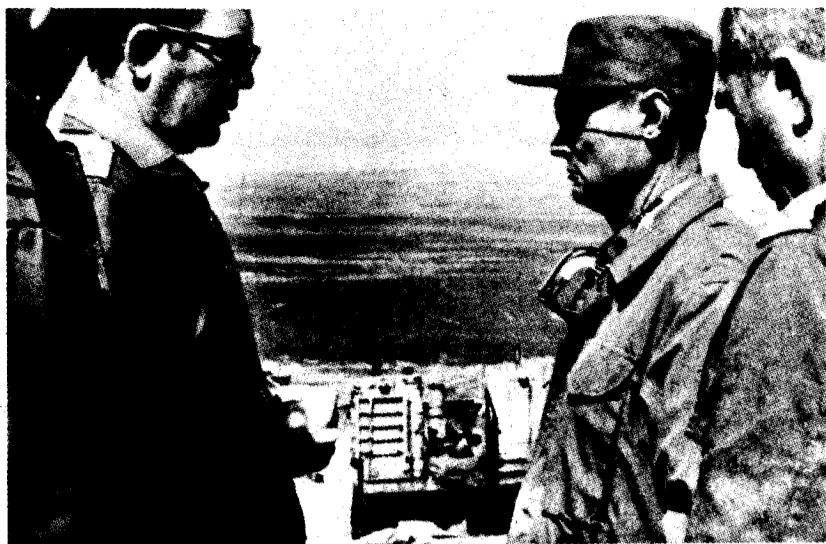
There can be no national rev-

olution that is not a socialist one. Vorster meanwhile continues to keep up his pressure on Smith to work towards a settlement with the nationalists. The fall in the price of gold, South Africa's principal export, makes it vital for South African capitalism to capture Black Africa as a market for its manufactured goods.

This is the basis behind Vorster's policy of detente towards the Black African states. As part of this he is prepared to remove some of the more superficial aspects of apartheid in South Africa itself and at the same time pressure Smith.

The Portuguese withdrawal from Angola and Mozambique makes the whole notion of white racist states as 'buffers' between South Africa and the north now outdated. Thus Vorster no longer has need of Smith and his regime on that score. He is more concerned to make diplomatic overtures to the FRELIMO government in Mozambique to secure the continuation of the supply of migrant labour to the South African mines.

ISRAEL: HUGE ARMS DEAL



Israel's Dayan on the Golan Heights

The full scale of Egyptian President Sadat's betrayal of the Palestinian masses only began to surface last week. As news leaked out of the secret US-Israeli agreements which Kissinger offered to compensate the Zionists for withdrawing from a small strip of Egyptian territory in the Sinai peninsula, it became clear that US imperialism intends to protect its position in the Middle East by supplying Israel with a terrifying arsenal of weapons - on such a scale that it will cramp supplies to the US armed forces themselves.

Top of the list for Israeli defence minister Shimon Peres as he arrived in Washington with his shopping list were Pershing ground-to-ground missiles - highly accurate and designed to deliver a nuclear warhead over 450 miles. US pleas that they will only include 'conventional' warheads means little, since Israel has a nuclear reactor producing plutonium for bombs, and are thought to have already built ten of the power that destroyed Hiroshima.

Though heavy, these could probably already be used with their F-4 bombers and it is well within Israeli technical capacities to scale them down for fitting in the Pershings. This brings within nuclear range all the main Arab capitals and population centres - Beirut, Damascus, Amman, Cairo, Port Said - and even the Aswan High Dam.

The Pershings are only the start. Among the weapons promised or already being shipped to Israel are 25 F-15 interceptor aircraft, carrying eight missiles and with a speed of 2,000 mph, and a requested 700 F-16 fighter bombers

The F-16, the US candidate for the Western European air forces joint contract - can drop five tons of bombs. The Israeli order is for a hundred more than the US forces themselves are expected to acquire.

They will also get large numbers of M60 A3 tanks, largely to replace the many knocked out by the Arab rockets - accurately guided by wires or lasers - which were an important factor in the last war. Together with all this will go replacement supplies of various types of short-range missiles and laser-guided bombs.

Sadat's claim is that he was unaware when he signed Kissinger's 'accord' of what the secret protocols with Israel involved. But, after the weapons arrangements were announced, the main obstacle to Kissinger and Ford's plans seemed to come from US Congressmen.

They fear an accelerated arms build up in the Middle East, Palestinian support for the left-wing in the civil war now raging round the fragile Lebanese coalition and generally increasing Soviet influence among the Arab states now left to face the brunt of Israel's reinforced capacity for aggression.

Syrian President Hafez Assad has made it clear that Sadat had reneged even on his pledge at the Arab summit to consult and co-ordinate with other Arab states on policy towards Israel, and, more seriously, that Egypt is likely to stand aside in the event of a future Israeli attack on Syria or Jordan.

It is Sadat's open treachery and the splits and compromises with imperialism of the 'left' Arab leaders and the leadership of the Palestinian nationalist movement, that hamstringing the struggle against Zionism.

The possibility for the US to rear Israel to the teeth in return for a few square miles of conquered land are the fruits of these policies.

SPAIN: CP TO UNITE WITH FASCISTS?

The intolerable pressures and divisions within the European Stalinist movement are driving certain Communist parties to hold out their hands even to the supporters of fascism.

In a recent interview with the reactionary American magazine Newsweek, Santiago Carrillo, General Secretary of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) has stated he would be willing to join a future "government of national union" with politicians of Franco's fascist regime. Questioned on the attitude of the PCE to the future of Spain when Franco dies, Carrillo had no hesitation in pledging his support to Prince Juan Carlos, Franco's nominee to succeed him as head of state.

"We are not adventurers who will systematically wave the flag of social unrest. We will accept whatever the majority decides. But the monarchy, to survive, must be on the side of the people."

Underlining the fact that the PCE is opposed to preparations for revolutionary struggle Carrillo added his "critical" support for the switchover from Franco to Juan Carlos.

"I would a thousand times prefer a peaceful transition. But it's my very deep personal conviction that Prince Juan Carlos only has a future in Spain if he makes a break with the Franco imprint."

Carrillo's words - spoken at the very moment when the death sentences of "the Franco imprint" were being prepared against 11 Spanish left-wingers, with the threat of many more levelled at dozens held in the Fascist prisons - confirm the utterly cynical attitude of the Stalinists towards the lessons of Chile, of Portugal and the terrible defeat inflicted on the working class in the Spanish Revolution and Civil War itself.

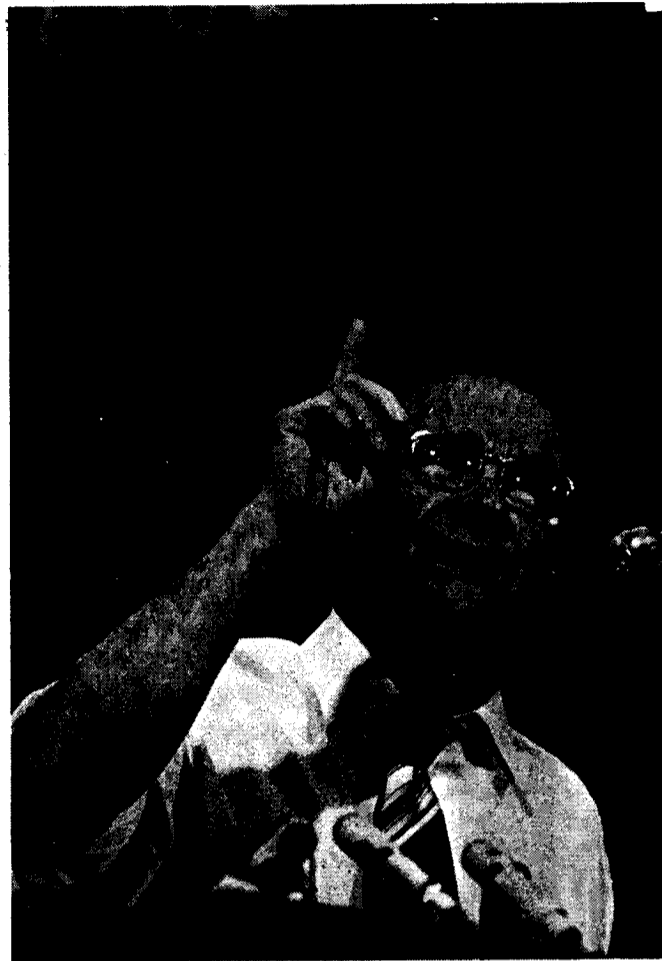
SEMI-LEGAL

They go far to explain why the PCE and its front organisation the "Democratic Junta" (which also includes former Franco ministers and representatives of the Spanish Catholic hierarchy) is permitted a semi-legal existence by the Franco regime.

Stalinism is an essential component of the plans of the Spanish ruling class to insure the continuation of their rule in the "transition" after Franco goes, as Carrillo's answers make clear:

Q. In practical terms, how do you see the transition taking place?

Carrillo. My feeling is that the Spanish military will join together with the politicians to form a provisional government of national



Carrillo

union.

Q. If the army is involved in a provisional government, won't this mean a bid to bolster the extreme right?

Carrillo. I don't think so. Some of Spain's younger officers have radical views - and the generals are becoming more and more realistic. If they feel the only possibility of order will be to bring about peaceful change with the opposition politicians, they will do so.

Q. Would your party be prepared to support a government of national union without being a part of it?

TRANSITION

Carrillo. The transition period will inevitably be a difficult time for Spain, and if we stayed clear of a government of national union we couldn't be blamed for any unpopular measures or decisions. Indeed, we would prefer to go to general elections without a prior spell in government. But now that the "Democratic Junta" has come into being and we have become part of it, we have a moral duty to take part in such a government. If we don't, we fear there could be more instability leading to a right-wing coup.

Commenting on the situation in

Portugal, Carrillo made it clear not only that there is a deepening rift within Western European Stalinism, but that the leadership of the Spanish Communist Party is quite consciously on its guard to deal with any workers in its own ranks who may wish to make serious preparations for a revolutionary struggle against fascism.

There was, he admitted, the possibility of a "Cunhalist" faction within the PCE, "but only in the event of violence and disorder. There may be factions with Cunhalist tendencies within the PCE, but I can say that so far, I am in control of the situation."

"MODERATE"

"If we are moderate", he cynically added, "it is because that is the only way for Spain today. There is to be no storming of the Winter Palace, no long march, no Castro-mounted guerrillas."

His words make a mockery of the Stalinists' so-called "defence" of left-wingers threatened by Franco's executioners. And, as the American journalist commented, Carrillo is to be the measure of Spanish communism "the chance of Madrid being draped in red seem slim."

WHAT IS THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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SLL on Lambeth Trades Council lobby of Parliament against Wilson's pay laws, 1966.

LESSONS OF OUR HISTORY

By JOHN LISTER

As the need for new leadership in the working class is shown clearer every day, a crisis now grips the world Trotskyist movement.

This has split the opportunist bloc of the Unified Secretariat into warring factions, and it is reflected in the International Committee by the mass expulsions from its leading section, the British Workers Revolutionary Party, together with the complete disruption of its subsidiary sections in the USA and Australia. We must begin an objective study of the history of these tendencies and of the International, if any clarity is to be found on the way forward.

We therefore intend to examine in this and coming editions of *Socialist Press* some questions which can lead us nearer a grasp of the problems as they developed in the world Trotskyist movement. Initially we will examine the degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party, in order to approach some central questions of programme. We will go on in further articles to look more specifically at some of the theoretical problems which have divided and split the world movement.

The mass expulsions from the WRP in December 1974 marked the determination of the leadership of that party - at the centre of which is General Secretary G. Healy - to defend to the utmost the sectarian method which still continues to liquidate the WRP and all the gains it has made.

DOCUMENT

It is significant to note that the expulsions began only days after Comrade Thornett had been given authority by Healy at an aggregate meeting to produce a second opposition document. This was to deal with the historical, philosophical and class content of the degeneration of the WRP into sectarianism; show the starting point of the degeneration in a party which contained the core of Trotskyism; and examine in this context the international perspectives of the International Committee.

It was clearly the prospect of these crucial questions being subjected to examination which

prompted the expulsions in order to suppress the document until Comrade Thornett was out of the party.

What, then, was Healy so afraid of? Why, in a party which continually spoke of the importance of "principle" and "the record", could no discussion be permitted on the history of that party?

Clearly because the WRP membership had been given a version of that history slanted to project Healy and the leadership in the best possible light, even as infallible leaders who had always stood unreservedly on the right side in every issue.

If an objective study was begun (even if only by one comrade in opposition) it could lead to other members reading and assessing that material and detecting the inadequacies of the Healy leadership. This was begun in Thornett's Second Document which, though suppressed, was produced and distributed at the First Conference of the WRP.

But further work on the history of the WRP (which was founded in 1973 out of the old Socialist Labour League) has shown that Healy is deliberately concealing important past struggles of the movement in order to protect the WRP's present sectarian course.

Their current demand "Make the Labour Government Resign" is a clear example of this. As we showed in our last edition, such a demand turns away from the necessary struggle to expose the fake left MPs to their supporters by pressing them to fight Wilson and the right wing under conditions where they refuse to lift a finger. Our slogan is "Make the 'lefts' fight Wilson". It has a long history from the SLL.

The demand was central to campaigns run by the SLL, its Young Socialists organisation (after they had been witch hunted out of the Labour Party), and the League's weekly newspaper *The Newsletter*. This carried such banner headlines as:

"CHANGE WILSON POLICY" (May 21st 1966)

"Left MPs Must Learn the LESSONS of 1966: Say NO to Wilson" (December 31st. 1966)

and the correct, if rather uncritical, headline: "LEFTS MUST FIGHT-WILSON" (April 22nd, 1967)

This policy had been carried forward from the SLL 1965 Manifesto which read:

"Wilson and the betrayers must be removed and a socialist policy implemented. That policy must be bold and direct, and there must be no hesitation in relying on the workers themselves to enforce it along the following lines:..." [How to Defeat the Tories for Good, September 11th, 1965]

IMPACT

The campaign on this orientation had a great impact in the unions and among the youth, and it was around bold and decisive initiatives including these slogans that the SLL won a considerable periphery of trade unionists in the mid and late 1960's.

Not only this, but the SLL correctly slammed into their opponents who refused to expose the

The vast majority of the rank and file want to fight and change Wilson's policies, and they can do this whilst still retaining a Labour government in Parliament. There are many left MPs who have had opposition to the constitution of the Parliamentary Labour Party allows left MPs the opportunity to present their opposition against the leadership of the present government. If this were done, then the rank and file would immediately be rallied in a struggle to change the leadership and policy of the Labour Party and replace it with people pledged to fight for socialist policies.

The demand of the Socialist Labour League for making the left MPs fight Wilson for socialist policies is the only realistic policy to rally the mass movement for alternative leadership and expose those inside the Parliamentary Labour Party who talk left but do not want to fight.

At the same time, if on a single issue the Labour government had fought Toryism, we would have given it our critical support insofar as it did this. If the left MPs now break from Wilson and challenge him in the Parliamentary Labour Party, they will also have our critical support. We are concerned here with taking the working class through all the experiences necessary in order to expose the bankruptcy of the right-wing Labour leaders and the fake left MPs thus preparing the way for the building of revolutionary leadership.

From 'The Alternative to Wilson' by G. Healy, Sept. 1967.

'lefts'. Thus as late as October 1970 Cliff Slaughter wrote in polemic:

"In accordance with this perspective we set course for a daily paper in five year's time. The essential political preparation for this was to turn to the trade unions with the cadres won from the youth, and to campaign on every political issue facing the working class under the Labour Government.

At the centre of this orientation was our initiative in the whole campaign to defeat the prices and incomes legislation, support the 1966 seamen's strike, and prevent the anti-trade union legislation.

No other political tendency whatsoever was able to campaign in this way... every one of them... opposed... building the independent revolutionary party; every one of them considered it 'sectarian' to oppose the Labour government as a capitalist government; they all collaborated with the Stalinists to denounce our initiatives in 1965 and 1966 against the Prices and Incomes Bill, against anti-union legislation, and to make the 'left' MPs fight, as premature and sectarian". (Reform or Revolution? 1970 p5)

The 'initiatives' Slaughter refers to here were not simple sloganeering, but real struggles carried into the workers movement by the SLL. In 1965 and 1966, around the banner of the Lambeth Trades Council, powerful interventions were made by the SLL against Wilson's first pay laws, which resulted in the TUC suspending Lambeth Trades Council. In the fight against Wilson's anti-union laws, the SLL spearheaded the fight, itself calling for a strike on May Day 1969 which eventually forced the Stalinists to support and resulted in nearly 900,000 workers stopping work.

Both the Young Socialists and the SLL were able on several occasions in this period to carry out lobbies ranging from 1,000 to 3,000 on working days. Their influence could be seen to extend to directly political campaigns when on May 1st 1970, as a direct result of SLL-YS initiative, Liverpool docks, together with numbers of building and engineering workers struck work in solidarity with the struggle of the workers and peasants in Indochina.

REVISIONISTS

None of the revisionists (particularly the IS and IMG) who have always so readily denounced the SLL as 'sectarian' have any comparable record of struggle. More often than not the SLL exposed IS and IMG opportunism in practice. The crime is that the WRP now chooses to obscure its own past for fear of exposing its present bankruptcy. The Workers Socialist League alone is able to assess these past achievements and draw strength from them.

It was not only on the question of demands on the 'lefts' and interventions in the unions that the old SLL had a more correct approach than the sectarian WRP.

It is conspicuous that the Healy leadership's struggle against Comrade Thornett's call for a return to the Transitional Programme centred very much on devaluing the transitional demands and, most important concealing their relation to the fight for workers' control of production.

Not one leading WRP member in the discussion referred to the earlier programme put forward for a long period by the SLL, in which

many of the transitional demands were advocated, often along the same lines as proposed by Comrade Thornett.

The contrast between the 1974 sectarian bankruptcy of programme within the WRP, and the surprising concreteness of the 1965 SLL Manifesto for example, must have been too painful for Healy to face.

As an example, in October 1974, the Election Manifesto of the WRP had only this to say on defence of living standards:

"HALT RISING PRICES. Nationalise the food monopolies and the supermarket chains without compensation under workers control. Abolish the speculative commodity markets".

This "policy", which raises almost as many questions as it answers, and which can only be regarded as a utopian proposal divorced from any means of achieving it (who is to do the nationalising?) is sharply answered by the SLL's 1965 Manifesto:

"Sliding Scale of Wages: Over and above all wage settlements, all employers must be compelled to pay cost-of-living bonuses to ensure that wages are not left behind prices. This policy is the only way to solve the 'prices' question in the interests of the working class. Committees of consumers, along with the trade unions, must be responsible for deciding a realistic cost of living index". [emphasis added]

Funnily enough, the SLL in 1965 saw protection against rising prices without even mentioning nationalisation!! But the 1965 policy is certainly far more relevant and tangible to the working class than 1974's abstract demagoguery. **



1964 YS Conference, SLL support

Indeed the very call for nationalisation is carefully prepared in the 1965 document. It moves from demands on wages to call for the ending of business secrets, and from this demand expands on the demand for "workers supervision and control of business". The nationalised industries are examined first:

"... on the railways, the liner trains and other modernisation schemes must be introduced under the control of workers committees, which ensure the sharing of all work, no unemployment, retraining on full pay.

These committees will represent all grades of railway workers and employees who, in fact, understand and run the industry every day... They will immediately enquire into all relations between private industry, the banks and the nationalised industry".

Here, despite the inadequate formulation (not calling for trade union committees, and not stressing that they must emerge from below and not be imposed from above by unions or management) the SLL attempted to concretise the demand for workers control and come to grips with the task of taking the management out of the hands of the bourgeois nominee who run state industry.

SUPERVISION

The specific call for "workers supervision and control" shows that this is a fight to supervise the existing management, in preparation for workers management at a later stage.

Today's version of this programme in the WRP is the phrase "workers control" attached to anything and everything. In the October 1974 Manifesto, the demands included:

"A SOCIALIST FUEL POLICY. Workers control of the planned expansion of mining, electricity and gas. Nationalise the fuel monopolies, North Sea Oil and gas.

A SOCIALIST TRANSPORT POLICY. Workers control of the railways, aviation, the buses and the bus service. Nationalise road haulage.

These might be abstracted point by point forward for the struggle for workers control of industry, a vital step in the development of revolutionary consciousness in the working class.

Indeed the continuous call for nationalisation by the WRP generally separated from any to action in the working class.

Thus the 1974 Manifesto:

"... Nationalise the food monopolies and the supermarket chains without compensation under workers control... **STOP UNEMPLOYMENT.** Take basic industry and the banks into public ownership [i.e. nationalise them!] without compensation under workers control... Demand a sliding scale of hours and wages[?!]... **HOMES FOR ALL.** Nationalise the land, the construction industry and building societies without compensation under workers control with protection for savers... **EXPAND THE SOCIAL SERVICES.** ... End private medicine and the public schools. Nationalise the drug industry without compensation under workers control..."

Presumably then, to follow the WRP's logic, putting forward a "programme" is just a question of stringing together a long enough list of monopolies to be nationalised at a stroke from above by a Labour government while the workers sit back and wait.

In this they are effectively at one with the *Militant* group of opportunists within the Labour Party, who even specify they want the top 250 (not 249, not 251, but 250) firms nationalised. Both maintain a verbal "programme of nationalisation"; but neither group attempts to mobilise the working class along the lines of the *Transitional Programme* to force such nationalisation.

"FIRST STEP"

The SLL 1965 programme did, however, put forward such an



1968: SLL demonstration calling for political revolution in Czechoslovakia.

the refusal of the 'left' to fight, along with considerable successes by the SLL.

Increasingly during the life of the 1966-1970 Labour government, the Healy SLL leadership began to minimise the working class support for that government - going on the appearance of increasing hostility from workers to Wilson's attacks on the working class.

The expulsion of the YS majority from the Labour Party in 1964, the pay laws and the anti-union laws all strengthened the notion, recurring today in WRP propaganda, that this government was more reactionary than any other Labour government.

When this combined in the late 1960's with waves of spontaneous working class militancy as a part of a world-wide movement, seeming in Britain to threaten the old leadership within the unions, the hour seemed as Healy saw it, about to strike for the Socialist Labour League after years of propagandising the need for revolution, to step into the leadership of the working class.

Accordingly, less and less attention was devoted to programme and demands, and more and more restating the depth of the crisis and the general question of the 'need to build the SLL'.

PROCESS

Let us compare some sets of demands to show this process at work. We have examined the transitional demands of the 1965 SLL Manifesto. In the 1966 Conference resolution of the Young Socialists there were similar transitional demands for the Trade Unions:

- *Independence of the trade unions from the state.
- *Sliding scale of wages to keep pace with the cost of living.
- *Abolition of business secrets. Open the books of industry. Make the bosses pay.
- *Suspend all interest payments which burden the nationalised industries, workers control of the mines, railways and docks."

The programme for youth included the demand for:

- "A full programme of public works (hospitals, schools, youth clubs, housing projects, swimming pools) paid at trade union rates under workers management," and
- "Work-sharing without loss of pay."

On September 10th. 1967, while the SLL Manifesto still called:

"Through the demand 'Make the 'left' MP's fight' there must be a united mass movement inside as well as outside Parliament... This movement can and must be built..."

the demands on which the 'left' were to fight were:

1. Repeal Prices and Incomes Act.
2. Restore full employment.
3. Implement a policy of paying full wages whilst working full time.
4. Nationalise the basic industries, including the motor industry."

Here, important steps in the fight for nationalisation are omitted making the call one for nationalisation from above rather than a struggle from below to force nationalisation, but at the same time, there are concrete demands which workers can fight for in the factories.

By October 1969 the Political Committee statement of the SLL was posing no demands at all except the call to join the SLL itself:

"The British working class will not stay at a purely economic level in its strikes. It already raises the question of the leadership of the unions, the political character of that leadership and its relations with the employers as with the Labour government..."

The road now opens for the building of the revolutionary working class party which every worker is beginning to

recognise is needed.

The SLL... calls upon all workers to join with it in the task of constructing that party."

The passage here reflects a superficial response to the spontaneous movements of the class more akin to the syndicalists of IS than to the political method of Trotskyism. The strike wave opened possibilities of going beyond an economic level - but only through the intervention of Trotskyist leadership. And there is a strong element of nationalism contained in this statement also.

The implied contrast is between the British working class - which is supposedly of its own accord going beyond "a purely economic level in its strikes", and the huge general strike movement of France in May - June 1968, which was betrayed when no leadership emerged to break workers from spontaneity.

Based on this view, which completely mis-assesses the weight of influence of reformism on the British labour movement, the impressions of the spontaneous strikes of late 1969 become the starting point of an abstract call to "every worker" who is supposedly "beginning to recognise" the need of a mass SLL to join, while any attempt to fight for programme is abandoned.



1971: SLL mass anti-Tory rally at Alexandra Palace.

The re-election of the Tory government as a result of the betrayals of the Wilson 1966 government gave the SLL a period in which programme again seemed to be pushed into the background.

The maximum slogan of "nationalise the economy" could remain and not be put to the test until the re-election in 1974 of the seventh Labour government. Meanwhile, the strong surge of anti-Tory feeling from a betrayed but undefeated working class between 1970 - 1974 brought a continuing flow of recruits to the SLL on its correct platform of "bring down the Tory government", which enabled the *Workers Press* to grow in size and circulation, the apparatus of the movement to grow, and the leadership's inability to train working class cadres to be concealed.

For this reason, as the verbal adaptation to the *Transitional Programme* which characterised the last twelve months is increasingly dropped by the WRP, the real weaknesses of the impressionist method are only now beginning to make themselves felt.

EDUCATION

And no grandiose "education" schemes, no demagogic displays of phrasemongering by Healy and its leaders can conceal the degeneration of a movement which has become divorced from any real

involvement or intervention in the struggles of the working class.

The fight for the method of the *Transitional Programme* now undertaken by the Workers Socialist League, is for us the very centre of the fight to build an independent revolutionary party to lead the struggle for the taking of power by the working class.

ADAPTATION

At the same time the struggle against impressionism and for an objective analysis of the balance of political forces in the working class movement is fundamental in the defence of Trotskyism. It was Pablo's empirical adaptation to the appearance of change in world Stalinism in 1950 - 1953 which caused him to revise the principles of the Fourth International, provoking a split from which the International Committee emerged as defenders of "Orthodox Trotskyism".

But, able only a little more than Pablo to probe to their roots the problems for Trotskyism in understanding the role of Stalinism and its relationship with imperialism post-war, the IC became less and less equipped to critically orientate in changing situations.

In the early 1960's the American SWP as a result succumbed to opportunism and drifted off in search of "natural Marxists" in the form of Fidel Castro and colonial revolutions, and split from the IC. But still the SLL was unable to develop beyond defence of "orthodoxy" and left itself exposed to empirical adaptations.

Our task is now to take the historic and theoretical gains of the SLL - WRP into our work of building the WSL and into the necessary discussion on perspectives for rebuilding the Trotskyist Fourth International. At the centre of this is our knowledge that we have to find the road to the masses through building a party along the lines marked out in the method of the *Transitional Programme*:

"It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist revolution. This bridge should include a system of transitional demands stemming from today's conditions and today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the taking of power by the proletariat." TP p15.

FOOTNOTES

* Many of the points from the historical section of that document were incorporated into the article in *Socialist Press* 2 "The WRP School of Falsification".

** So embarrassed are the WRP leadership at their complete lack of programme prior to the critique raised by Alan Thornett that they now feel they have to resort to the most barefaced lies in order to suggest they were right all along.

Thus we find S. Johns claiming in *Workers Press* of Tuesday 16th September:

"In the two General Elections the WRP stated unequivocally that the working class had no alternative but to fight for socialist policies to defend its most minimal gains. This required controlling prices by nationalising the food monopolies without compensation under workers' control; defending jobs by occupations; starting the fight for workers control with the demand to open the books [!]; and launching an all-out campaign for nationalisation without compensation in every trade union branch and industry". [emphasis added]

We challenge S. Johns to produce evidence of any WRP campaign in union branches for the demand to 'open the books', or any mention of this demand in either the February or October Election Manifestoes.

TU REVIEW

STRANGER THAN FICTION

by Adam Westoby

What was celluloid hero Michael Jayston doing last Friday with a boatload of armed thugs and Sandhurst 'patriots', sailing across the central Mediterranean? He was playing the part of 'Quiller', gilded hooligan of the British intelligence services in BBC1's new thriller series of the same name.

In last week's episode, 'The Assault on the Ritz', Quiller was sent to infiltrate a gang of mercenaries hired to trigger a coup d'etat in an 'oil rich Arab state' in North Africa, toppling the left wing nationalist government and restoring a right wing monarchy favourable to Britain and the western oil monopolies.

As the faithful instrument of British foreign policy Quiller's task was to discover the gang's target and sabotage their plan - which needless to say he did, the whole affair ending in a very satisfying blood-and-sand shoot-out on an anonymous North African beach.

After 50 minutes of jet-setting intrigue, CIA-provided electronics, seagoing skulduggery and Whitehall wrangles the mercenaries wicked plans were foiled and the peace-loving values of British foreign policy triumphed.

What's strange about such goings-on on the box? Just that the plot was closely based on a real episode in 1970, a year after Colonel Gaddafi and the nationalist officers who supported him booted out King Idris of Libya and the corrupt clique of courtiers, grown rich on oil revenues and speculation, who ran his dictatorship.

INVASION

And an armed invasion to oust Gaddafi, financed by one of Idris' chief lieutenants exiled in Geneva, led by 'retired' British intelligence officials, and using mainly French mercenaries, was planned over several months in late 1970 and early 1971.

Details of the plot were given in a book, 'The Hilton Assignment', published in 1973 by two *Observer* journalists who specialise in espionage and whose main contacts clearly lie within the British intelligence services.

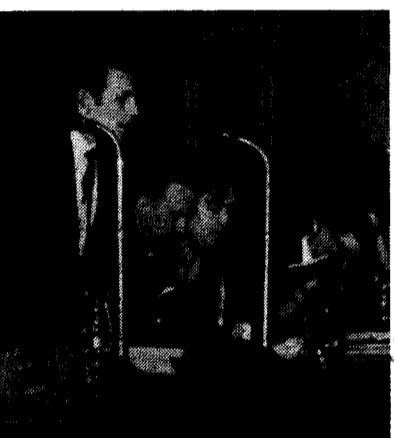
The difference is that in real life the British intelligence was well aware of the plans from the beginning, through Anthony Royle, a former officer of the Special Air Services (notorious for their role in Northern Ireland) and then a junior Foreign Office Minister in Heath's government.

The government did nothing to obstruct the conspirators, beyond indicating they would take a dim view if too many British citizens were caught armed to the teeth in Tripoli. The main go-between between the organisers and the Tory Government was Colonel David Stirling, who last year announced plans to form 'Great Britain 75', organising and training the Tory middle class to 'assist' the police during major strikes or 'civil disorders'.

Though Stirling denied his 'Great Britain 75' would be armed or use force, the book makes it quite clear he put his talents to work planning a full military attack against the Libyan government in 1970.

Naturally, since 'Quiller' is a fictional series, the BBC's tame scriptwriters did not dwell on these aspects. The Arab state was not named, Stirling's role was altered to that of a friend and confidant of the main organiser, the package was embellished with an erotic subplot and a public-school booby. Above all the actual role of the British government was reversed, to make it appear that the Arab government can thank its lucky stars for the benign intentions of

continued on page 7



defeat right-wing.

attempt:

"In private industry, as a first step to nationalisation, the workers' representatives, assisted by sympathetic accountants and technicians from the growing white-collar unions, must demand access to all accounts, order books and plans of the big monopolies such as in motor-cars, chemicals and building contracting."

This is a clear call for a fight to establish workers control of production, before nationalisation, as a preparation for nationalisation itself. If this approach had been developed and not discarded by the SLL in the period following 1965, then the ultimatums which stud the 1974 Manifesto and the present WRP programme would not have appeared.

This is evidence of how the WRP leadership has gone backwards theoretically in the last ten years. As Comrade Thornett's Second Document pointed out:

"By repudiating the correct use of the 'workers' control' slogan... the party is, in fact, blocking the road to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is not established by a single 'leap' from reformism to revolutionary consciousness, but by the working class through its own struggles and the conscious intervention of the revolutionary party, passing through stages of development, each of which is a qualitative development..."

... If the party telescopes these essential stages (or leaves them out) by using the single catch-all slogan "Nationalise industry, banks and land without compensation under workers control", we open up no road to the working class for the eventual seizure of power and the establishment of its dictatorship. This is, after all, the precise reason why Trotsky developed the *Transitional Programme*, and why the Fourth International adopted it as its founding document."

Indeed, as Trotsky states in the programme:

"Only a general revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat can place the complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie on the order of the day. The task of transitional demands is to prepare the proletariat to solve this problem." (p.24) (emphasis added)

IMPRESSIONS

Why then did the SLL move away from the attempt to carry transitional demands into the working class in the 1960's? The answer must be that the SLL leadership increasingly became swayed by surface impressions of the developing situation, and in particular the treachery of the Wilson government, coupled with

PORTUGAL MOVES ON TO REVOLUTION

by John Docherty



Soares embraces Labour Party Secretary Ron Hayward

On every available inch of wall space in Lisbon at the moment can be read the political views of just about every possible shade of opinion within the working class and socialist movement. The posters, the leaflets, the newspapers, and the impassioned debates that surround them, all with issues of daily concern for the Portuguese working class.

As the Portuguese workers have opened a breach for the development of a new stage in the European revolution, an understanding of their problems and movements is of fundamental importance for those who will certainly soon follow them.

Even in the most priest-ridden parts of Northern Portugal, lengthy discussions can be heard on the merits of different sections of working class leadership. You can find these as anywhere else all the classic works of Marxism which have been kept from the Portuguese people during generations of fascist rule, and for which there is now an enormous appetite.

In the southern agricultural areas, peasants occupying the estates of landlords who have now fled will tell you with considerable conviction how they will deal with the possible return of their former oppressors.

In each tiny event of day-to-day life in Portugal today you can see the effects of the living dynamics of a revolutionary struggle and the sharpest struggle for leadership in the working class.

If you go to buy a stamp in the new Post Office in central Oporto, you are liable to have to wait until the counter clerks have finished a noisy argument about the relative merits of the PRP and SP candidates in their forthcoming union elections. Outside, the teenage Maoists have drawn a large crowd, who are certainly interested in the policies being put forward to fight against a return to fascism and foreign intervention.

DUBIOUS

The crowd seems mostly to be made up of supporters of the Socialist Party, but they are dubious about the assertion that their first enemy is something known as 'Soviet social imperialism'.

To see these things happening in Portugal and to understand what they represent in a fast-moving political process is to confront a situation that throws into question every assumption and tests every principle derived from more peaceful and slow-moving times and places.

In the developing reality of the Portuguese revolution, not only is every organisation of the workers' movement rent with the most bitter debate, but every betrayal and every turning back is illuminated with a clarity that throws it to the sharpest possible relief.

Nowhere in the world today do you see Stalinists who are more recently tied to the defence of the bourgeois order than in Portugal today. In Portugal the notorious role of social democracy can be seen most clearly, as it allies itself and opens the door for every form of oppression and reaction.

There also, the centrists and fusionists of the workers movement reveal most clearly where their policies lead. In no other circumstances could the sectarians speak more empty phrases or flail their arms more uselessly in the empty air.

but to say something about what has been learnt from a number of recent visits to Portugal by members of the WSL, and in particular to indicate some of the main forces that are vying there for the leadership of the working class.

In this article we shall take up the position of the Socialist Party and describe some other important recent developments.

One point which should be made at the outset is to emphasise the extent to which the capitalist news media in this country has distorted and lied about the strength of the forces opposed to the revolution.

On the basis of such reports, we had expected to find on arrival in Portugal reactionary mobs on the march everywhere, with workers' organisations cowed and afraid to operate, their offices destroyed.

STRENGTH

Such an impression is quite wrong. In Lisbon itself evidence of the strength and confidence of the working class can be seen on every hand, with big meetings of workers an almost nightly occurrence, and occupations, large meetings of soldiers and socialist organisations taking place all the time.

Even outside the big cities, it is not the case that the forces of reaction predominate. Although there have been right-wing riots organised in such towns as Leiria and Braga, there is no sign that the workers' organisations have been driven out.

At least one of the buildings which the world press claimed was burnt to the ground at Leiria, the head-quarters of the pro-Stalinist MDP, can be seen standing in one of the main squares to this day without so much as a broken window. In all of these towns, offices of such left-wing organisations as the MES and the LCI can be seen in operation, Maoists give out their leaflets in the street and there are the same discussions on the same political issues that take place in Lisbon.

It is of course true that the peasants of the North are discontented with the effects on prices of the recent bountiful vine harvest and with the failure of the various governments set up since the overthrow of fascism to deal with their grievances. However, the agricultural labourers in the recently occupied and nationalised big estates in the south display quite a different attitude.

On Wednesday 17th. September for example, there was a general strike throughout the two provinces of Alentejo, which covers a large proportion of Southern Portugal, and include the towns of Evora and Beja. On that day, virtually unreported in the British press, a significant section of the agricultural workforce expressed their hatred of all the vestiges of the old fascist-landlord regime that still remain, and their determination to defend the gains which the revolution has already brought them.

STANDSTILL

Travelling around the area it was clear that not a workshop was operating, not a field being tilled, and those few offices and shops that had opened in the early morning soon closed their doors. In Evora there was an enormous demonstration in support of the agricultural reforms where there was open talk of the need to kill off the few landlords still to be found in the area.

A particular issue around which this display of the joint power of the urban and rural proletariat centred concerned the right to ownership of 103 cattle and 39 pigs from an occupied estate in

Portalegre, close to the Spanish border.

The various efforts of a group of armed landlords to get back what they claimed to be their property has filled the Portuguese press for a number of weeks now, and in some ways what has happened has been symptomatic of the forces operating in the revolution as a whole. At first the farmworkers looked to the local military commander to protect their rights to the newly-won animals, and were horrified when the military decision was to restore the animals to the former landlords.

Eventually, the bitter determination of the farmworkers, indicated not least by the 17th. September strike, forced the handing back of the cattle and pigs to the occupying farmworkers. However this may still not yet be the end of the story.

To describe the widespread and fervent support for the continued progress of the revolution is not of course to deny that the possibility of counter-revolution remains an ever present reality. In Lisbon one can see significant focus for such a movement in the 'retornados' back from the former colonial possessions who hang around in discontented groups on street corners, and who have adopted some of the methods of a movement they fear and misunderstand in order to draw attention to their grievances.

Thus they have hijacked buses to block a bridge across the River Tagus and have occupied the Bank of Angola, demanding that their worthless Angolan currency be changed into Portuguese denominations. Leaflets handed out to passers-by during these events called for an end to decolonisation and the return of Spinoza.

However much the 'retornados' place their confidence in such unworkable solutions as these, there can be no defence of their conditions by turning back the clock.

JOBS

Whatever efforts are made by the extreme right to emerge from the shadows by mobilising ex-colonials in alliance with the economically insecure peasants of the North, jobs will only be found for these people and a place in Portuguese society if there is a struggle for a government of the working class and peasantry based on the independent organs of workers' power.

The beginnings of such developments of independent workers' organisations can be seen on every hand in the big cities and in the agricultural regions of the South. In their form and purpose such bodies vary a great deal. In some cases their function is to set up a system of workers' management in an enterprise that has been taken away from an employer who has fled. Elsewhere, workers committees organise tenants, including those who have occupied empty properties.

These committees could be smashed or they could become the basis of a new society. Their direction will depend on the extent to which a leadership can be built within them that will develop them to challenge the bourgeois state and its instruments.

We spoke to the director of one section of the state TV system. He told us that of course there was a workers committee in his reorganised enterprise, though in theory this only existed to be consulted about management decisions. The committee, he thought, already exercised more power than it had on paper since its views were always a decisive influence. What happened next would of course depend on the strength of the working class as a whole, and on the overall political situation.

What is essential for the development and unification of such organs is to break them from the Armed Forces Movement and from supporting the present leaders of the working class, who will fight tooth and nail against any strengthening of the independent power of the class. If the position of the social democrats and the Stalinists in Portugal is not so deeply rooted by history as in other European countries, they show just as much ability to divert and betray the workers.

Both Stalinists and social democrats in Portugal work particularly closely in the international movement of which they are a part. Stalinist Cunhal relies heavily on the Soviet leadership whose faithful servant he has always been, and Soares desperately needs the kind of support he gains from his frequent visits to see his counterparts in Britain, Germany, Sweden and elsewhere.

Nor are these of course the only international contacts of Soares. He may deny that he has received financial subventions from the CIA, but such charges are widely believed in Portugal, and he has not been able to brush off the accusations of recent contacts with Spinoza.

In any case was it not the hypocritical campaign of the SP leadership against the fourth government that provoked the reactionary violence of July and August? Whose interests did these serve other than those of capitalism and imperialism? In any case Soares talks at length to such bitterly anti-working class leaders as President Giscard of France, and advocates support for NATO and the EEC.

The SP is now working closely with the right-wing section of the Armed Forces Movement, and with them they dominate the new sixth provisional government.

"SOCIALIST"

Yet how is it that, despite all this, Soares is compelled to make statements about the need for a thoroughgoing socialist transformation in Portugal and to maintain that he is opposed to social democracy? The answer to this was made obvious in discussions we had with Socialist Party members in Lisbon on the night of the formation of the sixth government.

The politics of rank and file members of the SP was miles from the pro-capitalism of everything done by Soares. SP members were not happy about the undemocratic practices of the PCP, but they nevertheless considered themselves Marxists, and wanted the nationalisation of the foreign monopolies and the remaining sections of big domestic industry.

The statements of Soares have to take account of feelings of this kind to outflank the only openly pro-capitalist party left in Portugal now, the PPD who are busy proclaiming their adherence to what they call 'social democracy'. The practice of the SP leadership however, clearly belies any of their 'revolutionary pretensions'.

The way in which the leadership of the SP is closely tied to the defence of capitalist private property comes out clearly in their policies in the *Republica* affair.

It is certainly the duty of every socialist to support the rights of

different sections of the workers' movement to express their point of view. However it was not in defence of such a principle that Soares ran his campaign against the *Republica* workers, nor on such a basis did he win the support of all the other capitalist papers in Western Europe. His was a defence of the rights of the proprietor over his workers, of a fake 'democracy' and a so-called pluralism in which capitalist rule could continue to predominate.

There were many deliberate false impressions created by the hypocrisy of Soares and his associates on this issue. For instance, in the parallel take-over of the reactionary pro-clerical radio station *Renasçenca*, the issue of workers' democracy did not arise so the workers' take-over was completely justified.

The workers at *Republica* did not demand complete control of the editorial policy of the paper, but at first simply a statement to the effect that the paper supported the line of the Socialist Party with which those who printed it were not in agreement.

CENTRISTS

Their take-over was *not* part of a "Communist plot" as it was portrayed both by Soares and by sections of the left. It was under the leadership of centrists of the PRP and UDP whose general view can be found in the editorial columns of the paper that now appears.

The greatest danger of all in the take-over perhaps was the illusions of the workers involved that the capitalist state and the Armed Forces Movement would necessarily be on their side. These issues have largely been by-passed by events, however. There are still plenty of papers that reflect the views of the Socialist Party leadership, and they can be bought any day of the week on the streets of Lisbon or Oporto.

As for *Republica* itself, it is now in financial difficulties with the withdrawal of a government subsidy. In recent weeks the paper has been appealing for people to come to work on it for nothing. The collapse of the paper now might win the applause of the hypocrites in the leadership of the SP. It would certainly in no way be a victory for workers' democracy.

The real basis of the 'democratic' pretensions of Soares was revealed with the formation of the new government on 19th. September. After continual attacks on Vasco Goncalves and his fifth government on the grounds that it was elected by nobody and responsible only to a clique of officers the Socialist Party has now joined a government, in league with the openly pro-capitalist PPD, which has again been elected by nobody and which rests simply on a different faction of the AFM.

This arrangement has inevitably produced dissension within the ranks of the SP, and also within the CP where the claim to have taken a minor portfolio simply to make the government slightly less reactionary than it actually is, rings very hollow indeed.

In the next article we will deal with the role of Stalinism in Portugal and with those groups who claim to provide an alternative to its counter-revolutionary role.

TRADES COUNCIL LEADS FIGHT AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

At the initiative of the T&GWU branch at Export Packing Services - a factory which packs cars for export - Banbury and District Trades Council passed a resolution to take action on unemployment and organise a public meeting in the town on September 18th.

To begin the campaign a leaflet was distributed which called for the fight against sackings and instead for work sharing on full pay:

PROGRAMME

"To answer the situation a programme must be put forward, the starting point must be a demand that sackings are abolished and instead a policy of work sharing on full pay fought for where jobs are threatened. Where the employers refuse this demand, the threatened factory must be occupied and a committee elected to demand access to the company's books and report back to the workers the state of the company's finances. This is the only way that a company's bankruptcy or otherwise be revealed".

The importance of the unity of employed and unemployed workers was stressed, and the issues on which unity must be fought for were set out:

"... there are other key issues on which unity must be fought for between employed and unemployed workers - while workers must fight for a sliding scale of wages to provide increases linked to the cost of living as assessed by trade union committees, these committees must also include unemployed workers and pensioners to lead the fight to ensure that state benefits keep pace with inflation..."

In addition specialist committees should be set up from the trades council to organise the unemployed on this programme, represent them on their problems, and to campaign for the trade unions to provide facilities for the recruitment of unemployed workers.

WELL ATTENDED

The public meeting was attended by 70 trade unionists. The speakers included a member of the Labour Party Young Socialists and a Labour 'left', both members of the *Militant* group, an unem-

ployed worker, Charlie Boyd, and the convenor of EPS, Colin Carty.

The entire meeting revolved around a discussion of the transitional demands put forward in the leaflet, and the importance of this discussion by 70 trade unionists must not be underestimated. All the speakers talked about the importance of the transitional demands but both the *Militant* speakers - who had anyway opportunistically taken their programme straight from the leaflet, having none of their own to put - spoke of these wrongly as 'defensive' demands. They claimed that the only solution lay in the "nationalisation of the top 250 monopolies under workers control and management".

FUTURE

The *Militant* speakers conception seemed to be that a sliding scale of hours was a correct demand to defend workers jobs now, but socialism was something in the misty future - they had no method by which this would be achieved. This point was emphasised in the discussion which followed the speeches, and the importance of the fight for transitional demands by workers in providing the bridge

between today's struggles on wages and jobs and the overthrow of capitalism by the working class was clearly brought out.

UNAVAILABLE

Colin Carty, EPS convenor (speaking in a personal capacity) described the present situation in his factory, where the jobs of over 200 workers were being axed by management the following day. He emphasised the complete absence of any leadership from the T&GWU in the struggle to defend the jobs - he had tried to phone the T&G Regional Officers and every full-time official in the Midlands area and not one was available to visit the factory.

Charlie Boyd, an unemployed trade unionist, after speaking on the points of programme outlined in the leaflet, moved that the meeting call upon the Banbury and District Trades Council to set up a sub-committee to look into the problems of the unemployed, with a view to recruiting them into the unions and in this way fighting to unite employed and unemployed workers in defence of jobs and living standards.

After a strong discussion the motion was put to the meeting,

and carried unanimously.

The fight must now be for the Banbury and District Trades Council to adopt this resolution and act on it, challenging in practice the trade union leaders who in accepting the state pay laws are accepting unemployment.

* This resolution was passed by the 10/76A T&GWU branch in Hull and circulated by Hull Trades Council as part of the discussion on unemployment policy:

"That this 10/76A T&GWU branch calls on Trades Council wherever possible request the affiliated trade union branches recruit unemployed workers and that any member of a trade union either made redundant or sacked in any way be allowed to remain a full branch member with full trade union rights.

We consider this important especially as unemployment is rapidly increasing and workers who may well become demoralised through being unemployed may become prey to fascist and anti-trade union organisations and their propaganda. Unemployment, as can be seen in Northern Ireland, can be used to split and divide the working class."

strike to defend NHS!

"Private practice must go", was the decision of the NALGO Executive last weekend, and splashed across the papers last Monday.

It was announced that the union would at last campaign for the abolition of private practice both inside and outside the National Health Service.

These militant words were of course backed by no proposals for action to carry them out. Instead the NALGO Executive decided to support a conference to be held by the Medical Committee Against Private Practice - a 'rank and file' organisation of health workers hitherto dominated by the IMG.

Why then the sudden decision? Because the NALGO leaders, having voted to support the £6 state imposed limit on wage increases, still want to present a 'militant' stance as conditions of work in the NHS go rapidly downhill.

When they correctly say to Minister Barbara Castle that the total abolition of private practice is "essential to the continuance of a system of state care and the ending of abuses by the private sector", they are diverting from the equally vital fight to defend the NHS against spending cuts carried out by this Labour government.

NHS workers will remember how the nurses' struggle for wages throughout the summer of 1974 provoked all manner of 'left' statements by the union leaders against private practice while they

consciously prevented united action to win either demand. The same double talk is again coming forward. It can be predicted that NUPE and COHSE will soon make similar blood-curdling statements, while studiously avoiding any action.

Indeed if forms of words were sufficient to abolish private practice, it would have gone long ago. The problem is that even when a correct policy is forced through a union, the bureaucracy uses every loophole to avoid action to carry it out.

ASTMS

ASTMS, for example passed at its last conference a composite resolution stating opposition to all forms of private practice. It called for a campaign led by the Parliamentary Committee "to urge the government to end all private practice inside and outside the NHS with the minimum of delay".

Perhaps more blatant still, the composite ASTMS resolution on private practice (passed against the recommendations of the NEC) called for the union to fight to establish a measure of workers control of the health service: "call for elected committees of

and went on to demand the incorporation of all private facilities into the NHS and an immediate injection of £1,000m for NHS spending to rise on a sliding scale to keep pace with inflation.

These motions won an enthusiastic response from the conference, but the NEC, consciously blocking any action, simply "referred them to the Parliamentary Committee" and washed its hands of any fight. When it is seen that Harold Wilson and David Owen, minister responsible for the NHS, are both ASTMS members and actually directing the programme of cuts in the service, we can see what effect the "Parliamentary Committee" will have if no trade union action is taken.

Perhaps more blatant still, the composite ASTMS resolution on private practice (passed against the recommendations of the NEC) called for the union to fight to establish a measure of workers control of the health service: "call for elected committees of

trade unionists composed of NHS workers and consumers to examine the day to day running of Health Service Authorities and to supervise, control and deploy resources to satisfy the health requirements of all".

The ASTMS Executive did not even refer this policy to a trade union body, but to management in the form of the DHSS!

SUPPORT

The WSL has fought since its foundation for the complete abolition of private practice, defence of the NHS, and for the defence of the living standards of NHS workers. If NALGO seriously begins to carry out such a fight we will support them at every progressive step.

But until such action does begin we can only question how the fight for private practice to be abolished can be carried out by a union leadership which has allowed Wilson to smash free collective

bargaining, and which has lifted not a finger to fight spending cuts and the onset of mass unemployment.

The time for talking is over. The NHS is in danger of collapse if the unions do not act. All NHS workers wishing to defend the service must now demand their union leaders act by calling national strike action demanding the Labour government carry out these policies:

* Abolish all private practice. Nationalise private health facilities without compensation under workers management.

* Immediate injection of £1,000m restoration of all cuts, sliding scale of expenditure to rise with inflation.

* Programme of hospital building under workers management create jobs and expand the NHS.

* Trade union Committees to supervise Area Health Authorities, and prepare full workers management.

OPPOSE WITCH - HUNT OF LABOUR LEFT

The witch-hunt against the 'Militant' group in the capitalist press, particularly the 'Observer' and 'Daily Telegraph' is not just aimed at this group but against all opposition to the Wilson leadership. The WSL is for the unconditional defence of their right to fight for their views inside the Labour Party.

The political record of the group itself, however, is one of opportunism. They at no point fight for the removal of Wilson and the right wing - arguing that it is a question of 'policies' and not 'personalities'. Though they have the support of the majority of the National Committee of the Labour Party Young Socialists, this hasn't worried the leadership of the Labour Party one bit.

'MARXIST'

Rather, it has been useful to provide people like Benn (who is speaking at the LPYS conference meeting at Blackpool this week) with a 'Marxist' coloration. They have also done this at local level wherever they have branches.

The leadership of the Labour Party has taken little or no action against *Militant* in the past, which

record of the *Keep Left* supporters inside the LPYS in the early 1960's which was one of continuous restriction and expulsions by the bureaucracy to prevent their fight.

We will be featuring an article on the history of the 'Militant' group in a future issue of *Socialist Press*.

In the latest issue of *Militant* (26.9.75) the lead article, by editor Peter Taafe, is headlined 'Labour Party Conference IMPLEMENT MANIFESTO' with a small sub-heading 'Nationalise the 250 monopolies'.

Here is opportunism at its height. Instead of fighting Wilson's reformist programme, these so-called Trotskyists simply call for a return to it. They know full well that there is no mention of nationalising the 250 monopolies in the manifesto. Indeed it was precisely Wilson's reformist policies - set out in the Manifesto - to attack the working class at a time when capitalism in crisis, far from allowing reforms, needs cuts in living standards. The manifesto has as its centre the 'fight against inflation' which Wilson has interpreted as the need to cut workers' living standards, slash the social services and create unemployment.

Here would be the opportunity

the impossibility of achieving socialism through the reformist Labour Party. But instead, *Militant* diverts from this course, saying that it is possible to achieve reforms. This is the path of all the opportunists. "Defence of the Manifesto" is an entirely reformist campaign and presents no danger to Wilson - who himself voted for the Manifesto along with the right-wing.

DANGER

What does present the danger to Wilson is the fight for policies that do pose the struggle to end capitalism. It is in order to stop this that the press bill the *Militant* as 'Marxist' and 'Trotskyist' in order to confuse and divert any opposition onto this reformist path.

*A part of the same sustained press campaign is the vicious attack on the Workers Revolutionary Party printed in Sunday's *Observer*. This, like the attacks on *Militant*, is designed to discredit Trotskyists as "extremists" and strengthen Wilson's position against any opposition. While our political differences with the WRP are well known, we defend their right to campaign freely in the workers'

On Friday 19th September the leaders of the blastfurnace men's union hastily called off the decision to lead their own official strike from the Sunday. By then, even before the call, more than half the union's membership had already gone on strike.

The decision to call the strike off on the basis of reinstating the suspended operator and carrying out an "enquiry", was a complete sell-out. The British Steel Corporation and the government will not use the enquiry to cut manpower and stop steel workers' wages rising with the improved technology of the industry.

But in line with their policy to stop any actions against the Labour Government the *Morning Star*, paper of the British Communist Party, lyingly called the settlement a "victory".

So the spontaneous struggle of the working class against the employers is in this way turned into their reformist leaders and Stalin supporters into an attack on the

TV Review continued from page 5

the Foreign Office. Ironically, the programme was broadcast scarcely a week after sanctimonious protests in the capitalist press against Libyan intrusions into the northern territory of Chad!

Among many real aspects which the programme reflected was the involvement of Stalinism. Ominipol, the Czechoslovak arms-dealing agency, cheerfully provided \$50,000 worth of automatic guns, ammunition and explosives, delivered through a Yugoslav port within a week - for purposes which were obviously fraudulent.

But in the event the boat in which the invasion was planned was arrested by the Italian police in Trieste - the most likely explanation being the CIA thought the escape too liable to backfire, and decided to scotch it.

The programme's finale was thus pure fiction - underlining the moral that the BBC's job is to tell only so much of the truth as

STEEL STRIKERS SOLD OUT



BENN, continued from page 1
Government's offensive against the working class is endorsed by the Labour Party Conference.

All this takes place without a word of protest from any of the 'lefts'. Along with the trade union leaders they have accepted rigid state control of wages and the creation of 1 1/4 million unemployed without a murmur.

It is therefore doubly clear that action must be taken in the trade union movement and in the Labour Party to force these cringing 'lefts' to begin to act in the interests of the working class and for the removal of Willson.

At the present time the working class face these frontal attacks leaderless. But the working class have not accepted the pay laws or the unemployment. They are confused and held back by the treachery of their leaders.

The fight for a programme to meet the crisis is the preparation by the WSL for the struggles against the Labour government that must undoubtedly emerge.

JOBS FIGHT CENSURED

Two members of the T&GWU Executive Committee, Brian Nicholson and Bill Powell, have been reprimanded and censured by a union enquiry initiated by Jones following a five weeks strike in defiance of jobs last February and March. They were accused of failing to carry out the instructions of the Executive Committee, which were to recommend a return to work.

During the strike the London dockers stood firm despite a treacherous instruction from Jones to return to work, given over the heads of their own democratic decisions and strike leaders, under conditions in which the run down of dock labour and the very existence of the Dock Labour Scheme was threatened.

The dispute was a test case of the dockers ability to resist employers attempts to undermine the scheme - which forces employers to employ men made redundant. A consequence of the strength

of this agreement was the continuous move by employers to areas outside the Dock Labour Scheme; to non-registered ports and inland container depots.

Previously dockers have fought this by picketing container depots and by strike action. As a result of the major struggles of 1972 the Jones/Aldington proposals gained an extra 500 jobs for dockers. But this was useless as long as the employers were free to move geographically outside the Scheme.

The failure of the Jones/Aldington scheme was the basis of the strike which from Jones' point of view had to be stamped out because his personal involvement and reputation as one who can deliver the goods to the employer was at stake.

The strike was broken under direct pressure from Jones who made public statements instructing the men back to work and spoke of a "very bleak future indeed for the ports" if the strike continued. There was a close vote at a mass meeting as a result of this and Nicholson was witch hunted by the press for "manipulation".

The disciplinary measures now taken by the Executive are part of the crackdown throughout the T&GWU against any group of shop stewards who set out to fight against the attacks of the employers.

Nicholson in the past has protected Jones and the strong resolution forwarded from the London docks branch to last July's Biennial Conference condemning Jones' role in the Jones/Aldington enquiry and instructing him not to become involved in similar enquiries in the future was withdrawn.

Jones, however, was not impressed by these concessions and has forced through disciplinary measures which he knows will seriously damage Powell and Nicholson's chances of re-election to the Executive.

Their only "crime" was to lead a completely principled strike in defence of one of the best agreements which has been achieved by the trade union movement.

50 MINUTE SELL-OUT

To the apparent fury of the Tory press, local authority employers agreed last week to £6 a week pay increases for 1 million of their manual workers. To judge from the panic, any reader might think it had been conceded after weeks of crippling industrial action which forced the employers to their knees.

Nothing of the sort. The negotiations had in fact begun and ended within a mere 50 minutes, and had taken the form of the union leaders (eager supporters of Wilson's pay laws) hearing the employers' offer and accepting it. This was not a "victory" for the union, but a capitulation to wage-cutting legislation.

If £6 was conceded as a starting offer, it is obvious much more could have been won with a fight. And £6, after deductions, will scarcely make a dent in the hugely inflated bills every worker and his family face this winter for food, electricity, travel and consumer goods.

bureaucrats, who live off the backs of trade unionists, consciously settled for a wage cut without even consulting the membership.

Their show of weakness on wages will only strengthen the employers' drive to impose savage cuts in manning. This is what the press barrage on the settlement was all about, with the continual reference to "£205 million on the rates" building up middle class hostility to the council workers and seeking to divide the working class itself, in preparation for redundancies.

The union leaders blandly ignore this danger. Jack May, NUPE assistant general secretary, said "We will now expect the Government to take action to protect our membership's jobs and to halt the rise in prices". As if the Wilson government has shown any inclination to protect jobs - with 1,300,000 unemployed - or hold down prices, rising at 20%.

REMOVED

These bankrupt union bureaucrats who will not fight the employers must be removed. The fight must be taken up for these unions to reject the TUC majority's acceptance of state pay laws and unemployment. To defend wages against inflation a sliding scale of wages clause must be forced into all wage agreements, which must not start out from bogus demands for "the full £6" but from the much larger increases needed to bring wages up to the increased cost of living.

CONFERENCE

In the case of the NUPE representative at the talks, he went completely against the decision against the £6 limit at their recent conference. The G&MWU spokesman, Charles Donnet, pointed out openly that "under normal circumstances we would have pushed for 27% increases to match the rise in the cost of living". In other words these

W.S.L. Public Meetings

The WSL is carrying a campaign into the labour movement against the Ryder "participation" proposals. We will be holding public meetings in all the main areas containing BLMC plants, and mass distributing our policy statement: "Leyland: Stewards movement threatened" explaining the dangers of "participation", and urging British Leyland workers to mobilise against the Ryder committees.

The main forces on the BLMC Combine Committee, right wing and Communist Party alike, are fully behind participation and are involved up to their necks in the ad hoc organising committee.

We are the only movement which is carrying out such a campaign, and it is at Cowley where we are influential in the trade union movement, that the only fight is taking place against Ryder.

BIRMINGHAM

"Fight Ryder, defend jobs"
Thursday 16th October, 7.45 pm
Labour Club,
Bristol Street,
Birmingham.

COVENTRY

"No Participation in Management"
Tuesday October 7th, 8.00 pm
Old Dyers Arms,
Butts,
Near Coventry Technical College.

WARLEY

"A Policy to Fight Unemployment"
Thursday 2nd October, 8.00 pm
Bear Hotel,
Bearwood Road,
Warley.

OXFORD

"A Policy to Fight Unemployment"
Thursday 2nd October, 8.00 pm
Clarendon Press Institute,
Walden Street

A.U.E.W

Terry Duffy, the extreme right-winger who is running in the election for the AUEW National Executive position in Division Four, has proved his credentials as a representative of the employers by taking the union to court.

In the High Court he was successful last week in obtaining an interim injunction preventing the union from postponing the election. For the right wing it is of course only natural that the capitalist state and not the labour movement should have the final say in the running of the union.

But the weakness already shown by the AUEW left in allowing the courts to decide delegates to National Conference has encouraged creatures such as Duffy to go to law.

The ruling must be fought, and the independence of the unions defended.

DEFEND THE 14

The trial has opened at the Old Bailey of 14 pacifist supporters of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign (BWNIC), who are charged with conspiracy to contravene the Incitement to Disaffection Act of 1934.

Their "crime" was to distribute a leaflet, entitled *Some Information for Discontented Soldiers* to members of the armed forces. The method of attack by the state - the use of a catch-all "conspiracy" charge which virtually absolves the prosecution from bringing hard evidence (as in the conviction of the Shrewsbury pickets) - is becoming

unpleasantly familiar as the ruling class seek to close the legal net against the working class.

To "prove" a conspiracy charge, the state does not even have to prove any offence was committed - but rather that one was intended. In other words it is the ideal frame up charge.

It is significant that this prosecution is going ahead under a Labour government which has ruthlessly pursued the Tories' imperialist policies in Northern Ireland.

The lessons of the break-up of discipline in the US army in Vietnam, and the tensions which have completely disrupted the Portuguese army after years of colonial repression, are not lost on the Wilson government.

They intend to keep Britain's regular army as a fighting force for the defence of the capitalist state, and prevent the growth within it of any left wing political discussion. Only then can it be used for such scab roles as strike-breaking in Glasgow, as required by Wilson.

All manner of political tendencies are supporting the campaign to defend the accused 14. Outside the Old Bailey on Monday were veteran pacifist Pat Arrowsmith with ageing Young Liberal Peter Hain. Despite the political confusion created by these people, the issue is an important one in the struggle against the extreme right wing course of the Wilson government. Only a campaign directed at removing Jenkins as Home Secretary and breaking the right wing hold on the Labour leadership can effectively secure the release of the 14.

At the same time the right for soldiers freely to discuss politics and organise within the army independently of their officers

£500 monthly development fund

The campaigns begun by the WSL on unemployment and against the implementation of the Ryder report in BLMC are a new development for our movement. It is not an accident that no other group on the left is campaigning on these questions. All of them shrink from the fight for principled leadership in the working class.

Such a leadership must be built. For this reason we ask you to send a donation towards our monthly £500 development fund.

Send to: Socialist Press,
31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London,
NW5 1HR.

FRANCO, continued from page 1

Stalinism. While Communist Parties throughout Europe denounce the crimes of Franco, they remain tactfully silent on the economic backing given to Spanish fascism by trade with the degenerated workers' states of Eastern Europe.

Poland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, Hungary, Bulgaria, East Germany and Albania all carry out increasing volumes of bilateral trade with Spain, providing Franco with valuable markets.

And in 1970 it was Polish coal imported by Franco which enabled the defeat of the Asturian miners' strike.

The British CP then and now remains absolutely silent on this international strikebreaking role of Stalinism. Nor does the Spanish CP challenge in any way the "peaceful coexistence" of the Soviet bureaucracy with fascism. Rather, CP leader Carillo himself sees a peaceful transition from dictatorship to bourgeois democracy in Spain (see report, page 3).

The Stalinist leaders, who just signed away half Europe to capitalism in the Helsinki pact, intend to keep this agreement, even at the expense of a further defeat for the Spanish working class.

TROTSKYISM

It is for this reason that only the Trotskyist movement, built in struggle against the betrayals of Stalinism and social democracy, can point a way forward in the fight to remove the Franco regime.

The demand in Spain must be for a united front of workers organisations to prepare general strike action to topple the fascist dictatorship. The shootings have confirmed that it is senseless to look to the regime for even the most minimal reforms. No issue - whether the national rights of the Basques and the Catalans, trampled on by Franco, or the democratic rights of assembly, free speech and trade union organisation - can be resolved while the fascist power remains intact.

The alliances being made by the underground Spanish CP and Socialist Party with "liberal" bourgeois



Juan Manot: sang ETA hymn to firing squad

general strike struggle waged to bring Franco down and establish a workers' government. In preparation for this, factory committees and local councils of action must be established, and these must arrange the arming of detachments of workers in self-defence squads to hold off military intervention.

POWERLESS

If Spanish workers through such a fight could inflict a defeat on the fascist regime, the European bourgeoisie would be almost powerless openly to intervene. But the way would be open for the working class of Europe to act in support.

These policies must at once be fought for to attack the Franco regime.

* A complete black on Spanish imports and exports. Jones must call official T&GWU action, and fight for full TUC mobilisation. All unions must cancel scab holiday programmes in Spain.

* The Labour government must break off all diplomatic and trade relations with the fascist regime.

* The labour movement must demand an immediate end to trade and diplomacy between the workers states and Spain. Demand where the British CP stands. End Stalinist support for Franco!

* Full financial support to Spanish workers in struggle. Open the books of British monopolies with holidays