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BACK ARMED LIBERATION FIGHT!

DRIVE OUT SMITH RACISTS!

Ian Smith's white racist regime in Rhodesia now confronts the onset of the armed struggle for black African liberation which, fanned on by the victory of the MPLA liberation forces in Angola, is spreading like a bush fire.

And as the liberation struggle grows it confronts still more desperate moves by world imperialism and its allies to maintain Southern Africa as a bulwark of repression and anti-communism.

Last week, Mozambique President Samova Machel made the belated move to seal off the traffic of Rhodesian exports through the ports of Beira and Maputo (first established under the Portuguese fascist regime).

This, together with the confiscation of much valuable equipment and chrome shipments already in Mozambique, will strike a hefty blow at the Rhodesian economy — but is a calculated move to head off rather than lead forward the impending armed struggle against Smith.

DOOMED

Indeed the whole strategy of the imperialists and the "left" bourgeois nationalists is now to pressure Smith into negotiating a "peaceful settlement" rather than allow a hopeless and doomed all-out war to develop in which all hope of maintaining direct imperialist control over the area would vanish. As the *Financial Times* assessed the Mozambique moves:

"President Machel may well have calculated that his move will provide the extra push necessary to ensure further concessions from Mr. Smith at the constitutional talks."

The form now taken by imperialist interventions is precisely this channelling of revolutionary struggle into bankrupt, reformist roads. In the context of today's struggles, no compromise is possible. Certainly nothing reflects more sharply the changed balance of class forces on a world scale in the wake of the defeat of US imperialism in Vietnam and Cambodia last year than the impotence with which the leading imperialist powers have been forced to witness the growth of national liberation struggles in Africa.

REACTIONARY

And nothing more condemns the reactionary nature of the

calls from all quarters during the Angola struggle to simply "withdraw all troops!". It is now clear for all to see that if the FNLA/UNITA forces with their squads of fascist mercenaries, CIA 'advisers' and South African regular troops, had defeated the MPLA, that this latest development in the struggle for Zimbabwe would have been drastically retarded.

ADAPTING

Now capitalist and Stalinist governments alike spring to adapt to the new balance of forces in Southern Africa.

The British Labour government, by supporting Mozambique, attempts to bluff Smith into peacefully conceding "reforms", offering as further bait the possibility, voiced by Foreign Office Minister David Ennals that:

"Britain could become involved in policing operations after a return to legality [end of UDI] and while an agreed settlement was being put into effect."

This is in essence the same as the South African racist regime headed by Vorster, which, fearing the Zimbabwe struggle may snowball into South Africa, is refusing to give Smith military help — unless reforms are made to head off the outbreak of all-out armed struggle.

HOLD BACK

Amid rumours of arms shipments and Cubans arriving in Mozambique, the Kremlin and Cuban governments hold back from immediate intervention, giving Smith some leeway to settle peacefully in the new situation. At the same time the "left" nationalists limit their support for the Zimbabwe fight to providing guerrilla bases and releasing thundery press statements calculated to keep intact their "peaceful" agreements of compromise with the international banks and monopolies.

As for the right wing Zimbabwean nationalist leader Nkomo, he continues, more isolated every week, to pursue endless "constitutional talks"

with Smith while increasing sections of the nationalist movement arm ready for war.

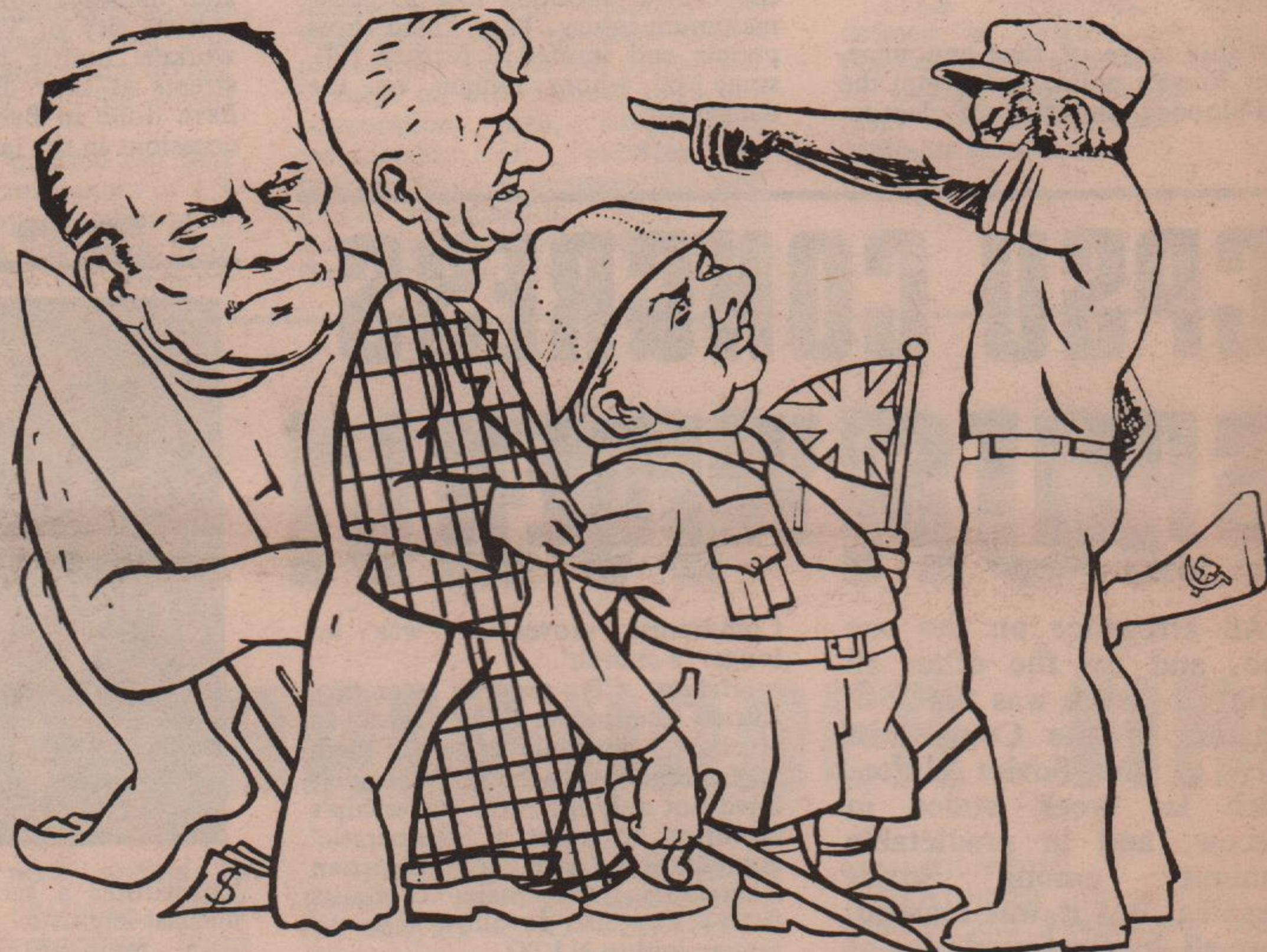
In the fight for African liberation then, just as in the fight to defend the working class and overthrow oppression in every country, the most crucial question is the building of Trotskyist leadership. Only such a leadership can carry through to the end both the fight for the immediate overthrow of imperialism and the socialist measures of nationalisation of land and industry necessary for the construction of a planned economy outside the domination and exploitation of imperialism.

SUPPORT

Thus while we must unconditionally support the armed struggle of the Zimbabwean liberation forces in their fight to drive out the Smith racists, we in no way declare support for their political programme, which (as in the case of the Angolan MPLA and Mozambique FRELIMO) is completely inadequate to solve the economic problems faced by the mass of African workers and peasants.

But all class conscious workers must now take up the demand that the 'left' MPs fight for material support to be sent to the freedom fighters in Rhodesia.

This of course is inseparable from the necessary all-round fight to remove the reactionary Wilson-Healey-Callaghan leadership, who will oppose these struggles. In this fight also, the indissoluble link between the Zimbabwean struggle, and the international struggle of all workers is revealed.



SCANLON SUPPORTS CUTS

This week sees a test of the claims of 'left' MPs that they oppose the Labour government's savage spending cuts.

Some Tribune MPs have put down a critical amendment in the two-day commons debate on the cuts.

25 Tribune MPs (though the group claims 80 members) have said they will not vote for the government — though they have been too coy to say whether they will vote against it.

RETREAT

But the history of the 'lefts' so-called "fight" so far is one continuous dismal retreat.

By the time of the meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party to discuss the cuts the initial blood-curdling statements made by the 'lefts' to the press immediately after Healey's announcements had converted themselves into muted and respectful reservations.

The 'lefts' crumbled weakly before Healey's insults. He arrogantly said that critics of the spending cuts were talking "poppycock" and were "out of their tiny Chinese minds".

On the Labour Party's national executive several 'lefts' voted with Wilson and Healey, thus defeating the call for a special party conference.

And Judith Hart agreed to withdraw a motion critical of government economic policy as long as it was discussed at a special meeting of the National Executive and the Cabinet later this month.

That meeting, of course, is nothing more than a Downing Street tea party designed to head off any political opposition. The 'lefts' see the whole question of the cuts as one where they must raise only face-saving protests to be dropped if they rock the boat; they do not see it for what it is —

cont'd on back page, col 4.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

SPAIN: POLICE KILLINGS SPARK FURTHER STRIKES

The historic offensive of the Spanish working class is referred to by Spain's fascist regime as a 'Communist plot'. In fact it is the very absence of national revolutionary leadership which is placing this rapidly growing movement in peril.

The Communist and reformist workers' parties have consistently tried to limit its objectives and to compromise with the so-called 'liberals' of the regime. Last week the leading 'liberal' socialist, Interior Minister Fraga, promised that there would be freedom of assembly within two months (not to include the Communist Party and separatist movements).

SHOOTING

Within days of that announcement Fraga's police had begun the blooded shooting of demon-

strators in the streets. These events showed clearly enough what Fraga's 'liberalisation' means.

They have shown too, the fact that the workers are not prepared to compromise and that their offensive has now spread out from the major cities to become a nation-wide movement, sweeping across all areas of the country.

In Vitoria, in the north on the edge of the Euskadi (Basque) country, a series of strikes in support of wage claims has been going on since January.

GENERAL STRIKE

On March 3rd at least 30,000 workers (out of a population of 170,000) joined a one-day general strike and 20,000 joined a demonstration.

Police, losing control of the centre of the town, opened fire on the crowd, shooting low to cause maximum injury. They killed three people and injured a further 100, some of whom remain on the danger list.

Since the deaths the whole city has been at a standstill as workers stay on strike and police patrol the city in groups of 30, armed with automatic weapons.

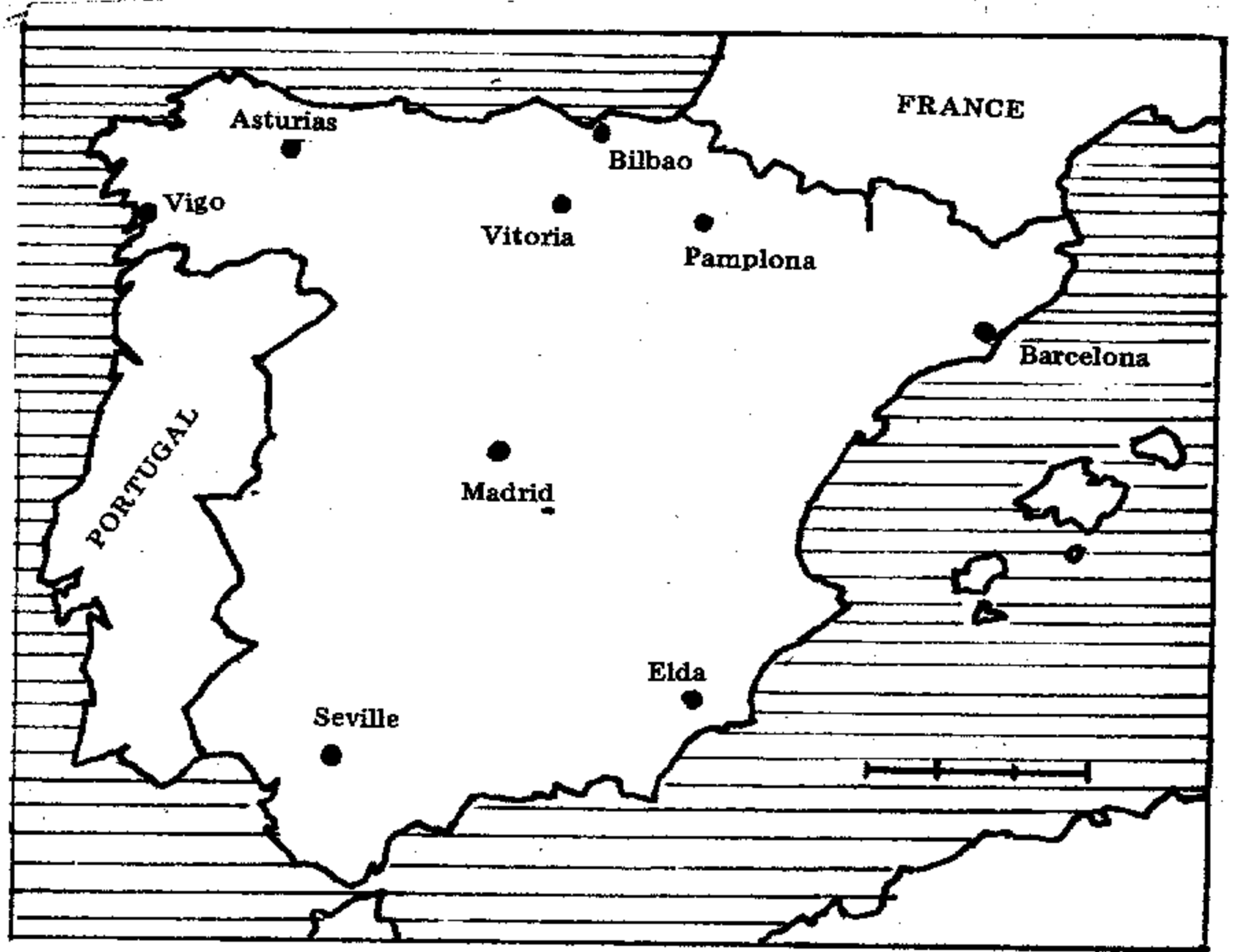
BARRICADES

In Bilbao, main industrial city of the north, 17,000 workers and students demonstrated against the murders in Vitoria and were themselves dispersed with police brutality. The same happened in the city of Pamplona to the east of Vitoria and in many other cities throughout Spain.

A few days before the Vitoria murders, an office worker had been shot dead by police in a demonstration in the southern town of Elda near Alicante.

On February 29th a series of battles took place between police and demonstrators in the north-eastern city of Vigo, during which workers built barricades in the streets as they did in Vitoria and have done in Barcelona on several occasions in the last few weeks.

In Barcelona itself, where the



striking police and firemen are now drafted into the army, other strikes, notably those of 85,000 building workers and 25,000 teachers, continue. And in Asturias the coal miners strike has now lasted two months. Spain is reported to be making up the needed coal by imports from Poland.

In addition, the whole of Spain has been partly paralysed by a national strike of lorry drivers which began three weeks ago in Madrid. In some areas the regime has tried to break the strike by using troops to move supplies and to protect blacklegs against pickets. In Seville eleven strikers were arrested for forming pickets.

By last week it was estimated that over 300,000 Spanish workers throughout the country were on strike; that is over 6% of the total labour force. In addition, demonstrations and clashes with the

police were a daily occurrence in several of the larger cities.

The reactions of the fascist regime, both the promise of reforms and the increasingly brutal repression, are unable to control the workers' offensive.

On the contrary they are giving it further fuel as all sections of the working class come to realise that Franco's death has changed nothing of the repression and hypocrisy of the regime.

All these events simply highlight the need for a revolutionary leadership within the workers' movement to direct against the main political obstacle to the overthrow of fascism - the continued grip of Stalinism and reformism.

The demands must be for a working class united front to prepare full general strike action, and for committees in each area to prepare armed defence squads against the attacks of the state.

CPSU CONGRESS SPLITS WIDEN

All arrogance on the one hand, and on the other all 'liberalism' - such was the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which last week ended in Moscow, and in predictable unanimity among Soviet delegates. But it was marked, above all, by the foundering of Brezhnev's attempts to get a final agreement with the other Stalinist parties of Western Europe.

In one form or another the Italian, the Spanish and the British Communist Parties announced their intention to collaborate with their capitalist classes and the ruling class in the labour movement independently of Moscow's wishes. Thereby they knocked further into the coffin of Brezhnev's policy for a conference of European Communist Parties which would be in underwriting the Kremlin's international strategy.

EVIDENT BREAK

This qualitative turning-point in the splitting of the world Stalinist movement had to be discerned - equal with Stalinist conferences - from a very few key phrases in an hour of routine verbiage from party functionaries. Much of this unashamed flattery of Leonid Brezhnev in tones which unmistakably recalled the obscene adulation of Joseph Stalin.

The most evident break to the left came from the leadership of the Spanish Communist Party - its general secretary Santiago Carrillo did not attend the CPSU Congress at all, but stayed in Rome where he gave an interview to *L'Espresso* (the reactionary newspaper of big capital in Milan). Carrillo spoke of 'the primitive state of socialism in the USSR', which he called 'the quasi-feudal system which it overthrew and of which it carries the stigma', and went on to declare that the international

Communist movement was no longer 'a church'.

Italian CP general secretary Enrico Berlinguer did travel to Moscow - but only to deliver there a 'fraternal' speech which underlined not only his Party leadership's intention to enter a 'democratic' combination with the Christian Democrats (the main capitalist party) but also to allow Italy to remain within NATO.

FOLLOWED

Berlinguer was followed by Gaston Plissonnier, deputy to Georges Marchais, general secretary of the French Party. (Marchais himself, having just presided over a French CP Congress which officially buried the goal of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', pointedly remained in Paris.)

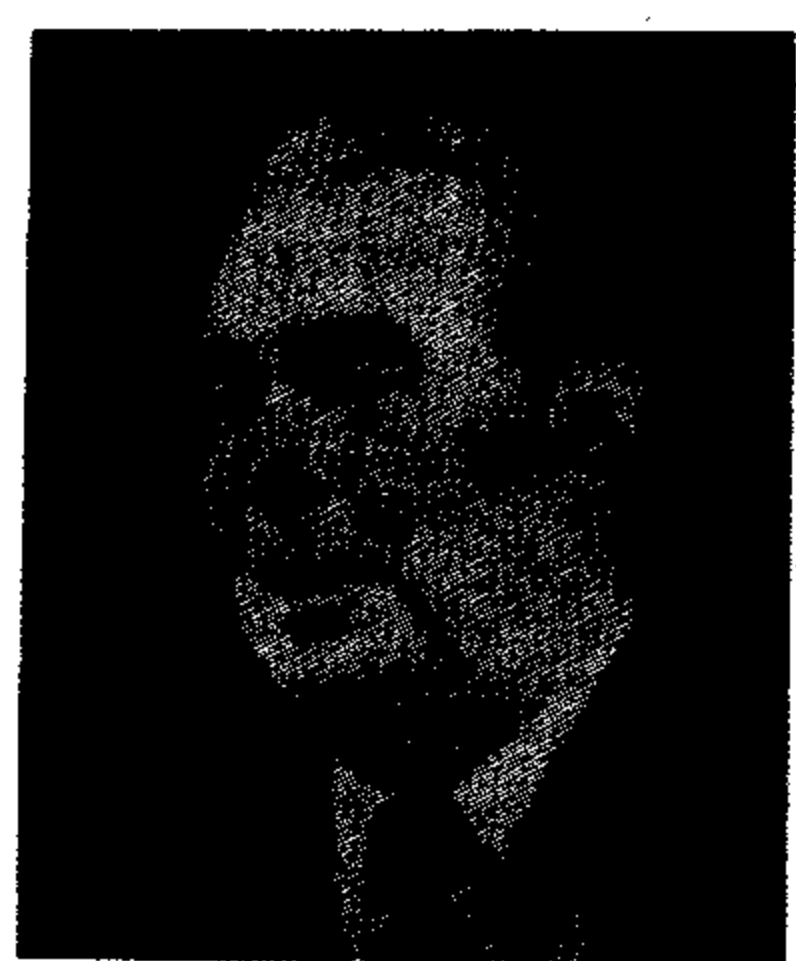
Plissonnier outlined a policy for 'socialism' draped in French colours and based upon the 'union of the left' with the French Social Democrats.

And as he was speaking the Swiss Communist Party, in a discreetly 'theoretical' article in the party paper, also brought its theory into line with practice by dropping the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'.

Bringing up the rear was British CP leader Gordon MacLennan with a hymn to the 'independence and sovereignty of every Communist Party and the need for individual freedoms and pluralism. His remarks were neutered by the Morning Star - doubtless with a view to sales in the USSR and the 'People's Democracies'.

'DIFFERENCES'

All these covert and 'diplomatic' assertions of 'differences' were in response to Brezhnev's opening report, with its equally veiled attack on 'those who make concessions to opportunism, and who may get temporary advantages'. 'Proletarian internationalism' Brezhnev declared (meaning of course obedience to requirements of Soviet policy)



'constitutes a sacred duty for all marxist-leninists.'

A number of coincidences underlined the historic character of the 25th Congress. It ended on the exact anniversary of Stalin's death in 1953. And it opened almost twenty years to the day since Krushchev, then Party Secretary, delivered his famous 'secret speech' to the closed session of the 20th Congress.

In this session Krushchev confirmed officially the terrible catalogue of Stalin's crimes and the murder of thousands of communists, through which the Stalinist faction consolidated its political dictatorship.

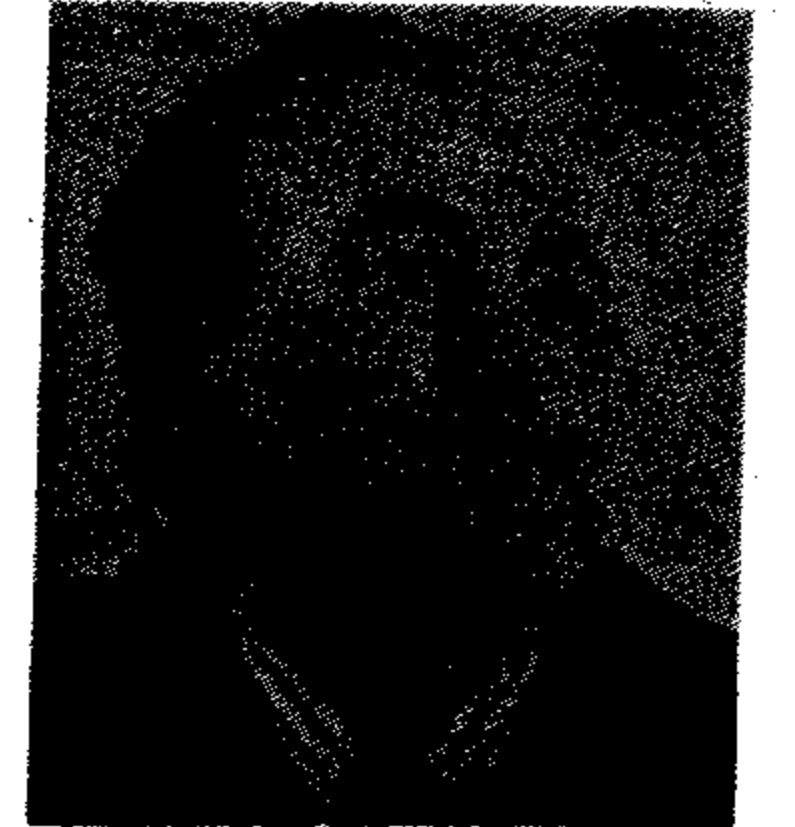
While the momentous history of the CPSU and the Bolshevik Party may be politely ignored by today's Stalinists, it cannot be buried.

'DEMOCRACY'

Behind all the hypocritical talk of 'democracy' stood the fact that in the ten years 1917 to 1927 (following the decision of the 1917 Petrograde Congress - the first on Russian soil) the Bolshevik Party held virtually one congress a year.

In the four decades since then the Stalinists have held - equally - just ten Congresses, every one of which has opened an ended in total unanimity among the delegates!

For forty years choruses of functionaries and bureaucrats have greeted the latest line of the Party chiefs and jumped to denounce those whose boots they were yesterday licking. There was obsequious 'unity' throughout the Stalin era. There was unanimity when Krushchev exposed Stalin at the 20th Congress in 1956, the same when at the 21st Congress (1959) he denounced the so-called anti-party group of Molotov and Malenkov (removed in 1957).



Likewise when Krushchev used the Albanian CP as whipping-boy for the Chinese leadership in 1961. And this astonishing 'unity' was in no way impaired when it became time to denounce Krushchev (ousted in 1964) at the 1966 Congress!

One can understand, therefore, why Brezhnev felt it necessary to deliver a caution in his opening report against over-zealous praising of the Party leadership. In the Byzantine world of the top echelons of Stalinism, superlatives are too often the prelude to a fall.

However, he might as well not have spoken. The hardened traditions of flattery brought speaker after speaker to the rostrum to support the 'general line'. Even the removal of Agriculture Minister Dmitri Polyansky from the Politbureau (undoubtedly as scapegoat for the poor grain harvest in 1975) was stage-managed to the hilt, being ushered in by attacks on the poor performance of his ministry - but not him in person.

After all, with good weather for a couple of years, he may still climb back to the top! Stifled with pomp, but without a shred of dignity, the public sessions of the Congress droned on for almost a fortnight.

Far left: Brezhnev; left: Castro with Portuguese leader Cunhal. Below: British Stalinist leader MacLennan.

But for Trotskyists this should not be allowed to mask the real developments which it signalled. The fragmentation of the world Stalinist movement stems from the material basis of the Stalinist bureaucracy - resting on the political usurpation and prostitution of the economic gains of proletarian revolution, but seeking to limit those gains and protect them only through compromise with imperialism.

The policy of 'socialism in one country' - even reproduced through many states in Eastern Europe - necessarily gives rise to native bureaucracies with their own interests and privileges to preserve, and their own diplomatic, economic and even military policies towards imperialism. And the problems of doing this are being sharpened by the economic crisis and the offensive of the working class in the capitalist world. So along with the public 'dissent' by the Western European CPs, the Congress also witnessed even more camouflaged expressions of independence by the Eastern European CP chiefs.

Ceausescu, of Rumania, flew home early after 'fraternal greetings' in which he outlined the intention of his party to "work for a new unity founded on respect for the right of each party freely to develop its political line, its revolutionary strategy and tactics."

For the Hungarian party Kadar (whose particular stripe of 'Popular Democracy' was installed in Budapest by Krushchev's tanks in 1956) prudently expressed a more modest desire to adapt the historical experience of the USSR to 'Hungarian conditions'.

And in Poland the press tactfully censored these references - but also the statement by ultra-Stalinist Bulgarian Zhivkov that "For a Bulgarian, the love of Bulgaria and of the USSR are the same thing!"

Like a scab upon the body of the European working class, Stalinism is gradually cracking as the tissue beneath it begins to move. But of course the final defeat of Stalinism will be in no way spontaneous: the political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracies just as the social revolution against capitalism can only be completed under a conscious Trotskyist leadership.

POLISARIO FRONT

On February 27th the Polisario Front announced the formation of the Democratic Arab Republic of the Sahara in the former Spanish colony of Western Sahara.

The Front has been fighting a remarkably successful guerilla war for several weeks against the armies of Morocco and Mauretania which have taken over the country after the withdrawal of the Spanish army which was completed last week.

This takeover was the result of a sordid deal signed in Madrid just before Franco's death between the Spanish fascist regime and King Hassan.

The King promised Spain the continuation of a large slice of the territory's huge phosphate revenues in exchange for sovereignty.

In fact, in an entirely unsuccessful effort to save face the Spanish government gave sovereignty to "the people of the Sahara" but handed over the "administration" to the Moroccan and Mauretanian

armies.

In resisting this settlement the Polisario Front has had the support of the Algerian government. This help, however, has been more nominal than real. And Algeria has up to now wriggled opportunistically out of recognising the new republic.

TWO

So far only two countries have done so (Malagasy and Burundi) though a majority voted in the OAU to recognise the Polisario Front as a national liberation movement.

The matter promises to have wide repercussions, not least in Spain.

The Military Democratic Union have strongly protested at Spain's cynical betrayal of the Saharan people and a large number of the returning Spanish officers are reported to be supporters of the Union.

W. GERMANY: REPRESSION MOUNTS

By a special correspondent

The most recent example of the growth of repressive legislation in West Germany was an amendment to the Criminal Law (paragraph 88a) which severely tightens press censorship and restricts freedom of speech.

The new paragraph provides for jail sentences of up to three years for anyone who undertakes "to spread, make available, produce, accept, deliver, store, offer, advertise, announce, import into, or export from "the Federal Republic (including West Berlin) any publication which supports crimes of violence and which "tends in the given circumstances to increase the preparedness of others" to support movements against the Federal Republic and her security or against principles of the constitution by criminal acts of violence. The same applies to all public speeches.

For German courts "criminal violence" need not involve any kind of direct exertion of force; it includes obstruction of entrances and exits, of public highways or public means of transport, picketing, passive resistance, civil disobedience, and strikes which do not have the blessing of the union bureaucrats.

A liberal critic pointed out that in the present circumstances of 1.3 million unemployed, even the balance sheet of a flourishing bank might well "increase the prepared-

ness of quite a number of people to engage in "criminal acts of violence".

Clearly, the law is flexible enough to permit prosecutions for virtually anything said or printed that does not suit the ruling class. In practice it means that a call for a strike is illegal unless it is within the rules of the "social partnership" between the union bureaucracies and employers. It also means that information about ongoing working class action can be suppressed, especially if it might help build up solidarity or spread the action.

SUFFICIENT

The existing laws were already quite sufficient to permit the common police practice of raiding oppositional publishers, printshops, booksellers, and editors, of seizing printing equipment and printed material, and of banning publications from open sale.

The new law is more specific and it covers everybody between the actual author and the reader.

The DGB (Deutscher Gewerkschafts Bund, the main trade union federation in West Germany and West Berlin) long ago took its own precautions against left opposition. It ruled on 3rd October 1973 that cooperation with, support or membership of, "extreme left organisations" is incompatible with union membership. Since then hundreds of militants who oppose the "social partnership" have been

expelled from their unions, and frequently as a result, sacked from their jobs.

COLLABORATE

The union leaderships collaborate closely with the political police in implementing these expulsions. And on many occasions Stalinists, Maoists and "left" social democrats in the unions have in their turn collaborated with the union leaders by denouncing fellow workers.

The DGB's expulsion policy followed a similar ruling by the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) in 1969, and the well known *Berufsverbot* of 28th January 1972.

A common decree by the Federal Chancellor (then Willy Brandt) and the Prime Ministers of the 10 provinces of the Federal Republic plus West Berlin then ruled that nobody could be employed in public services unless they would "under all circumstances support and defend the liberal and democratic principles" of the Federal Republic.

These principles, nowhere defined in written law, are in practice redefined from day to day to exclude from public employment anyone opposed to the capitalist status quo.

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THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

The Workers Socialist League was formed in December 1974 to struggle for the continuity of the principles of Trotskyism in Britain and towards the rebuilding of the Fourth International.

In the daily struggle to take the demands and principles of Trotsky's *Transitional Programme* into the trade unions, the WSL has been at the forefront of the fight for the sliding scale of wages, and work sharing on full pay - demands which at the T&GWU Conference were the only alternative to Jones' treacherous £6 pay plan and the wholesale acceptance of redundancies by the bureaucracy.

In the Health Service, WSL comrades have led the struggle for the sliding scale of NHS spending and for trade union committees to open the books of the Authorities, along with the fight to end all private practice - policies adopted by ASTMS National Conference.

In local disputes also, WSL comrades have tested and developed the demands of the *Transitional Programme*, putting forward in every case, the only real opposition to the Stalinists and the right-wing. Our struggle for the "open the books" demand in the motor industry has won a mass response.

At the same time we have put forward a policy to fight unemployment, calling for unity of employed and unemployed through the fight to mobilise the trade union movement.

The WSL is the only movement that fights consistently for transitional demands, going beyond mere trade union militancy to pose the political issues to workers.

While these practical interventions have developed the League's grasp of Trotsky's *Programme*, there has been a consistent drive to deepen and enrich the movement's understanding of the history and the present crisis of the Fourth International, as an essential part of any serious initiative towards its reconstruction.

We urge all readers who agree on the need for revolutionary leadership and the demands we put forward to find out more about the WSL and join our fight in the labour movement.

MORE INFORMATION

I would like more information on the Workers Socialist League.

Name

Address

TUC NEW RULE DEMOCRACY UNDER FIRE

Each day now seems to produce new attacks upon trade union democracy from the various wings of the TUC bureaucracy. Communist Party members have now threatened to use the TUC's new Trades Councils Rule 14 to exclude opponents on the left from Islington Trades Council.

At the Islington AGM, the Stalinists adopted the rule without even a vote stating that it was "mandatory". Even before it had been discussed, the President attempted to prevent a delegate from attacking the Council's abominable record over the past year - threatening to exclude him from the Trades Council because he was "disrupting" the meeting.

Ironically, the Council had earlier in the year refused to rule that fascists would not be allowed to represent union branches at the Trades Council.

During the same meeting, the CP dominated executive refused four delegates from NATPHE voting rights, because the treasurer had "mislead" their affiliation fees, and in a crude manoeuvre to prevent election of a new secretary ruled that this post was not elected at AGMs, but only when the sitting secretary retired.

It is ironic that the rules used by the CP to prevent discussion today were used by the TUC against the CP themselves in the thirties.

In 1934 the TUC "Black Circulars" were used to exclude Communists of the Minority Movement from the Trades Councils, thus removing from union branches their right to choose their own delegates in their own way.

The TUC, then as now, saw the Trades Councils as part of the chain of command by which the leader-

By fighting to make the Trades Councils "the local co-ordinating and unifying centres of the working class organisations" and fashioning them into "weapons of struggle" the Minority Movement, despite the limitations of Stalinist politics posed a real threat to the bureaucracy.

The outcry at this crude censorship amongst the trade unions threatened the ability of the TUC to get the circulars accepted and Ernest Bevin was forced to fabricate a new reason for their introduction, that "delegates were being sent from unions to these bodies, who continually obstructed, and men who gave up their time to do the business of these bodies could not get beyond the Minutes". In this way the circulars were forced through.

Now in 1976, with the TUC called upon again to hold back workers' militancy, the modern equivalent of the black circulars have again been issued. The new Rule 14 which Trades Councils have been asked to adopt (one clause is optional, the other mandatory) is intended for use against political opposition which challenges the TUC's class collaborationist policies.

There is however, one major difference between the new Rule 14 and the black circulars. The latter were intended for use against the Communist Party. Today, as the TUC's introduction to the new rule makes clear, the target is the militants and revolutionaries to the left of the Communist Party, while the CP is the agency that is used by the TUC to attack these militants.

The new clause which prevents Trades Councils from cooperating with any organisation whose policies are contrary to those of Congress is intended to prevent Trades Councils from cooperating even with the Cuts Committees

expenditure cuts.

Nevertheless the refusal of Camden and Westminster Trades Councils to accept either clause of the new rule shows that the resistance amongst the Trades Councils and even some CP members, to the witch hunting, will be as strong as it was in the thirties.

Of course, "democratic" procedures do not inhibit the CP and right-wing when they risk defeat.

In the Oxford Trades Council AGM a rump grouping of 15 right-wingers and Stalinists walked out, led by Stalinist Trades Council President Joe Richards, after failing to carry a majority against continuing the meeting. Even some right-wingers were unable to support this move, and stayed even after Richards had declared the AGM 'closed'.

The walk-out followed repeated refusals by Richards to reveal to delegates what had taken place at a conspiratorial "special Trades Council meeting" held by selected CP and right-wing delegates half-an-hour before the AGM.

It later emerged that they had voted unconstitutionally for a rule change restricting Trades Council to monthly instead of fortnightly meetings.

These upheavals in Oxford are no accident - they flow from a prolonged fight against the CP and the right-wing by WSL and other delegates and for a Trades Council demonstration against Wilson's spending cuts.

Confronted with a clear majority against their acceptance of the cuts, the bureaucracy and their political allies could only seek themselves to disrupt and stage provocations to impede any local action.

Despite these manoeuvres, 34 delegates from a wide range of unions stayed to agree overwhelmingly to press ahead with organising the demonstration against the cuts, to take place next

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

PART 5: RUSSIA 1914-17

By Rick Roberts

Germany declared war on Russia on August 1st, 1914. This war was not only to matter the lives of millions of workers who died in uniform in foreign battlefields, but also broke the back of all the old, non-revolutionary ways of struggle in the workers' movement.

On August 4th the German Social-Democratic party voted in the Reichstag to support the war and over night transformed the international exchange of comradely greetings into the deadly exchange of bullets.

The Social-Democratic parties of the Second International had nearly found an alliance with their own national employers easier and more fundamental, than a common struggle alongside workers over the border against the employers and their war.

But while the Second International had collapsed, as it had done so it had given birth at the same time to a truly revolutionary, international leadership for the working class and then it was born, was to grow to maturity and seize state power only two and a half years later.

By all standards, Russian participation revealed the absurdity of the war in full. Russia was an under-developed country and a massive part of her productive forces were in the hands of foreign owners - western countries owned 70% of all stock capital, and controlled almost all heavy industry.

PAYING PRICE

Thus Russia was out of her depth in that bloody struggle for world domination, but was paying the price for the right to be a privileged colony of the Allies, and oppress and rob Turkey, Galatia, Armenia and even more backward countries.

Her army was a serious force in attack only against such peoples, and in defence only with the help of vast spaces, sparse population and impassable roads.

The war brought only catastrophe and disgrace. Out of 15 million men mobilised, 2½ million were killed (about 40% of all Allied losses) and another 3 million wounded or taken prisoner for no reward but the right to call foreign imperialists friends.

The terrible burden of war added another twist to the already existing antagonisms of Russian society. The mighty forces of the peasantry and the working class were caught up by the war and fighting together against the crumbling walls of a mediaeval life.

Power rested in the hands of the Tsar and his appointed Cabinet of bureaucrats, while the bourgeoisie, in charge of advanced and swiftly developing capitalist industry, were represented only in the Duma (the Russian Parliament) which was relatively recent, and (more important) completely powerless.

AUTOCRATIC

The autocratic rule of the Tsar was not being overthrown in favour of the parliament, as accomplished in Britain by Cromwell in 1640, because the bourgeoisie in Russia had a large and hostile working class on one hand, while their alliance with the landlords meant they could not use the support of the peasantry on the other: thus they dreaded any shake-up of property relations. Their paralysis of this contradiction was only ended by their overturn.

What then was this agrarian problem that only a revolution could solve? Essentially it was that culture remained at the archaic, unproductive level of the

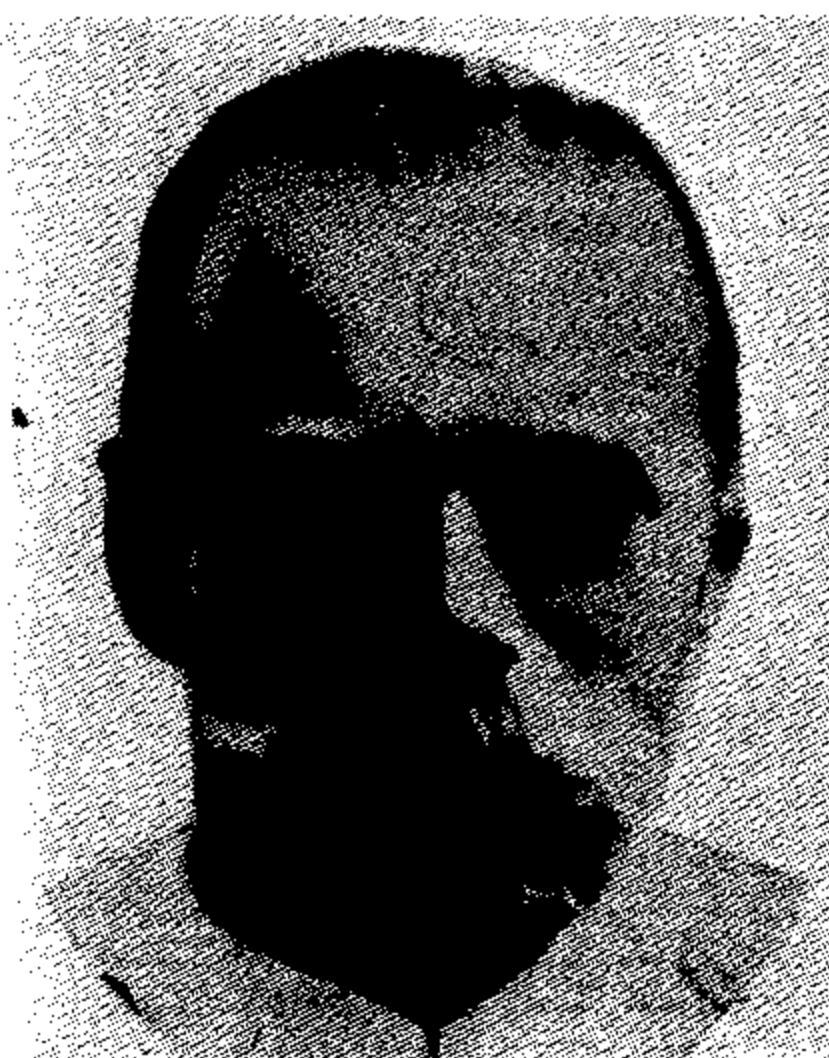


Russian prisoners under guard after defeat at Tannenberg

industry in technique and capitalist structure outstripped even advanced countries. As Trotsky says: "an advanced money economy . . . made demands upon the wooden plough that could only be met by a tractor".

The peasant could not jump straight to advanced cultivation but first tried to solve the problem of under-production and a rural excess population by increasing his land above the traditional three fields. This could only be done at the expense of the landlords, 30,000 of whom owned about 190 million acres, enough for 10 million peasant families.

After 1905 the landlords started selling their estates and a law of November 1906 allowed the ownership of sections of the communal land - this in order to create a stratum of capitalist farmers or 'kulaks' for their support.



Csar Nicholas II

But by 1914 a million peasants had sold land they could not live on, adding five million to a rural working class. Millions of others could only hang on to their tiny, hungry allotments.

The new rural bourgeoisie was as hostile to the peasants as the old landlords, so that the peasant movement, which died down after 1905, revived in armed conflicts over the seizing of communal land against their will. In addition the war carried away some 10 million rural workers and 2 million horses, so many peasants (even the middle rich) could not now sow their fields. Thus peasant hostility to the war started even before soldiers brought back tales of the front to the villages.

LEADERSHIP

The peasantry needed a

revolution. In Britain the problem was solved by the bourgeoisie grasping power through Cromwell in the civil war, enabling them to liquidate the independent peasant long before the working class awoke.

But in Russia serfdom was only abolished in 1861 (4½ centuries after Britain) and the forced development of capitalism gave the agrarian problem to the social revolution to solve.

Thus the peasant found his leadership for the first time in history in the person of the worker, and he in his turn found in the peasant mighty support for the struggle of his class.

MODERN

What then was the background of the Russian working class? Industry in Russia was modern, organised on a base of giant enterprises - in 1914, industries employing over 1,000 workers accounted for 41% of the working population as opposed to 18% in America. This may seem surprising but is explained by the late arrival of capitalism in Russia, in accordance with the law of combined development as formulated by Trotsky. This he briefly stated as follows:

"The privilege of historic backwardness - and such a privilege exists - permits, or rather compels, the adoption of whatever is ready in advance of any specified date, skipping a whole series of intermediate stages. Savages throw away their bows and arrows for rifles all at once, without travelling the road which lay between those two weapons in the past."

This meant that the working class was small in numbers in relation to the total population but for the same reasons was very advanced politically.

WESTERN CAPITALISM

Firstly, this was because capital for industrial development had to come from the west, and under pressure from richer Europe, the Russian state swallowed up a far greater part of the people's wealth than in the west, enforcing a twofold poverty and weakening the foundations of the possessing classes.

The concentration of industry also sharply divided the capitalist leaders from the working classes, and the foreign owners who bought political influence through investment, opposed any struggle for democracy in Russia. For all these reasons the bourgeoisie was isolated and unpopular.

Secondly, the very sudden origin of these huge enterprises especially

coal-mining south, took place in the thinly populated steppes among peasants who had lived in economic backwardness and religious prejudice. Trotsky explains:

"Capital ruthlessly seized the peasant lad or youth by the scruff of the neck and at once flung into the cauldron of factory life. The change in his conditions took place catastrophically. When the young peasant felt the blast of the factory's steam he at once began to think about who he was and where he was. At that stage the revolutionary party caught up with him and began to explain to him what and where he was. It gained ascendancy over him all the more easily because he had no conservative ideas: the old village notions did not fit at all".

SUPPRESSED

Under the absolute monarchy the workers' movement was ruthlessly suppressed. Hours of work were long, income levels a tenth of those in the United States, and trade unions and strikes illegal. Socialists and workers' leaders were either in exile, like Lenin and Trotsky, or serving long sentences in prison or in Siberia.

Under these conditions resistance was forced into underground circles, street demonstrations and often bloody encounters with police and troops. Persecution of the young, fresh and impulsive working class led to the adoption of the political strike as its fundamental weapon.

The great defeat of 1905 discouraged workers for a long time, worsened by the industrial slump of 1908-11. But with the industrial boom that followed, the struggle revived: in 1910 only 4,000 workers had engaged in political strikes, but the first half alone of 1914 saw over a million workers striking.

The outbreak of war gave this resurgent process a backward movement at first, since together with the wreck of the Second International it disorientated the working class politically and gave patriotism a big stick with which to beat, often literally, the revolutionary workers.

PENALTIES

Severe penalties were imposed for striking, workers' papers were hunted out of existence, and revolutionary elements in the factories were sent to the front.

Bowing to the mood, not one of the Bolshevik groups or organisations took the openly defeatist position of Lenin abroad, who argued for civil war against the bourgeoisie. When the Bolsheviks began to develop agitation against the war their organisation, heavily penetrated by Secret Service spies, was broken up, and in November 1914 the Bolshevik deputies to the Duma were arrested.

After the trial in February 1915,



at which they received long prison sentences, there were no protests by workers who a year earlier would have struck solidly at some arbitrary police station. The anniversary of the 1905 march of workers to the Winter Palace went almost unnoticed.

The chaos of war strengthens the state power, which seems the only firm support to cling to, but then undermines it. In Russia the interruption of war held back the recovery of the workers movement, only to accelerate it more powerfully as the full meaning of the war broke through.

How then did the fighting affect Russia, a country with all the contradictions of a nation which still had its bourgeois revolution to accomplish?

INADEQUATE

The army reflected the country: the peasant-soldiers were hopelessly inadequate to the demands of the modern military technique and the commanding staff showed an ignorance, lightmindedness and thievery corresponding to that of the ruling classes from which they came.

The demands of war revealed the bankruptcy of industry and transport: the troops soon turned out to have neither weapons nor even shoes.

The lack of munitions, the small number of factories for their production, the sparseness of railway lines for their transport soon translated the backwardness of Russia into the familiar language of defeat.

"The first days of war were the first days of disgrace. After a series of partial catastrophes, in the spring of 1915 came the general retreat. The generals took out their own criminal incapacity on the peaceful population. Enormous tracts of land were violently laid waste. Clouds of human locusts were driven to the rear with whips. The external rout was completed with an internal one.

In answer to alarmed questions from his colleagues as the situation at the front, the War Minister Polivanov answered in these words: 'I place my trust in the impenetrable spaces, impassable mud, and the mercy of Saint Nicholas Mirlikisky, Protector of Holy Russia' (Session of August 4th, 1915). A week later General Ruzsky confessed to the same ministers: 'The present-day demands of military technique are beyond us. At any rate we can't keep up with the Germans.'"

BLAME

Everyone looked for someone to blame: the Jews were accused of espionage, the staff and the Duma accused the Csar's Court of friendliness with the Germans. The Allies were envied and hated by all: the French command spared its army by using Russian soldiers.

"In the drawing-rooms of Petrograd and the headquarters at the front they gently joked: 'England has sworn to fight to the last drop of blood . . . of the Russian soldier'. These jokes seeped down and reached the trenches. 'Everything for the war!' said the ministers, deputies, generals, journalists. 'Yes', the soldier began to think of the trenches, 'they are all ready to fight to the last drop . . . of my blood'."

The soldiers gathered the increasingly bitter experiences of lower ranks who are ignorantly commanded. They measured the

confusion of the generals by the number of purposeless manoeuvres on sole-less shoes, the number of dinners not eaten. The number of deserters kept increasing even in the face of more rigid discipline, including flogging for the most trivial offences.

Everyone wanted peace at any cost, and the growth of discontent brought the revolutionary elements, at first drowned in the army without a trace, to the surface. The sending of striking workers to the front as a punishment increased the ranks of the agitators, and the retreat gave them a favourable audience.

"The Gendarme Administration of the Petrograd province declares in October 1916 . . . that 'the mood in the army is alarming, the relation between officers and soldiers is extremely tense, even bloody encounters are taking place. Deserters are to be met everywhere by the thousands. Everyone who comes near the army must carry away a complete and convincing impression of the utter moral disintegration of the troops' . . . In a few months all these gentlemen . . . will nevertheless assert that the revolution killed patriotism in the army, and that the Bolsheviks snatched a sure victory out of their hands".

Meanwhile the representatives of the bourgeoisie in the Constitutional Democrat Party, or Kadets, had greeted the war as their war. A Special Conference was called in the spring of 1915 to recruit private industry to work for the army, and Military-Industrial Committees were set up.

POWER

These organisations encouraged the bourgeoisie to struggle against the monarchy for power, a struggle it had given up after 1905.

From the Conference billions of roubles flowed out to irrigate private industry and since the influx of raw labour to the factories and the scramble for war profits had increased exploitation, enormous fortunes were made out of the blood of defeat. As the war industries swelled, devouring all resources, peacetime production was dying away and shortages were becoming chronic.

However, the Russian masses were passing over from criticism of the war to action in the summer of 1915:

"Their indignation finds expression first of all in food disturbances, sometimes rising to the height of local riots. These food disorders, spreading over the whole country, broke the war hypnosis and laid the road to strikes. The rise in the cost of living automatically lowered wages. Economic strikes were the inevitable mass reflection - stormy in proportion as they had been delayed. The strikes were accompanied by meetings, adoption of political resolutions, scrimmages with the police, not infrequently by shots and casualties".

Common profits, war defeats and internal dangers drew together the parties of the ruling class. In 1915 the patriotic majority of the Duma formed the "Progressive Bloc" for "a satisfaction of the needs created by the war" comprising the Kadets, the Progressives, and national groups like the Poles, Jews, etc. Minister of the Interior, Prince Sherbatov, called it "a union called forth by the danger of social revolution".

JOINT CABINET

Taking up again the struggle for power, they proposed to the Czar a Joint Cabinet of the Duma and the Court. They hoped to take over the regulation and planning of industry which the state bureaucracy had refused, although the latter was impotent against the opposition of the powerful Military-Industrial Committees.

The Czar refused and dissolved the Duma on 3rd September, 1915. The workers of Petrograd and Moscow responded with strikes of protest. These first signs of strike struggle since the war began were weaker and less clear politically than the first months of 1914, but heralded great battles.

The Minister of Justice said: "If there are at present no armed demonstrations of the workers, it is only because they have as yet no organisation". The Minister of the Interior added "We must not amnesty the members of the Duma



Russian soldiers committee meets

organising centre of the movement in its most dangerous form".

After the arrests the Bolsheviks had no centralised party organisation at all, only scattered groups and individuals, but in the growing strike movement their underground work revived. The Police Department wrote:

"The Leninists have . . . been issuing in considerable numbers revolutionary appeals with a demand to stop the war, overthrow the existing government, and found a republic. And this work has had its palpable result in workers' strikes and disorders".

September 1915 meant paralysis for the bourgeoisie faced with the Czar's obstinate clinging to power, but held a great step forward for the leadership of the workers' movement. The conference of socialists at Zimmerwald in Switzerland gave a powerful impetus to the development of the anti-war struggle in many countries. Trotsky describes it as follows:

"The delegates, filling four stage-coaches, set off for the mountains they joked about the fact that half a century after the founding of the First International, it was still possible to seat all the internationalists in four coaches. But they were not sceptical. The thread of history often breaks - then a new knot must be tied. And this is what we were doing in Zimmerwald. 'Lenin was on the extreme left at the conference. In many questions he was in a minority of one, even within the Zimmerwald left wing, to which I did not formally belong, although I was close to it on all-important questions. In Zimmerwald, Lenin was tightening up the spring of the future international action. In a Swiss mountain village, he was laying the corner-stone of the revolutionary International.'" (Trotsky - *My Life*, Pathfinder p.249-50).

MENSHEVIKS

While the bourgeoisie continued to suppress the Bolsheviks, they attempted to win over the Mensheviks. Frightened by the strike movement, the industrialists tried to impose patriotic discipline on the workers by including their elected representatives on the Military-Industrial Committees.

While the Bolsheviks campaigned to boycott the committees, one Menshevik was saying to the industrialists there "You ought to demand that the existing bureaucratic power retire from the scene, yielding its place to you as the inheritors of the present social structure". This new political friendship brought forth its rotten fruit after the February revolution.

In May 1916 the Duma was called together again, no one knew why. The bourgeoisie was mortally afraid of a revolution, of any change, but were powerless without it. By the autumn it was obvious that the war was hopeless, and the indignation of the masses threatened to explode.

SEPARATE PEACE

On behalf of the "Progressive Bloc", Protopopov felt out the possibilities of a separate peace, but the demands of the Allies, who wanted to make Russia the chief field of exploitation after the war, were too great for him.

the Czar's government increased, the government banning the speeches of the Duma and thereby ensuring that they circulated by the million.

CONSPIRACY

Conspiracy against the Czar hung in the air as a mood of the upper circles of Petrograd; a confused idea of salvation or a slogan of despair. The conspirators did not dare remove the chief actor of the monarchy, but the Grand Dukes decided to remove its prompter - Rasputin.

The more isolated the monarchy became, and the less shelter the Czar felt, the more this mediaeval autocrat had turned for help from the "other world".

Rasputin had first met the Czar in 1905, and by 1916 had enormous power over state appointments and royal policy, although in his private life he was a drunkard and a womanizer.

The Czarina would write to the Czar "I am firm, but listen to me. This means Our Friend, and trust us in everything." The Friend was Gregory Rasputin.

On the night of 16-17th December 1916 Rasputin was murdered in a Prince's maisonette. The ruling classes greeted it as an act of salvation. People talked about it everywhere, saying that even the aristocracy had no other solution.

It was a sign that the antagonisms of society had reached their highest pre-revolutionary tension, unbearable even for the classes of

the old society which Trotsky called the "rank-and-file nobility". The forces were now maturing that would, ten weeks later, sweep away the Czar and all his court for good. Prices were rising by leaps and bounds. Shortages cut down consumption by a half.

"In October the struggle enters its decisive phase, uniting all forms of discontent in one. Petrograd draws back for the February leap. A wave of meetings runs through the factories. The topics: food supplies, high cost of living, war, government. Bolshevik leaflets are distributed; political strikes begin; improvised demonstrations occur at factory gates; cases of fraternisation between certain factories and the soldiers are observed; a stormy protest-strike flares up over the trial of the revolutionary sailors of the Baltic Fleet."

The Government refused to give concessions and abolished the Duma. It proposed a government of autocrats, martial law in Petrograd and Moscow, and preparation of forces to put down the rebellion.

GENERAL STRIKE

The slogan of the general strike was reviving, the first two months of 1917 showing 575,000 workers out on political strikes. On January 9th, the anniversary of the march on the Winter Palace, 150,000 struck in Petrograd.

Workers felt no retreat was possible, organisation was forming, most often around the Bolsheviks, in the factories. Strikes and meetings went on throughout the first two weeks of February.

On the 16th bread cards were introduced in Petrograd, but the powder had been lit and on the 19th crowds gathered round the food shops, demanding bread. Next day bakeries were sacked all over the city. This was the lightning of the revolutionary storm.

WRP MYTH EXPOSED

One of the most recent myths created by the Workers Revolutionary Party leadership is that wartime Trotskyists entered Joint Production Committees. They put this forward as part of their argument as to why Trotskyists today should enter class collaborationist "participation" committees.

For instance *Workers Press* of January 9th tells us:

"The position of White [leading WRP member who entered the class collaborating Ryder committees in British Leyland] on this issue is no different from Trotskyists in the second world war who participated in Joint Production Committees where they were nominated by their members, in order to expose them".

It is no surprise that WRP General Secretary G. Healy should wish to find cover for their latest opportunist policies. But that he should do so by inventing tales about the history of Trotskyism is another matter.

The war-time Trotskyists were so far removed from the class collaboration represented by today's Ryder plan that they were slandered as "traitors" and "Nazis" by the arch-collaborators - the Communist Party. And it was the CP who were the prime movers behind the Joint Production Committees.

The CP campaigned vigorously for these in *New Propellor*, the organ of the CP-dominated Engineering and Allied Trades Shop Stewards National Council. (The paper was, along with the *Daily Worker* and the *Sunday Dispatch*, the most vehement in denouncing Trotskyists as 'nazis'.)

The object of these committees was of course speed-up, rate-cutting and discipline. In the shipyards, for instance, the committees were first set up to deal with the 'problem' of absenteeism (for which during the war workers could be imprisoned).

The hated Essential Works Order - an anti-labour law - demanded that absenteeism be dealt with by these JPCs! This function was, of course, bitterly opposed and

relieved of it.

Indeed, as Court, the official historian of the Coal Industry tells us:

"The miners were not prepared to relax their hostility"

This hostility was shared by the Trotskyist movement. They recognised the truth of the statement by ICI Chairman Lord McGowen in 1941, who expressed open cynicism:

"Though there was a risk of their (JPCs) getting into the hands of extremists, his experience was that they moderated the extremist by giving him a place in the sun and at the same time weakened his influence amongst other workers, because they were taken into the confidence of management". (emphasis added).

The rapid plunge of the WRP's Tom White to the right wing bears out completely Lord McGowen's assessment. The wartime Trotskyists for just these reasons opposed the JPCs.

The British Trotskyist movement at this time was split into two sections, the Revolutionary Socialist League and the Workers International League. The latter, around Haston, Ted Grant, Tearse and Healy, published a paper *Socialist Appeal*. (The two organisations merged in 1944 to form the Revolutionary Communist Party). It was the WIL, of which Healy was Industrial Organiser, which was the most active in its campaign against the JPCs.

This correctly upheld the need for the class struggle to continue during war time. In the early days the main slogan of the WIL and RSL was "THE MAIN ENEMY IS AT HOME!", and Trotskyists became the only labour movement tendency to support strikes against speed up and the slashing of living standards.

Healy in October 1942 wrote attacking the CP for its role in speed-up and rate-cutting:

"Today British industry is in a chaotic condition. The workers know full well that the owners are the responsible people. This is a natural result of the fact that they are not gearing up industry with the

successfully the war of capitalist competition. . . These are their war aims and that is why the drive against the workers to lower conditions and keep down wages is a more urgent concern to them than any national interest. These are the real saboteurs of production and they now have a very good ally in the CP with its parrot cry to the workers to sacrifice everything to production and the Second

(*Socialist Appeal*, October 1942).

So, as any study of their press shows, the position of the WIL was absolutely clear on these questions. They stood for total opposition to the Joint Production Committees, attacked the CP for its support for them, and showed how support for them was in the interests of capitalist profits and led to wage cutting, the worsening of conditions and more repressive legislation.

Indeed, nowhere in the pages of *Socialist Appeal* during the war years is there one single mention of 'entering' these committees in order to 'expose' them - such a move was the opposite of the WIL's whole line.

Healy knows this full well. In the issues of *Socialist Appeal* in which our quotations appear, there are also articles by Healy himself as Industrial Organiser. In January 1943 a picture of Healy accompanies a WIL programme for industrial militants within which the only mention of production is to criticise the CP for rate-cutting activities. And a resolution, passed at the WIL annual conference in 1943 refers to:

"the failure of the Joint Production Committees to solve the problems of production except at the expense of the workers", and goes on to call for the necessity of ending the industrial

truce. We can say therefore that, unless Healy is to convince us that the WIL (in the same sneaky and underhand manner as today's WRP) published one policy in its paper while carrying out a completely different opportunist role in practice, that the story cooked up to justify their entry into "worker

IMG: Permanent Liquidation

There is seldom light without heat. This is true of political struggles. And where dead wood is involved the heat is not infrequently accompanied by a good deal of smoke.

The series of articles currently appearing in *Red Weekly* (paper of the International Marxist Group, British section of the 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International' - 'USFI') which polemises against *Socialist Press* and the Workers Socialist League is a good example.

Red Weekly succeeds in visualising a whole series of issues that are of fundamental significance for the workers' movement.

These include such questions as the united front; the history of the post war Trotskyist movement; the nature of the Transitional Programme; and the relationship between organisational and political unity.

As though this were not enough also caricatures the political record of the WSL, accusing us of "tail-ending the working class"; of "sectarianism"; of accommodation to reformism; of "perpetuating organisational separation from the Fourth International" (ie the USFI); and (more generally) of "confusion": an entire catalogue of errors!

PATRONISING

The attacks against us are written in a tone of patronising obscurity and it is difficult to see why, if we were as guilty as *Red Weekly* supposes, they should be proposing to us as they do a "principled fusion" with the IMG and the USFI, - or even why they could think it important to polemise against such a miserable organisation as the WSL at all! *Red Weekly* makes great play over the supposed failure of the WSL to 'break from Healyism' after the expulsions from the WRP. But that does not seem to have occurred to the sages of the IMG leadership is that the essential question over which we fought the Healy leadership also lies at the very root of our differences with the IMG.

DEMANDS

Attention centred especially on those demands on pay and jobs - such as those for the sliding scale of wages, for work sharing without loss of pay, and for opening of company books - which directed to the organised working class, against the bureaucrats, left and right, and pointed towards organisations of workers control. The WSL has done this because this is where the key lies to the struggle for political leadership and fighting unity within the workers movement.

But the period of slightly over a year since the expulsions from the WRP, 'transitional demands' have now become the small coin of all sorts of political tendencies. Even the WRP leadership adopted many of the formal positions of the opposition while it was in the very act of expelling them, and from then on the pages of *Workers Press* were cynically and eclectically decorated with lists of 'transitional demands'.

CONFERENCE

And since then at conference after conference various 'left' speakers have put up this or that argument of the Transitional Programme - usually abstracted from any overall political perspective, or proposals for making a real fight even on the immediate demands - as their own political nostrum.

And this process - which has certainly been driven on by the development of the class struggle itself, particularly the willingness of

sackings - is one of which the IMG, too, has been a part.

Scarcely an issue of *Red Weekly* now appears without several articles ending in a shopping list of such 'transitional demands'.

On occasion the IMG positively falls over itself in its new found enthusiasm for 'programme', as in the main resolution for the recent London conference on 'Women and the Cuts', which in two closely printed sides contained literally dozens of demands - but with scarcely any indication of how they were to be fought for, or by whom!

But the IMG has by no means been consistent, even in its own propaganda. Leading IMG members, and IMG militants in some areas, have opposed fighting for the demands of the Transitional Programme, on the grounds that they are 'ultimatic'.

KERNEL

Why, then, does the IMG leadership feel driven to launch its political criticisms against the WSL? The kernel of the answer is found in the first article in *Red Weekly* (*The WSL and the Fight for Unity in Action*, February 12th), where we are reproached for not immersing ourselves in initiatives (whose main slogans we emphatically support) such as Troops Out Movement (TOM) and the National Abortion Campaign (NAC).

Blithely passing over the main body of work of the WSL in the organised working class ("On much of its work in the unions we have no wish to disparage the WSL."), *Red Weekly* hastens on to accuse us of 'sectarianism' for our refusal (to which we emphatically adhere) to entangle ourselves in the interminable manoeuvres and wheelings-and-dealings of such committees.

To believe the IMG the very centre of politics and the class struggle is to be found in such formations.

Not only that, but having passed over the whole body of the trade union movement with a phrase, the sleight of hand is then embellished with a 'theoretical' formula. They inform us that this sort of activity is part of the application of the 'united front' tactic.

This is a completely spurious claim. Neither the NAC nor TOM is a working class united front. In the main they are made up of radicalised individuals and revolutionary left organisations, decorated with a few bureaucrats who have sniffed the wind.

The IMG seeks to justify their position by citing certain formulations by Lenin and Trotsky which correctly point out that a united front cannot by-pass the labour bureaucrats. But this does not at all mean that limited unity with certain bureaucrats of itself makes for a united front.

The essential ingredient is the involvement of the masses, for the purpose of breaking them from the bureaucracy in action and winning forces to revolutionary policies.

Sharing a platform with bureaucrats is the price revolutionaries must sometimes pay for unity in action with the vanguard of the working class - but if this platform itself 'by-passes' the working class (as the bureaucrats themselves fervently desire), then the practice becomes pure tribute-money to the labour fakers, and nothing can be more dangerous than to disguise this with idle chatter about the 'united front tactic'.

EXPULSIONS

Healy moved to mass expulsions of the WRP opposition at the point where we insisted on a turn into the body of the working class, on policies which could really come to grips with the struggle for leadership and defeat the bureaucrats - especially within the unions - instead of 'left', propaganda phrase-mongering from the sidelines.

the class.

The form is different, but the content the same. Behind all the palaver over ersatz "united fronts", "sectarianism" and so on, there is an inner identity between the recent liquidationist course of the WRP and the Pabloite politics of the IMG.

Healy dissolved the WRP into election campaigns, crippling the daily paper that had been built over years. The IMG exists in a state of permanent liquidation, not as a whole, but in its several factions.

Red Weekly accuses us of "tail-ending" the working class, and even (laughably) of spreading the illusion that the left MPs can take state power.

But meanwhile, back at the ranch, IMG delegates at the National Abortion Campaign conference split three ways in public on what the central slogan of the campaign should be! And every slightest left shift of the Stalinists is greeted by the IMG as good coin and a real step forward. Seriously, with 'heads' like these who needs 'tails'?

This dissolving of political leadership is reflected also in the evolution of one of the key concepts of the present IMG leadership and of the Majority Tendency



Hold it, chaps -

wait for our united front!

within the USFI of which they form a part - the concept of the "new mass vanguard".

This first came to prominence in 1972-3, to describe an "advanced" minority within the European working classes which had allegedly broken free of the political influence of Stalinism and reformism.

It served, in effect, as justification for political work which sidestepped the struggle with the reformist conceptions of advanced workers - by claiming that an important section of the working class could exist in a sort of political vacuum.

Now, three years later, this particular conception of the vanguard has been dropped and it is recognised (in the USFI majority's statement on Britain) that every serious struggle involves a definite break with reformism.

What now comes to the fore is a tactical "dialectic of unity and outflanking", whereby the IMG cadre is to demonstrate (in an 'exemplary' manner) that they are the best fighters in such struggles as left reformists and Stalinists will agree to support.

There has been no attempt to give a political accounting of this switch.

But, most important, what the latest tactic avoids is the self-evident fact that Stalinists and left reformists now stand as one to prevent any practical struggle taking place which might endanger Wilson.

BLOWS

Far from it being necessary to

possible to deal blows at the Stalinists and 'lefts', the opposite is the general rule - even to start a real struggle requires their defeat!

This is, for example, very clearly the case in the fight to defeat the Ryder 'participation', rationalisation and speed-up schemes in British Leyland - the very centre-piece of Wilson's industrial strategy.

In British Leyland's Cowley plants the building of a principled mass opposition to Ryder has required, above all, a systematic fight against Stalinist and 'left' plans to smuggle 'participation' in behind workers' backs.

In this fight the IMG has stood with the WSL. We are in no way cynical about this unity. It goes together, for example, with the excellent and prompt response in *Red Weekly* to our call for an inquiry into TGWU election practices by the right-wing in Cowley and the Midlands.

In this way we have struck real - not propaganda - blows against the employers' and Government offensive. But we ask that the IMG cadre should draw the real lessons of our common struggle. We at no point tried to 'outflank' the reformists and Stalinists - we could go forward only by fighting them head-on.

These concrete lessons on the relationship between a revolutionary organisation and the bureaucracy are also central to the issues at stake when *Red Weekly* calls on the WSL to abandon its 'shibboleths' and fuse with the USFI and the IMG.

MANGLING

This position is bolstered by a) a total mangling of the historical significance of Lenin's struggle for Bolshevism against the Mensheviks and conciliators of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party from 1903 (*Red Weekly* 26th. February and 4th. March) and b) an equally false characterisation of the 1953 split in the world Trotskyist movement.

Our positions on the split in the world Trotskyist movement are set out in our perspectives document 'Fourth International - Problems and Tasks' (in *Trotskyism Today*, supplement to *Socialist Press*, Nos. 21-23), and a future article will answer specifically the positions of the IMG on this, and on the continuity between Lenin's struggle for the Bolshevik Party and the Third International, and the fight today for the programme and party of the Fourth International.

But it is essential here to put the record straight on Lenin's view of the Party. The *Red Weekly* articles put the line that because the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks both existed as factions

of the RSDLP up to the Prague conference of 1912 and the split then took place because the Mensheviks violated discipline, there was some sort of real party unity in the period 1903-1912.

seems to be saying 'if Lenin and the Mensheviks could be members of the same party for a decade, shouldn't the WSL and the IMG combine today?' - though they diplomatically steer clear of who corresponds to whom!

This view is justified by snippets from Lenin's writings in the course of the faction battles with the Mensheviks (and of Trotsky's writings against Stalinism, and later against revisionism in the Fourth International).

the real results of his struggle in 1920, after the party he had built had accomplished the October revolution:

As a current of political thought and as a political party, Bolshevism has existed since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the entire period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it has been able to build up and maintain, under most difficult conditions, the iron discipline needed for a victory of the proletariat.

The first questions to arise are: how is the discipline of the proletariat's revolutionary party maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? First, by the class-consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its tenacity, self-

sacrifice and heroism. Second, by its ability to link up, maintain the closest contact, and - if you wish - merge in certain measure, with the broadest masses of the working people - primarily with the proletariat, but also with the non-proletarian masses of working people. Third, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided the broad masses have seen, from their own experience, that they are correct. Without these conditions, discipline in a revolutionary party really capable of being the party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved. Without these conditions, all attempts to establish discipline inevitably fall flat and end up in phrase-mongering and clowning." (Lenin: *Selected Works*, vol 3, 'Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder' p 352; notice that Lenin is mainly arguing against abstract sectarianism towards the Labour Party!)

It is in this spirit that the WSL takes up - internationally - the political struggle for the principled reconstruction of the Fourth International. We know that our record and our positions have produced important discussions and ferment within the USFI.

The WSL are not 'split merchants', we have no intention of drawing political lines a priori, before full discussion and struggle have been engaged. But at the same time we insist that the questions which split the world Trotskyist movement in 1951-53 will not be resolved without testing contending

BLACKWELL'S STRIKERS DEFEAT EMPLOYERS AND BUREAUCRATS

Since our last edition went to press we have received this more detailed account of the Blackwells strike by one of the pickets involved in the dispute. In view of the importance of the questions raised by the role of the bureaucracy in this victimisation fight, we have therefore included it in this edition.

At a time when capitalism requires the weakening of trade union organisation, the increasing attacks on wages and jobs create conditions for whole sections of workers to begin to organise for the first time.

The recent successful four-week strike at Blackwell's in Oxford reflects many aspects of the capitalist crisis and also the way in which the class collaboration of the trade union leaders nationally drive them to suppress all attempts by the working class to act in their own defence.

BATTLE

The fight for union organisation was a continual battle from the start, against the company on the one hand and the trade union bureaucracy on the other. At each point, the rich experiences which were made proved an important element in the struggle over union recognition.

The allocation of the membership initially to the branch of a leading T&GWU right-winger brought immediate conflict, as the branch had not met for six months - and then only did so on their insistence!

As union recruitment increased, a leading union organiser was victimised in the middle of 1974, and though only a dozen took strike action, the strike was short and entirely successful. This resulted in increased membership and the formation of a separate Blackwell's T&GWU branch at the beginning of 1975.

For six months before the latest

dispute there had developed increasing conflicts between union members and management in response to the company's offensive on working conditions.

This centred on time and motion studies being implemented with no consultation or agreement, and it was as part of this resistance to the company's speed-up that the dispute arose.

Ted Heslin, a Branch Committee member and well known as a leading union organiser, had been subjected to persistent harassment over a considerable period, mainly on trivial issues, but also on his principled opposition to work study in his own section. Throughout this, he had insisted on being dealt with on a trade union basis with union representation, which the company had refused to recognise formally.

The company eventually moved in with an ultimatum; either accept a move to an isolated section of the firm without union representation - or be sacked. The decision of the branch was to defend the principle of representation and challenge the company with strike action on that basis.

HISTORY

The branch leadership raised the issue with the local T&GWU officials, Thompson and Buckle, bureaucrats whose history of opposition to principled trade unionism in Cowley goes back more than a decade.

Thompson pledged full support for the action and confirmed this with Regional Office. Feeling certain of official backing, when the company refused to concede representation and Ted Heslin was



One of the mass pickets staged outside Blackwells main shop.

sacked, more than 70 took strike action.

But at a meeting the following day between Thompson and management, it became clear that the officials had prepared a sell-out. The Picket Committee was told that the "union" had agreed on an immediate return to work and the question of Ted Heslin's re-employment and union recognition should be referred to ACAS for arbitration.

Despite the strongest objections, Thompson, refusing to leave his office and visit the picket line, demanded a meeting of the strikers, at his office where they would be instructed to go back.

CAMPAIGN

A recommendation that these proposals be rejected was carried by the picketing strikers and a campaign was begun to raise support for the struggle in the local trade union and student movement, demanding the strike be made official.

Following support from Oxford Trades Council and many local branches, particularly BLMC Service T&GWU 5/55, students at Ruskin and Balliol Colleges voted to hand over their facilities to the strikers, who had been maintaining pickets from early morning throughout the day under arduous conditions outside Blackwell's main premises.

Daily statements were prepared for the 600 people still working

which carried details of the dispute. Mass pickets were organised and support began to grow nationally.

With the fight directed back into the local union leadership, their position was forced to change to the extent that after three weeks the strike was declared official, at which the company agreed re-employment and shop steward recognition.

The experiences gained during

this fight provide a strong basis for the inevitable struggles to come. A further gain from the dispute was the strong links established between students and trade unionists.

The Blackwell's T&GWU 5/833 branch is for this reason sponsoring the establishment of a delegate student-trade union committee from which programmes of joint action can be fought for in the town.

20 000 STUDENTS MARCH

"Fair Grants Now!" roared 20,000 college and university students on the march from Waterloo to Hyde Park on Friday, February 27th.

We agree. The £100m to be hacked away by Healey's axe over the next 3 years put education at the top of Labour's list of targets.

In higher education, not only would grant levels slide, but facilities would be allowed to run down, and jobs, of every kind, will be under constant "scrutiny" if the cuts go through.

But what do the student leaders propose? The Stalinist "Broad Left" who dominate the NUS Executive spoke to the marchers of "priorities": education is "more important", they say.

More important than what? Medical care? Public transport? Housing? Social services? Pensions?

In the current situation all such talk is reactionary and vicious.

It is no accident that the Broad Left now stoops to signing joint appeals with the Confederation of Conservative Students, for on these matters there is no fundamental hostility between them. But there is no way out down this road.

We say to students: your fight must be alongside workers in education and on a socialist programme.

* for a rising scale of grants and wages to offset the inroads of inflation, as determined by elected committees of the students and trade unionists.

* Not one job less
* Not one place less
* For increases in educational expenditure
* To maintain and improve all facilities!

"RIGHT TO WORK" - LETTER AND REPLY

Dear Comrades,

In the 28th Jan. issue you attack the Right to Work Campaign, which you allege is a purely IS campaign, on the grounds that it has no programme other than the vague slogan "fight for the right to work", and because it is based on 'the diversionary politics of "rank and file" or "right to work" committees which direct unemployed workers and youth away from the trade unions'. Instead of the Right to Work Campaign you advocate Trades Council unemployment sub-committees.

Inside the same issue, you report that as a result of WSL Hull Trades Council has adopted what you call a "fighting programme" on unemployment. Two of the four demands which you single out as particularly important, are calls for a general ban on overtime, and that trade unions must have a veto on hiring, firing and the control of manning levels.

The truth is, however, that these demands were proposed by members of the International Socialists through their trade union branches; and furthermore, that these points are taken directly from the programme of ... the Right to Work Campaign!

Your allegation that the RTWC is "diversionary" can now be seen for what it is, a sectarian excuse for not fully participating in an important initiative on the unemployment question, an initiative which, as you must know,

is directed towards the labour movement, and in no way opposed to any initiatives by the Trades Councils or any other official body.

The need for rank and file organisation has been clearly demonstrated, however, by subsequent developments on the Hull Trades Council.

Your article failed to point out that a programme by itself is just a piece of paper; it needs active organisation to give it any meaning, and the bureaucracy of the trade union movement will do its utmost to prevent this.

This is what has happened in Hull, where the Trades Council leadership and TGWU officials have blocked even the circulation of the newly-adopted policy to affiliated branches!

Meanwhile, the Hull Right to Work Committee has mobilised unemployed workers for local action. And far from diverting the unemployed from the trade unions, the unemployed workers in the Committee will soon be banging on the doors of the Trades Council and asking them when they will stop talking about unemployment and do something about it.

WSL members would be better off working in their local Right to Work Committees and getting trade union support for them, than engaging in artificial criticism of the International Socialists.

Yours fraternally,

Martin Shaw.

Hull I.S. (Trades Council delegate)

REPLY

In reply to Comrade Shaw's letter we should like to consider some aspects of the activities of the International Socialists in and around the Hull Trades Council.

Firstly, we do not have to make "artificial criticism" of the International Socialists, because it is what they have actually done in this area that exposes their lack of principles.

The Right to Work Campaign is for the IS a stunt and an adventurous diversion from carrying out a political struggle for a leadership that will challenge the hold of the bureaucracy and mobilise the trade unions in defence of workers jobs and wages.

To avoid such a fight they advocate instead 'ad hoc' bodies with no real base in the actual rank and file membership of the trade unions.

When our comrades on Hull Trades Council began a campaign for the setting up of an unemployment sub-committee last summer the IS delegates to Trades Council attempted to prevent this and urged Trades Council instead to affiliate to the local Right to Work Committee, which at the time had no policy or programme.

This sort of unprincipled stand has been largely responsible for

allowing the right wing dominated Executive to drag its feet over the unemployment issue.

Whilst our comrades have fought consistently in their union branches for socialist policies to combat unemployment the local IS [thinly disguised as the Right to Work Committee] have been content to engage in stunt activities such as their recent occupation of the local 'Jobs Centre'. As if Hull workers had to be reminded that 15,000 of them can't find jobs and that every week hundreds more face redundancy!

Instead of waiting patiently until unemployed workers "bang on the doors of Trades Council" what is needed is a principled campaign now against the union bureaucracy for a socialist programme based on transitional demands which will defend workers living standards and end unemployment.

Before the IS can be taken seriously by the labour movement in Hull they could be well advised to discontinue a method of work which allows them to write letters to the Hull Daily Mail condemning the Trades Council' President's use of the same capitalist newspaper to attack "left wing extremists planning to take over Trades Council"!

WSL members, on the other hand, fought for Trade Union branch motions condemning the President's press statement and one in particular from 10/76A T&GWU branch calling for Trades Council to

condemn the press statement, was carried with a large majority at the last Trades Council full meeting on February 26th.

At the same meeting major amendments to Trades Council's twelve points on unemployment were called for from the regional committees of several unions, but all these amendments were defeated.

This was a victory for those who had fought for the original programme, but this programme can only have any meaning if it is taken back into the trade unions and fought for.

This means a determined fight against the bureaucracy and not an attempt to deny its existence and influence - otherwise the programme will become "just a piece of paper". The WSL's emphasis is continually on the fight to carry out policies - not simply talking abstract demands.

It will be interesting to see whether the IS delegates will carry out such a struggle for the Trades Council programme they claim to be largely responsible for - or whether they will continue to cling to their illusions in the vague catch-all policies of the Hull Right to Work Committee.

Judging by past performance, we would doubt whether they are able to break away from non-political protest, to seriously mobilise the working class.

Jeff Fowler,

On behalf of Hull Branch WSL.

SUSPICIOUS SILENCE

T&GWU BUREAUCRACY SILENT IN FACE OF BALLOT COMPLAINTS

The Region 5 Committee of the T&GWU still has not even replied to detailed complaints on the recent electoral practices of the 5/60 (BLMC Cowley Body Plant) leadership.

Both individual and branch complaints have been lodged, one coming from the 3,500-strong 5/293 Branch, listing violations of democratic procedure in the way the 5/60 Branch ran the regional ballot for General Executive, National Committee and Regional Committee.

In the election, the slate of extreme right wingers supported by the Oxford District bureaucracy all obtained suspicious and unaccountably

high votes, on the strength of which Cowley Body Plant Convenor, Bill Roche was elected to the General Executive, and unknown right winger Jack Adams from MG Abingdon elected to the Regional Committee.

The complete silence from the T&GWU bureaucracy presumably means they cannot answer the serious complaints posed, which included the fact that Roche, a major candidate in the election, had for two days the uncounted ballot papers, together with the unused ballot papers, locked in his private office, to which he had the key!

The WSL welcomes the support which has come forward in both *Red Weekly* and now in *Socialist Worker* for the demand

for a full union enquiry into these gross abuses of trade union democracy by the appointed officials of the T&GWU and their hangers-on.

The bureaucracy must not be allowed simply to brush aside legitimate complaints and protests of the membership. The time has come to clean up the T&GWU and expose the manipulations on which Jack Jones bases his wage-cutting initiatives.

Footnote

The following resolution was passed at the Warwick 5/504 Branch TGWU on 3rd March:

"This 5/504 branch of the TGWU regards the action of No. 5 Regional Committee in relation to the two recent elections held in No. 5 Region for General Executive Council, Regional Committee and National Committee positions as undemocratic and contemptuous of the membership. Despite clear indications that votes returned in the first ballot were impossible in terms of votes cast, and despite calls from 5/293 and 5/55 branches (who represent 5,000 members) for a full enquiry, the Regional Committee simply declared the vote invalid and proceeded with a new ballot. Similar grave doubts have arisen over the results of this vote and the way it was conducted, and similar calls for an enquiry have been ignored.

Therefore this branch calls upon the National Executive to immediately organise an enquiry into these two ballots, and the way the Regional Committee handled them; and further resolves that in order to prevent re-occurrence of this situation:

1. Secret ballots, which are open to manipulation and prevent full discussion by the membership of candidates involved, should be ended and all votes be held in branch meetings.
2. All candidates be given equal rights to speak to all branches concerned.
3. In the case of ballots occurring scrutineers be elected by the membership, and the voting figures and procedures be open to inspection to members at any time; and that the Regional Committee follow the three procedures listed above when organising elections.

Passed 3.3.76 Warwick 5/504 TGWU

SOCIALIST PRESS £500 Monthly Development FUND

Our £500 Fund is still vital to continue the work of the paper.

Please send all donations to:
31, Dartmouth Park Hill,
London NW5 1HR.



Goodbye living standards - and trade union democracy! Jack Jones, architect of the pay laws and centre point of the huge unelected bureaucracy which runs T&GWU.

WRP Crisis

The demise of the 'Workers Press' on 14th February is not, it seems, to be an end to the sectarianism and liquidationism of the WRP leadership.

This is the only conclusion that can be drawn from the mysteriously produced *News Digest* they are now bringing out. The world is told to 'wait and see'. We assume from this that the *Workers Press* will reappear in some form.

For our part, we are all glad of it. It will enable us to study the wits and turns which emerge in the politics of the WRP. But we can only hope that by then they will have found some political explanation of the difficulties they are now facing.

The frenzied and disgusting charges against every political opponent of being an agent of capitalism, or at the very least an agent of an agent of an agent, have been just one facet of the treatment of the WRP from political principle of any kind.

Such charges presumably are considered to remove the need for discussion.

But, this attitude leads a stage

further, to what might be described as an Alice in Wonderland theory of infallibility.

Thus in reply to a question at his Manchester public meeting, Stephen Johns, formerly on the editorial board, said the collapse of *Workers Press* was a 'step forward' for the movement, though he had omitted to mention this 'step forward' in his preliminary speech to the meeting! Johns did not account for why £35,000 had been extracted from members to preserve a paper whose liquidation was a 'step forward'!

This degeneration has gone alongside an increasing opposition to any form of political discussion within the workers movement. Thus it has become routine for members of other political tendencies to be physically excluded from 'public' meetings of the WRP.

Members of the WSL, the IMG and the ex-Workers Fight have been treated in this way.

Leaflets have been 'confiscated' by moral policeman Banda; people seen talking to WSL members have been thrown out of meetings; caretakers have been told to threaten to call the police on paper sellers.

ATTACKS

These brazen attacks on democratic rights must not be allowed to continue. There are historical precedents for some of these practices in the Stalinist movement, but there are none whatever within Trotskyism.

We demand an explanation from the leaders of the WRP for their conduct on these questions. Where do they stand on the right to discussion within the workers' movement, which they continually undermine, even by use of the capitalist state and its police force?

It is a scandal that a movement claiming to be Trotskyist can bring discredit to the entire movement by such practices. The WSL will fight to bring this to an end.

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

CLASSES ON
MARXISM
LIVERPOOL

Wednesday, 17th March
AUEW Hall,
Mount Pleasant

OXFORD

Every Sunday, 8.00pm.
Lake St Community Centre
SUNDAY, 14th March:
The Boom Years, 1951-64"
SUNDAY, 21st March:
The 1964-70 Labour
Government"

DEMONSTRATION OXFORD

Saturday, 13th March
Trades Council
Demonstration
AGAINST PUBLIC
SPENDING CUTS!
Assemble Cowley Rd.
Hospital, 10.30 am. March
St Giles at 11.00am.
Bring your banners!

LETTERS

We welcome letters from readers, whether critical or with additional information on matters raised in these pages. Letters for publication should be kept as brief as possible.

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

Publication Fund

With the first book of a series of planned publications coming out next week, we are calling on our readers, members and supporters to help us carry through our schedule, by giving generously to our £500 Publications Fund. This Fund, to be completed by May Day, will provide the additional cash and resources needed to begin work on further books and pamphlets.

First response to our Fund, which opened last edition, has been extremely encouraging. To date we have received: Oxford (Meetings and classes) £30: Oxford (NHS Branch) £25: London (East) £15: Islington £10: London (South) £6: Midlands reader £3 Total So far: £89.00.

All donations should be sent to the WSL Publications Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

cont'd from front page

a question of who is to lead the labour movement.

But the TUC leaders have shown that they are no more willing than the 'left' MPs to lead a fight against Wilson and Healey's cynical and arrogant anti-working class policies.

Just the contrary, they give them every backing. Hugh Scanlon, once an "opponent" of the social contract said in Glasgow last week:

"We support the government completely and absolutely in its general strategy. We are not against the cuts in principle but against cuts in certain directions."

Scanlon, like the rest of the TUC leaders, accepts the government's argument that the worker's right to a job is entirely secondary to the capitalist's "right" to profits.

The cuts in public spending, like the wage restrictions are designed to give top priority to capitalists' profit.

PAY LAWS

And while Scanlon campaigns for the cuts, Jack Jones has continued his pleas for further reductions in pay through state wage control.

Healey, of course, has welcomed this and hinted that the legal limit planned for the next year is an increase of about £2 a week or 3 per cent!

These consistent anti-working class positions of the trade union and Labour Party leaders are producing a wave of revolt throughout the labour movement.

As the collaboration of the leaders with the capitalists becomes more naked, so the anger of the rank and file is growing. For instance, last week's T&GWU executive meeting received anti-cuts resolutions from several Regions.

Jones managed to postpone discussion of them until after the budget in the utterly forlorn hope that a bit of "reflation" will temper the opposition to the cuts.

But there is little chance that the leadership can for long hold down the upsurge of opposition.

The cuts have already provoked numerous resolutions in trade union and Labour Party branches rejecting the Wilson-Healey policies.

They have also given a boost to the growth of local anti-cuts committees formed from organisations of the labour movement.

The WSL supports such committees and fights for them to become sources of active opposition to the Wilson-Healey government and its policies.

We fight for the anti-cuts committees and for Trades Councils to take up a relevant programme of demands which include:

- Opposition to all cuts; no discussion of 'priorities'.
- A sliding scale of public spending.
- A programme of extra public works to be allocated to nationalised industries to cut unemployment.
- Open the books of all public authorities as a prelude to:
- Local programmes of public spending under the control of elected trade union committees, and the nationalisation of construction and supply industries.
- In addition to this we continue to support the demand for a recalled Labour Party Conference - not to provide a forum for a polite debate, but as a means to expel the anti-working class Wilson-Healey leadership and to further the struggle for a socialist leadership in the labour movement.

OUT NEXT WEEK!

THE BATTLE FOR TROTSKYISM

As the first of a series of publications to be produced by the WSL over the next few months *The Battle For Trotskyism* represents an important development for our movement.

This 170 page book contains the two documents - *Correct the Wrong Positions of the Party: Return to the Transitional Programme*, and the *Second Document on Party Policy and Perspective* - submitted by Alan Thornett for discussion in the WRP prior to his expulsion, along with 200 other comrades, by the Healy leadership.

The book also contains, published for the first time, a detailed political account of the struggle within the WRP. It sets out to draw the political conclusions from Healy's sectarianism and subjective method, particularly as applied in the Cowley factories and his trade union work.

In addition, carried as appendices, are all the relevant documents and letters relating to the struggle and the expulsions including the WRP Control Commission Report through which the expulsions were carried out.

The price will be £1.00 plus 20p postage. Advance orders can be placed for delivery on publication. Orders should be sent to WSL, Dartmouth Park Hill, London, NW5 1HR.