

international COMMUNIST

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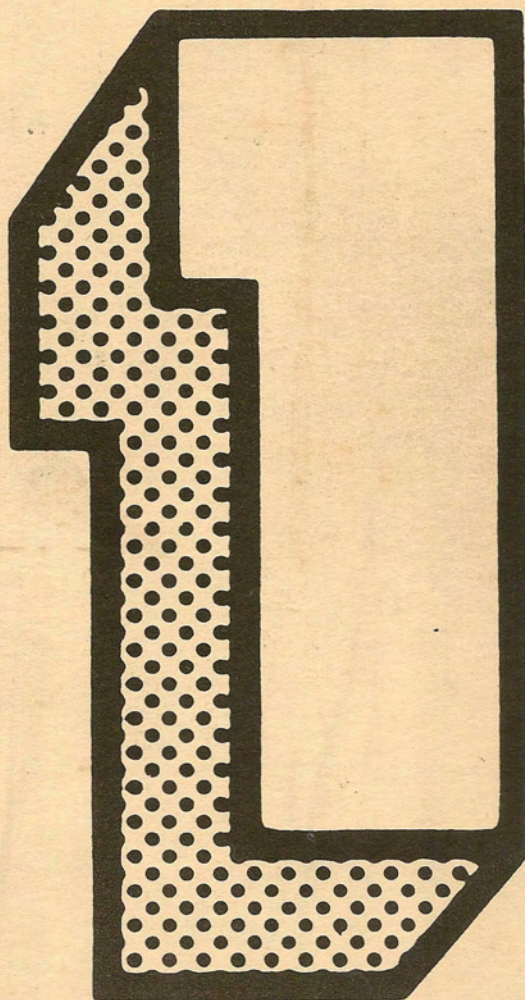
I-CL Fusion
Statement.

PORTUGAL

• PAY DEAL
REVIEWS.

june
76

30p





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“INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST”, incorporating Workers Fight, Permanent Revolution, and Workers Power, is the theoretical and discussion journal of the International-Communist League.

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All correspondence to “International Communist”, 98 Gifford St, London N1 0DF. Published by the I-CL at 98 Gifford St, London N1, and printed by voluntary labour.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the positions of the I-CL, which are presented in editorials, statements, resolutions, and unsigned articles.

EDITORIAL

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST is the journal of the International Communist League, which was formed in December 1975 as the result of a fusion between Workers Fight and Workers Power.

The WORKERS FIGHT group had existed since September 1967, publishing a monthly journal of that name until its fusion with the International Socialism group a year later. After keeping its identity in IS as an organised tendency (the Trotskyist Tendency) which published in IS a number of critical pamphlets (eg 'IS and Ireland', 'IS and the Common Market'), it was expelled in December 1971 and went on to publish the newspaper 'Workers Fight' at first fortnightly, and from January 1974 weekly; and a theoretical magazine 'Permanent Revolution'.

The WORKERS POWER group started out as the Left Faction of IS; it was expelled from IS in October 1975, and published two issues of a magazine 'Workers Power' in November 1975.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST thus incorporates these publications and is the organ of the International Communist League.

The fusion took place at a time of serious setbacks to the working class, inflicted by the joint actions of the TUC and the Labour Government. Massive cuts in the welfare services, one and a half million unemployed, the "most successful Incomes Policy since the war" cutting real wages by up to 6%, have all been imposed against little resistance on the same movement which routed the Tory offensive between 1972 and 1974, causing the fall of the Heath Government.

With the TUC's acceptance of the 4½% pay ceiling, the ignominious retreat goes on. From Murray to Scanlon, from Healey to Benn, the leaders of the labour movement are determined to make the working class pay the price of British capitalism's chronic problems. Workers had to pay the price of the crisis. Now these gentlemen want us to pay for the 'recovery' and the massive re-structuring the bosses need to drive through so that they can engage in the cut-throat international competition of the late '70s.

Faced with the desertion of nearly all the Left leaders of the early '70s, the rank and file militants — the leaders at shopfloor level — are thrown into confusion. Among these militants there is an acute crisis of politics.

The policies which characterise the Communist Party — reliance on the Trade Union 'Lefts', of electoral pressure groups in the Unions, of limiting direct action to pushing the TUC leaders forward, the hope that a growing Tribune grouping in the Parliamentary Labour Party would mean

'left policies' from the government — are all increasingly seen to be bankrupt.

The defeat we have seen happened without a fight. It was the product of ideological confusion — and in turn, the defeat has sown its own crop of confusions. Chauvinism has ranged from the Left's disastrous involvement in the anti-EEC campaign last year and its present advocacy of import controls, through the Government's calls for National Regeneration and sacrifice, to the growing effects of racialism in isolating scapegoats for unemployment, bad housing and slashed social services. Participation schemes have been foisted on sections of advanced workers to weaken shop organisation. Established patriarchal views of sex roles are increasingly cited as women, bearing the brunt of the cuts, have been forced back into domesticity; in the workplaces, they are often pressured into volunteering for the first redundancies.

Engels pointed out that the class struggle takes place not only on the fronts of trade unionism and politics, but also on the front of ideology. Revolutionaries cannot ignore this front on pain of being outflanked. The traditional ideology of a given society, organised through the schools, the family, churches and newspapers — whether expressed in the crudest homespun 'truisms' or in the subtlest philosophical tract — is a 'material' force binding the masses to the ruling class, in cementing the crevices of conflicting interest. The ruling class's intellectual monopoly is an irreplaceable weapon in its continual struggle to keep the masses in subjection, to deprive them of the consciousness necessary to take advantage of their numbers and rise up to put an end to their oppression.

Some classes, in their struggle to end the old order, can manage without clear goals. The bourgeoisie, when it came to clear out the feudalists, already had a large measure of economic power, of accumulated wealth, of independent culture and powerful connections. It could afford to blunder and grope its way empirically to full control.

But the working class remains in slavery right up to the day it takes power. It can only free itself economically and master the means of production by first taking power politically. Because of the intricacy of its tasks and the number of obstacles in its path — and its lack of wealth, culture or leisure under capitalism — the initial struggle for workers' power is a struggle against all forms of bourgeois ideology, and for the scientific proletarian world outlook — Marxism.

The working class under capitalism, without its own independent culture, is not a blank page. Inevitably it is influenced by the ideas of the ruling class. The British Labour Party demonstrates this: 70 years of 'successful' political activity, on the basis of bourgeois ideas and conceptions, of socialist aspirations without clarity on the nature of the state and capitalist society in general, mixed in with patriotism, gradualism and Christianity, have resulted in ... the present Labour Government. That is, the main instrument of entrenched capitalism in controlling the working class and canalising its aspirations against its own interest.

working class and canalising its aspirations against its own interest. The present wage-cutting Labour Government is the direct result of a working class victory in direct action against the Tories.

The British working class, through a peculiar combination of histor-

ical circumstances, was utterly defeated ideologically — and this has conditioned everything else.

By contrast, the real groundwork of Bolshevism was the merciless battle for Marxist theoretical clarity waged by Lenin from the first days, on this foundation building the actual party structure as a living organic unit combining the different aspects of the class struggle in a strategy of struggle for power.

The battle on this front, to break the hold of the ideas, methods of thinking and outlook which express and sanctify the interests of capitalism — this is the prerequisite of revolutionary politics. Where this foundation is lacking, no sharp revolutionary weapon of the working class will be forged, no Bolshevik combat party will be built. In the whole history of the labour movement those who were indifferent to revolutionary theory almost invariably wound up not only indifferent, but hostile, to revolutionary practice.

Our task therefore is to strive for that irreplaceable clarity of revolutionary thought, necessarily developed in war with the ideas of the enemy class and their reflections within the labour movement, which is essential to effective political action by the proletariat for its own programme — the conquest of power in society and its transformation towards communism.

These considerations show us what the role of INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST must be. The specifications are high ones, and it would be pretentious to claim that we as yet measure up to them. But for Marxists to formulate the demands placed upon us by the objective needs of our class is to announce our determination to live up to them. And we believe that our record of consistently principled struggle on the major issues confronting socialists and militants qualifies us to attempt this work.

The WORKERS FIGHT group has been consistent in its solidarity with the Irish struggle; it stood alone against the chauvinist tide of opposition to the Common Market; during the high point of the industrial struggle of 1972 it attempted to focus that militancy and draw out its political logic through raising and examining the question of the general strike and its implications; at the founding of the Rank & File movement (initiated by IS and now completely controlled by it) Workers Fight fought for the adoption of a detailed programme against racism in the workplace and trade unions, for a range of demands relating to women's oppression and super-exploitation, and for action on redundancies, on union democracy, on workers control and nationalisation, for international working class unity.

The WORKERS POWER grouping fought in IS against that group's cowardice and evasion on the Irish struggle; against IS's semi-syndicalist conception of trade union work and for an understanding of the method of the Transitional Programme and the need for a serious fight against reformism; for a Leninist conception of the function of a programme and a party; for an internationalist position on the Common Market; against the degeneration of IS's internal democracy.

How do the two major groups on the revolutionary left measure up to the political tasks that face us?

The IMG is an unstable bloc of about five distinct organisations or cliques, held together by a common worship of a fetish — the so-called "Fourth International" — which is a pretentious myth. In the last four years, the IMG has presented no coherent politics, its 'theory' reduced to the latest bright idea with no reference at all to current reality: when the working class nearly mounted a general strike to wipe out the Industrial Relations Act in July 1972, the IMG was buried in passive propaganda; two years later, quite inappropriately, they 'caught up with the general strike', advocating its use to see off the Tories right up to the day that workers were voting Heath out of Downing Street. Their view of the Labour Party as divided between working class, trade unionist lefts and a middle class right wing clique was just as unreal.

IS has been a centrist diversion which successfully inserted itself into many industrial struggles but negated its own work by boycotting its own nominal politics. (Abortion on Demand was a fine slogan when thousands of women were demonstrating for it last June, but was considered too 'extreme' for inclusion in the aims of the Rank & File Movement.) Believing that through sectional industrial militancy workers can spontaneously break with reformism, IS totally downgrade the importance of politics and ideology, changing positions casually with no explanation (as on the Common Market and the question of British troops in Ireland) to tune in with the needs or the audience of the moment. A bright and attractive 'shop-front' is all-important to the IS leaders.

Apart from cheap sneers and ignorant, philistine put-downs, IS's interest in politics doesn't extend to debate or polemic on its own or other groups' positions. Such polemic it regards as 'sectarianism'.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM repudiates all dogmatism and sectarianism. But we do not regard concern for precision and clarity of ideas as sectarianism. Our attitude to other groups and publications is one of seeking points of unity against the common enemy. But at the same time communist seriousness demands a clear and open discussion of issues and points of difference.

Among the urgent tasks posed for the ICL and its journal is the attempt to regroup the fragmented forces of the left: to do this, it is necessary to engage upon serious analysis and criticism of the politics that has led to this fragmentation. On the international arena, we stand for the ideological regeneration and organisational reconstruction of a communist International in the spirit of Lenin and Trotsky, and to this end polemic and debate on the various tendencies within Trotskyism on a world scale and in Britain will find a prominent place in the pages of our journal. We will publish special issues on the Fourth International and on the struggle for the Leninist Party, against the false conceptions prevalent in groups like the IS.

Our first issue presents the founding documents of the ICL, an analysis of the situation in Portugal, material on the Irish struggle and the tasks of revolutionaries in Britain, plus the start of a regular reviews feature.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM will carry the policy statements and resolutions of the ICL; but it wishes too to become a forum for serious debate and will open its pages to serious contributions from all sections of the left.

POLITICAL RESOLUTION OF THE I-C L FUSION

I: INTRODUCTION

This meeting hereby constitutes itself as the National Committee of the International-Communist League, a proletarian-revolutionary organisation formed by the fusion of the Workers Fight group, the Workers Power group, and a group of comrades from the Workers Revolutionary Party.

The League shall adopt the Constitution of Workers Fight, with such minor amendments as are obviously required by the context or explicitly indicated below.

The present resolution shall have the force of a Conference resolution until the first full Conference of the League, provisionally called for July 1976.

II: INTERNATIONALISM

The proletarian revolution in Britain is only one subordinate link in the chain of the world workers' revolution. The proletariat, the class which will create communism, is a world class; and capitalism is a world system which, especially in its imperialist phase, has drawn the world together, intermeshing it so that no single part is understandable without reference to the whole.

The communist programme is an INTERNATIONAL programme, or it is utopian. The national orientation of the proletariat must and can flow only from a world orientation, and not vice versa.

Our fight to build a revolutionary party in Britain is historically, therefore, only a subordinate part of the fight to build a proletarian-revolutionary International. The primary precondition for such an International is a developed international PROGRAMME. A

PROPAGANDA International — that is, one which as yet lacks mass national sections — can be valid and meaningful as the defender and advocate of such an international programme. We reject the centrist view promoted by IS, according to which an International can only be formed AFTER national mass parties are built.

Trotsky's Fourth International, declared in 1938 as just such a propaganda International, represented the healthy revolutionary-communist tendency which had survived — and which had fought against — the political liquidation by the Stalinist bureaucracy of the Communist International.

In the post-war period, the Fourth International movement suffered ideological erosion and disintegration. This arose essentially from a failure to come to terms adequately with the post-war revolutionary developments in Eastern Europe, China, etc. For Trotsky's dialectical materialism, there has been substituted a vulgar evolutionism, seeing the 'world revolution' as a mystical and pervasive 'process', acting behind or even in spite of the material class struggle. The disorientation is expressed in adaptationist politics, most seriously in evasion, or even treachery, on the anti-bureaucratic revolution in Yugoslavia, China, Cuba, Vietnam, etc.

To this general ideological disorientation, the 'anti-Pabloite' currents have added an extra element of poisonous confusion. They arbitrarily assign all the failings of the post-war Trotskyism movement to their factional opponents, the so-called 'Pabloites'. In actuality, the term 'Pabloism' has and can have no precise historical meaning, because there is hardly a single mistake, however grievous, that the 'anti-Pabloite' forces themselves, collectively or separately, have not committed, usually with that crassness which is peculiar to them.

To their incoherent and often lying denunciations, the 'anti-Pabloites' add loud proclamations of "the party" and "the programme" — as entirely NON-POLITICAL fetishes. By thus reducing their politics to RELIGION, they LIQUIDATE scientific Marxism in the most thorough way possible.

In this sense (and in this sense only) we consider the current represented today by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International to be the mainstream of post-war Trotskyism. It represents the most serious and sustained attempt to relate to the post-war problems. The 'anti-Pabloites' can offer only ideological left-overs from the USFI current's work, together with an obscurantism which is properly their own.

As for the 'state-capitalist' alternative to the mainstream 'Fourth Internationalist' position, the most substantial state-capitalist tendency, the Cliff group in Britain, abandoned basic Leninist conceptions of the Party and the International; moreover its 'state-capitalist' theory is certainly neither Marxist nor state-capitalist! (The internal logic of Cliff's description and analysis of the USSR, as opposed to the labels adhered to for reasons of dogmatism, is bureaucratic-collectivist).

Nevertheless, we do not consider the USFI to be a Marxist International — rather, a centrist obstacle to the building of such an International; and all the greater an obstacle for its pretence, bluff and self-glorification. We WELCOME the forthcoming split in the USFI,

believing that this disintegration of a rotten bloc will increase the possibilities for healthy dialogue and regroupment.

Immediately, we see our tasks as:

- a) building a communist-internationalist organisation in the British working class;
- b) contributing to dialogue, discussion and debate on an international scale, and, out of that, seeking to build international links with co-thinkers.

III: INTERNATIONALISM — THE EEC, IRELAND

International contacts, or international organisation, are meaningless without an effective fight for internationalist POLITICS in that section of the world working class among which we live.

The League rejects the pseudo-Marxist rationalisations used to justify opposing British entry into the EEC and campaigning for British withdrawal. Our basic position is, 'In or Out, the fight goes on'.

A crucial test of a revolutionary organisation operating in an imperialist country is its attitude to anti-imperialist revolts. Communist internationalism does not counterpose itself to the struggles of oppressed nations for self-determination. On the contrary, it recognises that the road to the real world-wide unity of the working people will not be over the protesting backs of the oppressed nations and peoples of the world, on tracks already laid down by brutal capitalism — but that it runs through a whole period of reconciliation, including freedom of separation, leading to a voluntary world federation of workers' states, and thence to the stateless United Communist world system.

Communists therefore defend, assist and promote to the best of our ability the national revolts of oppressed nations, while maintaining our political independence from all forms of nationalism (including the relatively progressive nationalism of oppressed nations). In particular, the League maintains a position of unconditional solidarity with the struggle of the Irish Republican and Socialist forces against the British Army, against the Six County state, and against the Loyalist organisations. We uphold their right to strike against the British state in Britain, while reserving the right to criticise their tactics and their politics. But we criticise only in such a way that such criticism does not cancel out, appear to cancel out, or overshadow our position of communist solidarity; and we will not make any criticism for the sole reason of currying favour with British workers.

IV: THE STALINIST STATES

The International-Communist League (as a majority position) characterises the USSR as a degenerated workers' state, and China, North Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, and the states of Eastern Europe as deformed workers' states.

From this characterisation we draw two conclusions:

- 1) Against imperialism, these states are to be defended, unconditionally (that is, irrespective of the policies of the ruling bureaucrac-

ies and against those policies).

2) We stand for a working class anti-bureaucratic revolution, which we characterise as a political revolution while recognising that it will have very serious 'social' effects.

What is the political revolution? An essential first qualification must be this: the degree of resistance by the bureaucracy and by the state machine will certainly vary from country to country, and the experience of Hungary in 1956 shows us that the ruling bureaucracy itself can fragment, sections of the ruling party going over to the proletarian revolutionaries. Allowing for such variations, then, the political revolution means:

- a) The smashing, through revolutionary direct action under the leadership of a revolutionary party, of the bureaucratic state apparatus, its dismantling and the assumption of direct power by the working class masses. History has provided ample proof that the form of political organisation specific to proletarian democracy is a network of workers' councils (soviets).

- b) The concomitant assumption of direct control in industry by the working class — control in which factory and area organisations will interact creatively with the central state power, and organise the economy according to a democratically arrived at, and democratically controlled and implemented, working class plan. In short, the seizure of control and administration of the means of production from the hands of the bureaucracy.

- c) The complete destruction of the bureaucracy as a social stratum by removing its material privileges, as well as destroying its totalitarian monopoly of control and power in society.

In any conflict, or apparent conflict, between defence against imperialism and the proletarian struggle against the bureaucracy, we believe in the primacy of the workers' struggle and the duty of revolutionaries to support them.

Further we unconditionally oppose the interference of the Russian army in the states of Eastern Europe. We support their right to untrammelled national independence, against the rapacious and repressive parasitism of the Russian Stalinist bureaucracy.

The League recognises the existence of a minority in its ranks adhering to a 'state capitalist' characterisation of the Stalinist states. These minority comrades, however, would defend the Stalinist states (other than the USSR) against imperialism on the grounds of national self-determination. In terms of practical conclusions, the point of difference is the defence of the USSR against imperialism.

Under democratic centralism, the organisation AS A WHOLE stands for the defence of the USSR, against the USA, NATO, etc. For the minority this does not mean that they argue for a view they do not hold, nor that they do not say to non-members that they hold a minority position. Such an interpretation of democratic centralism would be Stalinist, not Leninist. For the minority, it means that:

- a) Minority comrades have a right to announce that they hold a minority position and state it briefly in such a way that it is not PROPAGANDA against the majority line.

- b) They have a duty to explain to the best of their ability what

the organisation's position is, while saying that they disagree.

c) In any vote, as opposed to argument, they VOTE according to the majority line. In a voting situation — the quintessence of organisational deployment of forces under democratic centralism — the minority have the imperative duty to subordinate their opinion and vote for the majority line.

V: THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMME

The Second International had a diffuse structure united by no strategic, programmatic conception of the working class struggle. The "political" (Parliamentary) "struggle" was separated from the "trade union" struggle, and both were routinised. The Third International set out to weld the various fronts of the class struggle together according to the needs of a revolutionary strategy. The dominant idea of socialist consciousness of most Second Internationalists had been one of a gradual ripening in line with the ripening of capitalism. The idea that the class struggle takes place on the IDEOLOGICAL as well as on the economic and political fronts had little influence except among the Bolsheviks. Strict ideological clarification and self-determination, and an active struggle for communist consciousness, was to be the mark of the Communist International. The Second International had divided the minimum programme (reforms) from the 'maximum' programme (socialism); the Communist International, organising itself fundamentally at the point of production, proposed a TRANSITIONAL programme to link up with the DAILY struggles of the working class with the struggle to conquer power.

Today many 'Trotskyist' tendencies have in fact reverted to the level of the Second International. The International-Communist League upholds the revolutionary-strategic conception of a transitional programme — a programme which in its sum is a programme for workers' power, but which is broken down into a chain of inter-linking demands, and which, therefore, to the extent that the revolutionary organisation can connect those demands with the actual class struggle, can lead that struggle forward to revolutionary conclusions.

We defend the method and general approach of Trotsky's Transitional Programme of 1938. We also recognise that it cannot be applied mechanically as a collection of recipes for all time; that, on the contrary, Marxist politics requires a constant effort to seize what is new and specific in any situation.

We therefore reject IS's approach, effectively a minimum programme/maximum programme approach. We also reject the 'bible-thumping' approach of the Healyites and their various spin-offs and twins. They PROCLAIM the Transitional Programme INSTEAD OF using the method of the Transitional Programme. They 'use' the Transitional Programme propagandistically, in a maximalist way: which, in fact, given that transitional demands are not the full programme, leads to maximalist form and reformist content.

VI: UNITED FRONTS

United front activity along the lines of anti-fascist committees,

solidarity committees, etc, will generally be supported by the League. Revolutionary organisations can be of value to the working class only be seeking to develop the widest possible activity with the most precise, practical policies — not by proclaiming their own ORGANISATION to be "the alternative" and crying "join us".

In relation to united-front-type activity, the League will take into account the following main criteria: (a) that the political basis of the united front should relate to key practical tasks of the class struggle; (b) that the united front should mobilise serious forces, and not just be a talking-shop for left grouplets; (c) that under no circumstances can the League ever subordinate its independent politics to united fronts. United front tactics are either weapons of communist militancy, or snares and diversions which gut the activity of communists of its revolutionary content.

VII: INDUSTRIAL WORK

The central focus of the League's work is the workplaces and the trade unions. We orientate towards the rank and file, recognising the fundamental role of the labour bureaucracy as 'labour lieutenants of capital'.

As a major instrument of its work, the League will produce factory bulletins, carrying both information and agitation on factory issues and revolutionary political propaganda.

We work for a genuine mass national rank and file movement aiming to unite workers for militant policies, transform the unions, establish rank and file democratic control, and thus oust the bureaucracy. As part of this work we will promote rank and file caucuses in industries and workplaces. Within any such rank and file grouping we fight for communist politics and for communist leadership on the basis of our politics, raising the key elements of a transitional programme as they become tactically relevant, while avoiding any ultimatum or sectarianism.

It is the duty of all non-worker members of the League to involve themselves as closely as possible in the life and struggles of the working class, and to structure the rhythm of their lives accordingly. To this end, they will be assigned to work in labour organisations, in workers' districts, and with the industrial fractions of the League. Colonisation — the sending of comrades into carefully selected sections of industry (and geographical areas) — is a policy of the League. Comrades free and able to find jobs in important sections of industry will generally be expected to do so.

VIII: THE LABOUR PARTY

The International-Communist League characterises the Labour Party as a CAPITALIST party, while recognising that it has mass support from workers and organic links with the bedrock organisations of the working class, that is, the trade unions. The Labour Party is not a two-class party, nor are its left reformists a proletarian tendency. It can neither be ignored syndicalist-fashion, nor transformed into a revolutionary party.

It is a dual party, politically and tactically capitalist and sociologically working class. Not to recognise its overall, fundamental capital-

ist character is to fall into illusions in its potential for transformation. Not to recognise its organic sociological and organisational (and political, in the sense of reformism) roots in the working class, is to lose touch with the political reality of that class. Not to recognise the relation of both, is to miss the possibility of exploding the contradictions at the heart of Labourism.

The League does not confuse the ideological hold of the Labour Party with its organisational hold as expressed by individual membership in the wards. Nor do we confuse the labour MOVEMENT with the Labour PARTY. But we recognise that the Labour Party is the summation so far of the general political development of that movement, a crystallised 'summation' which is a self-perpetuating factor. We recognise that the Labour Party is an important organic part of the British labour movement as it exists, and no revolutionary change will take place in the broad labour movement without considerable upheavals in the Labour Party.

The Labour Party is — whether we like it or not — seen by the organised workers as one component — the parliamentary-political-reform component — of their struggle. Throughout the history of the Labour Party — bar some exceptional periods — revolutionaries have therefore sought to develop work inside the Labour Party.

Such work must be seen as a TACTIC, not a STRATEGY. Its guiding principle must be the idea that the direct struggle of the working class is primary, above any parliamentary or Labour Party considerations. That idea determines both the political CONTENT of such work — the revolutionary PROGRAMME must never be subordinated to the TACTIC — and the METHOD of work — always trying to turn the Labour Party OUTWARDS. Work in the Labour Party must not be seen as compartmentalised off from other work, as a matter of conducting internal Labour Party debates or pushing resolutions for conferences. Rather it must be done in the spirit of drawing Labour Party organisations out into the broader class struggle. If such work is to be done in this outward-looking way, rather than being focused on internal Labour Party terms of reference, it must include recruiting people to the LPYS and Labour Party, on the basis of a fight against the right and fake left. It must also include building activist, revolutionary-led LPYSs in areas where none existed beforehand.

IX: THE INDUSTRIAL STRUGGLE, THE LABOUR PARTY, AND THE PRESENT PERIOD

1967-70 saw the growth of trade union struggles against the Labour Government and a great flood of militants out of the Labour Party.

The tremendous industrial struggles, reaching a peak in 1972, did not, however, smash the hold of reformist politics, even over the vanguard of the class. Under the banner of "anti-Toryism", there was a revival of the credibility, and to a certain extent of the organisation, of the Labour Party. Most markedly, there has been a thorough healing of the 1969-70 rupture between the Labour Party leadership and the Trade Union bureaucracy. This development is not what we wished for or advocated — certainly not! — it is nevertheless

less a fact.

Faith in the eventual spontaneous politicisation of the industrial struggle served IS well in the period from 1968 to 1972. A recipe of 'more militancy' and 'hate the Tories' meant IS could stand as a pole of attraction. The effects of unemployment, inflation and a Labour Government made such a recipe increasingly inadequate. IS has not been able to cut with the grain again.

The period since the election of a Labour Government in February 1974, while it has meant a CERTAIN reduction in the possibilities of linking Labour Party organisations with direct anti-Government struggle, has also without doubt brought an increase in the level of internal ferment in the Labour Party. Newham North East is the best known signal of this.

The close alliance between the Labour Government and the top trade union leaders has meant a definite reduction in direct industrial struggle for the time being (though the basic combativity of the working class remains unbroken). Workers' attention has been turned more to questions of "the general administration of society". There is a revival of focus and attention on the Labour Party. Membership figures do show a partial increase.

The ability of the Labour Government and the Trade Union bureaucracy to serve capitalism well proves the ideological grip of reformism and the Labour Party on layers only recently focused on direct action. Our job is to change that situation. Only if we recognise where we are the contours of reality can we hope to do so — not otherwise.

The major current issues of the class struggle are unemployment and the cuts. While on these, as on all issues of the class struggle, direct action is our keynote, they are — it must be recognised — issues on which it is very difficult to win successes through sectional direct action. We see the strengthening of class-wide campaigns based on trade union branches, shop stewards committees, and Trades Councils, as priority work for the League. The development of class-wide alliances will inevitably — except in freak cases of highly concentrated and militant trade union activity — spill into (and even be threatened with takeover by) the existing 'classwide' organisation in the locality, the Labour Party.

Just because the issues relate to the OVERALL running of society, it is difficult for sectional action to come to grips with them. On unemployment, there is a tremendous record of struggles over the last few years, with occupations, etc, but a far lower rate of success than on wages struggles.

For these reasons, we — revolutionary Marxists — argue the inadequacy of "more militancy" and the vital need for a programme of transitional demands. SOME workers, also, will directly share our conclusions. A FEW will thread their way through the chaos of the revolutionary left and come straight into our ranks.

Greater numbers, however, while perhaps sympathising with a few or several of the transitional demands we put forward, will first see the need for "politics" in the terms in which politics is traditionally understood by the British working class — the Labour Party.

This need not — and probably will not — be expressed in a big flood of workers into the Labour Party wards. It may just be a matter of appealing to the local Labour MP, or to Benn, for support in a redundancy struggle (as with Meriden or Imperial Typewriters, Hull, or a host of others).

However, the general trend on this front is for more working class involvement (at however low a key) in and attention to the Labour Party. Most obviously, we can expect big fights round Labour councils on the cuts (and there are already some fights in progress).

It is probable (or at the least highly possible) that the £6 limit will blow up in the government's face within the year. This may lead to various results. It may lead to a sharp polarisation between trade union militancy and the Labour Party, on the 1969-70 model. Or it may lead to sharp polarisations INSIDE the Labour Party (thus probably INCREASING working class involvement in the Labour Party).

It is necessary to be prepared for BOTH alternatives: but, most of all, to recognise that, while we can speculate about future events, we can ACT only in present-day events.

X: WOMEN'S LIBERATION

The League participates in and works to build the women's liberation movement. We recognise the struggle of women against their specific oppression as progressive, even if conducted with confused ideas; we oppose those who would seek to limit "women's liberation" to demands for economic equality, neglecting the central question of the family.

We work, however, to build a mass communist women's movement, organisationally autonomous, but politically under the leadership of a proletarian party. We intervene in the existing women's movement not just as energetic women's liberationists, but as fighters for communist ideas and resolute critics of petty bourgeois feminism.

We also seek to raise the question of women's oppression in all areas of our work, particularly in our industrial work. We support women's caucuses in the trade unions.

We recognise the Working Women's Charter as important because it combines demands relating to women at home with demands relating to women in industry. In itself, however, it is only a list of demands. We work to build a real rank-and-file working-class-based movement around the Charter, against attempts to subordinate it to trade-union bureaucratism. We also argue for certain amendments to the Charter, especially on the question of the position of women inside the trade unions.

We also work in the National Abortion Campaign and other single issue campaigns round the women's question. We recognise the important mobilising function of such campaigns and do not COUNTERPOSE a more complete programme to them in sectarian fashion. We nevertheless also recognise the inevitable limitations of any single issue movement, and in our work inside that movement we strive to win over people to a broader perspective of ongoing work.

XI: RACIALISM

The League recognises racialism as one of the most important ideological weapons of the British capitalist class. We uphold — and in appropriate circumstances advocate and even initiate — the right of black workers to organise independently, for example in black caucuses in the trade unions. We campaign actively for the physical defence of black people under attack from racists. We undertake a conscious struggle against racism in the white working class, rejecting the view characteristic of IS that racialism can be 'melted' away just by increasing the temperature of economic struggle. We see the physical destruction of the National Front as a focus for direct action to concretise and implement this propaganda.

XII: THE LEAGUE AND THE OTHER 'REVOLUTIONARY' GROUPS

The League does not believe that we are the nucleus of the revolutionary party, fully-formed except for our small size. The revolutionary party will not be built simply through one-by-one recruitment. A whole process of splits and fusions, and also of ideological rearmament and regeneration, will be necessary.

The League will adopt a policy of regroupment with any tendency where there is a principled basis for fusion. Here and now, however, we don't "speculate", but see the building of our own organisation as the immediate contribution we can make to preparing for the future. Centrally we fight to build the League as the most healthy revolutionary tendency. We are the pioneers of the future revolutionary party, or we are nothing.

We take to heart Trotsky's comment on the French centrist Pivert: "Without plumbing the gist of programmatic differences, he repeats commonplaces on the 'impossibility' of any one tendency 'claiming to incorporate in itself all truth'. Ergo? Live and let live. Aphorisms of this type cannot teach an advanced worker anything worthwhile; instead of courage and a sense of responsibility they can only instill indifference and weakness".

While joining with other ostensibly revolutionary tendencies in united-front work where appropriate, we relate to them generally through sharp polemic.

Briefly, we analyse the other tendencies as follows:

The IS see the revolutionary party in almost purely TECHNICAL terms. Their activity consists essentially in aiding and cheering on existing militant struggle and abstractly propagandising for socialism. Through this activity the IS leaders hope to build a 'party'. Unfortunately, a party built on such evasion of revolutionary strategy and ideological struggle will DITHER in any sharp situation — as IS dithered over British troops in Ireland in 1969-70, over the Aldershot bombing in early 1972, and over the mass strike movement of July 1972.

For the IMG, the key question is: what way do you think the 'currents', 'tides', 'evolutions', 'conjunctures', 'waves', and 'processes' of the world revolution are flowing today? They rely on a mystical unseen force guiding the 'world revolution', whose current

'will' it is the duty of revolutionaries to discern and accommodate to. They are characterised by adaptationism and the most extreme political instability. Their current attitude shows a serious political adaptation to the Labour left. Central to the genesis, growth and survival of what is fundamentally a rotten bloc of about five organisations or cliques under one umbrella, has been the myth that the Fourth International exists meaningfully. It doesn't. Central to our work is to strike at, debunk, demystify, and expose the pretensions of the IMG about the so-called "Fourth International".

The WRP represent organically right-wing politics (cf. their attitudes on Ireland, the Labour Party, etc.) overlaid with loud but politically meaningless proclamations of "the party", "the programme", "the method", etc. Their organisational sectarianism — with a dynamic based on organisational opportunism, rather than coherent politics — remains their chief characteristic, though it has been a looser organisation since the proclamation of the WRP.

The WRP cannot be characterised simply in terms of political and theoretical errors. With them, politics is completely subordinate to organisational technique. In their hysterical factionalism, they have often played a positively ANTI-WORKING CLASS role (cf. the Tate affair and other cases and violence against working-class militants; their current slander campaign against Joseph Hansen; their general gangsterism; etc.)

The WSL represent a 'scrambled' version of the WRP's politics. They have the same basically RELIGIOUS conception of politics, and the same rightist tendency on the Labour Party, Ireland, the EEC, the women's question, etc. However, they show signs of 'thinking' and should be treated flexibly and sensitively.

The RCG is a contemplative sect which rejects any active orientation to the working class. In addition they have a rightist position on the Labour Party and on Ireland. The results of their theoretical contemplations, while sometimes possibly useful, are generally in inverse proportion to their pretensions, and almost always are totally unconnected with their practical conclusions.

The 'Militant', finally, we characterise as plainly REFORMIST. It is a caricature reincarnation of Second International politics.

14th December, 1975.

NOTE: Certain sections of the resolution dealing with purely organisational questions have been omitted.

CYNTHIA BALDRY



LAST NOVEMBER 19th, Cynthia Baldry, a member of Workers Fight, died in Liverpool. Aged 26 at her death, she had suffered since the age of 19 from a rare and incurable disease which finally killed her, lupus erythematosus.

Her political life spanned five years of gradual physical deterioration. Yet it was by any standards a life of intense activity and dedication to the cause of socialism and the groups she joined to fight in that cause—first the IS group and then Workers' Fight. In the last months of her life, after she had partly recovered from a severe crisis early in the year, her comrades had to conspire against her to stop her doing routine and exhausting political work — despite the fact that exhaustion was a major threat to her existence, and intense political activity on top of her work as a teacher rendered her at least as vulnerable as a guerilla fighter. Forced finally to limit her political activity, she immediately embarked on a study of the Bevanite movement. She was dead within a month of starting that project, but though hospitalised much of the time, she completed three in a planned series of short articles on leaders of the labour movement.

The respect and affection in which she was held, way beyond the ranks of Workers' Fight, was shown when 150 people attended the commemoration meeting for her on 29th November—CP building workers, members of the different revolutionary tendencies, brothers and sisters from the NUT and people from the estate where she lived.

Not only respect and affection, but also understanding. The commemoration was a frankly political meeting. Some fellow tenants, politically sympathetic but uncommitted, collected £10 and donated it to Workers' Fight in honour of Cynthia Baldry. People who were not committed to her politics nevertheless understood perfectly well that Cynthia Baldry was first of all a fighter for her ideas, and it was not possible, in death as in life, to separate her from those ideas and the organisation she saw as embodying them.

* * *

To list the achievements of such a short span — 26 years of life, less than 4½ years in revolutionary politics — would usually produce a brief and trivial chronicle. Not so here —and what she did achieve is the measure of the tragic loss and waste which her death is.

Her parents had been members of the Communist Party in South Africa, and it was after some years of acquaintance with revolutionary politics that she joined the International Socialism group in 1971. In late 1972 she joined WF, and from 1973 until her deteriorating health forced her to stand down at the 1975 conference, she was a member of WF's National Committee.

During the Fisher-Bendix occupation in 1972 she was one

of a group of IS comrades assigned to go through the files of the company. She was also active in the NUT, being one of the "Liverpool 12" whom local union bureaucrats tried to victimise in 1975. She was active in the tenants' association during the rent strikes in 1972, as well as being heavily involved in the battle over closure of Shotton steelworks.

Most importantly, she initiated, and for the first period sustained almost single-handedly, the campaign in support of the 24 Shrewsbury pickets.

For reasons which are still obscure, the 'Morning Star' at first refused to publish reports of the frame-up being arranged by the police. Articles sent in by CP members were repeatedly 'lost'.

Cynthia started the defence campaign in the pages of Workers' Fight. She wrote and WF printed the first leaflets published by the locally-based defence committee set up on her suggestion. She continued to play a central role until the CP decided that it was, after all, interested, and took control of the campaign, pushing aside Cynthia as a Trotskyist political enemy.

There was an appropriate sequel. After Cynthia's death the Workers' Fight National Committee submitted the following obituary notice as a paid advertisement to the "Morning Star":

"Cynthia Baldry, aged 26, died Liverpool, November 1975, of a rare and incurable illness.

A Revolutionary Communist; initiator of the campaign to publicise the political conspiracy against the "Shrewsbury 24" and to rouse the labour movement in their defence; fighter for the rebirth of a mass communist women's movement; an unbreakable proletarian militant until her last days.

Grieving for her loss and in homage to her memory, we offer our condolences to her parents and to John Bloxam".

The "Morning Star" rejected it, sending us back a rewritten version. They insisted on deleting the reference to Shrewsbury and decreed that Cynthia should be represented as fighting for, not a communist, but a 'left-wing' women's movement.

They insisted — these newly 'liberal' Stalinists — on censoring the obituary of a class fighter: while they had published an article (presented as is usual with the 'Morning Star' as an interview) by UCATT General Secretary George Smith. Over Shrewsbury, Smith issued a circular telling UCATT members to treat the case as a legitimate criminal prosecution on which no trade union action should be taken. Cynthia's activities had led to the exposure of this circular on the front page of Workers' Fight.

Like Cynthia's friends on the estate, her political enemies

also understood that she could not be separated from her politics. Impossible for us to publish an obituary notice without mentioning her role in the Shrewsbury affair; impossible for them to accept the true account without conceding a lot politically to Cynthia, her politics and her organisation. In its own way, the "Morning Star" paid a tribute to Cynthia Baldry — the tribute of a snarling cur capable of licking the boots of trade union scabs like George Smith, while suppressing the facts of the work of a dead militant in fighting to defend that scabs framed-up members. From them, that's the only tribute Cynthia Baldry would have wanted or accepted.

* * *

Within the WF National Committee, Cynthia Baldry played an important role. At an important NC discussion on the policy to be put forward by WF at the rank and file trade unionists conference organised by IS in March 1974, Cynthia intervened decisively to counter comrades who vacillated on including the abortion rights question in our platform. Later in 1974, she played a vital role in reorienting the WF women's fraction away from a lurch towards petty-bourgeois feminist ideas of self-improvement within capitalism. Ever honest, probing, open-minded and intensely serious, on these and many other occasions she helped focus the group politically.

* * *

The way Cynthia Baldry came to us was typical too. In 1972 WF had consolidated in the months following our expulsion from IS. But at a cost. Inevitably people buckled and broke; people willing to join an opposition tendency within IS found intolerable the rigours of building a tiny independent organisation. Some just dropped away; a few returned to IS.

At that time, too, IS was not yet the wholly bureaucratized sect it is now, nor had it entered into its ultra-left binge of today. Everything seemed to revolve around the industrial struggle and IS was firmly focused on that struggle. Cynthia Baldry had been heavily involved, through IS, in some of the most exciting events — such as Fisher-Bendix. Workers' Fight in Liverpool had one member!

To come over to us at that time, in those circumstances, in that city, indicated either indifference to the class struggle that IS SEEMED fully immersed in or else a profound ideological commitment to think things through with political rigour and to be governed by a logic of political ideas irrespective of any personal consequences. Cynthia did not abandon the positive side of IS work, the working class orientation common to IS and WF (but within which IS had massively more scope, size and 'credibility') and continued it in such activity as the Shrewsbury 24 campaign. But she understood, grasped and lived by the central truth for

communists, that programme and politics are decisive. Starting from defence of WF against our expulsion by IS and opposition to IS's shameful line on Ireland, she thought things through politically; she decided that IS was wrong and WF right, and she drew practical conclusions.

So she left IS, numbering half a hundred in Liverpool and set out to build a branch of WF, which didn't quite number a hundred nationally. In all this she acted together with her companion John Bloxam.

* * *

Cynthia's portrait as a person is best drawn in the words of a letter from her mother to John Bloxam, read out at the Liverpool commemoration meeting.

"Please make it a happy occasion and don't let anyone feel gloomy — let them feel glad to have known her and more determined to do better for the movement and to use all of themselves — brains and bodies — to forward the work. Whoever saw her gloomy? She was eager and looked forward without fear to the future. And to learn from her friendliness to trust people and to be glad about the happiness she spread around."

* * *

The first issue of "International Communist" carries an obituary of Cynthia Baldry. The first issue of its lineal predecessor, Workers' Fight, in January 1972, carried an obituary of our comrade Peter Graham, assassinated by pseudo-political gangsters in Dublin in October 1971.

The death of Peter Graham as a direct result of activity, while trying to find a mode of communist action in partly unexplored territory, is easier for us to accept than the death of Cynthia Baldry, struck down not by the bullets of political enemies, but by the blind laws of chance. It would be easy for those of us for whom Cynthia's death was not just the loss of a valuable comrade, but also a deep personal bereavement to shout in anger at a situation of life in which such monstrous things happen, that indeed it is "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing".

Easy and tempting — but it would be a betrayal of Cynthia Baldry. The struggle for socialism is the struggle to put mankind in control of itself and its situation including mastering disease and eliminating the arbitrariness and blindness that now makes death, not the end of a natural ageing, but something arbitrary and savage, perpetually lying in ambush. Cynthia Baldry gave her life to that struggle

Adolf Yoffe wrote in 1927, before killing himself:—

"It is more than 30 years since I embraced the view that human life has sense only in so far as it is spent in the service of the infin-

ite — and for us mankind is the infinite. To work for any finite purpose — and everything else is finite — is meaningless”.

Cynthia Baldry's short life did have a meaning. She gave it a meaning: the meaning Yoffe talks of, the only meaning it can have, now.

Cynthia did not live to see the qualitative transformation which the fusion of WF and WP created for the politics she spent her last years fighting for. As we will continue to fight for those politics, Cynthia's life will continue to have a meaning. Her contribution to its development means that in the I-CL much of the essence of Cynthia Baldry lives on. We will see to it that it does.

Political Committee of the I-CL

THE END OF THE WORLD RECESSION, BRITISH CAPITALISM, AND THE £4 LIMIT

BY STAN LOMAX AND LEROY FOSTER

WITH ALL THE FAITH of Jehovah's Witnesses, the governments of the major capitalist countries are waiting for the next upswing of the trade cycle to get them out of the problems their policies have been unable to solve. Attacks on working class living standards are justified by the argument that "there is light at the end of the tunnel".

In Britain, the selling of Healey's pay policy and budget was based on the view that the next upswing of the economy will cut unem-

ployment and, with a devalued pound, boost exports and thus investment. In this way, we are told, the jam tomorrow will be guaranteed by less bread today. Undoubtedly there will be some economic upswing. But what will be its real consequences?

All the indications are that the worst recession since the War is coming to an end. Production began to pick up in the US, West Germany and Japan in the late summer of 1975.

But last year's optimism is being rapidly dissipated. While many commentators saw the pick-up of the US economy as the start of a rapid sustained growth, it had begun to tail off as early as last October. After three months' growth in industrial production at an annual rate of 12%, there was a fall back to 5.4%. At the same time, unemployment stuck at 8.5% (about eight million people) and inflation remained around 10%.

The pick-up of the stronger economies has been cautious, partial, and shallow — in part, deliberately restrained by the ruling classes for fear of unleashing massive inflation, as during the last boom. There have been three elements in the recovery. Firstly, government action through tax concessions and increased spending. This 'pump-priming' does not in itself have the strength to give an overall boost to the economy unless there are other more basic forces making for revival. The dollar has been allowed to depreciate against other major currencies to an even greater extent than the pound or the lira, making for a balance of payments surplus in the US through cheapening of American exports. And there has been a rebuilding of stocks of raw materials and goods. The depression had the eventual effect of running down stocks, as they were used instead of newly produced goods to meet a lower level of demand. Thus, rebuilding stocks is a first sign that the expected level of demand is rising. This, however, soon comes to an end.

The one signal that shows that the capitalists expect good times ahead, and which could really start a sustained upswing, is an increase in capital investment. Investment gives a stimulus to the capital goods industries and provides a basis for extended rises in production. But in the current mini-boom in Germany, the US, and Japan, the main burden of the increased production has been borne by restocking and government stimulus. There is little, if any, increase expected in 1976 in capital investment in either the US, Germany, or Japan.

DECLINE IN PROFITS

The cause of this lack of investment at precisely the time when, by all accounts, it should be rising, is the same one which caused the crisis in the first place — namely, the low rate of profit. The prospects for profitability are still not good, and the capitalists see no need to change their gloomy view of the future.

Capitalist governments — including the social-democratic governments in Britain and Germany — see their main task as boosting the confidence of the capitalists. There are two closely connected ways

in which they try to do this. The first is directly to attack the living standards of the working class, and to cut back social services which are becoming more difficult for the state to maintain without making inroads into profits via increased taxes. The other is through the state intervening more and more in unprofitable sectors, to bail them out, to subsidise them, in some cases to nationalise them, and to rationalise and increase productivity. The 'participation' schemes of the type of the Ryder plan, far from being steps towards workers' control, are elements in this strategy.

At present, these features combine with the economic situation in pointing to a bleak future for the working class even with the upswing.

With the large amount of unused capacity existing in industry as a result of the deep recession, the unemployment rate in the major capitalist countries will remain static or even increase through 1976 as 'shake-outs', rationalisations, and state expenditure cuts continue.

Such expansion as does take place will come slap up against raw material and — in some areas — capacity shortages. The mining and metal industries are in no fit state to meet any sustained expansion. The resulting goods shortage will lead to another 'commodities boom', which basically means higher prices for the finished goods. Steel plate, tinplate, aluminium, ethylene will all be in short supply, and inflation is likely to increase.

The fact that some countries are in a far better relative position to deal with this brings another destabilising element into play. An already chaotic world currency system will see more speculation on the weak currencies and on any short-term movements in the floating rates. With the likelihood of money moving back to the oil countries, these movements will be magnified.

This will also pose difficulties for the warring members of the EEC. They are at the moment arguing about the extent to which the stronger economies should have to pay to keep the weaker ones in business. The future of two of the cornerstones of the EEC is at stake: the agricultural policy and the joint management of the parities of some of the countries (the so-called 'snake') which was the only real step taken towards the much-vaunted aim of monetary unity.

BRITISH RECOVERY

With the Italian, the British is the sickest of the advanced capitalist economies. In Britain, the government cannot find room to reflate the economy for fear of the effects on the budget deficit, balance of payments, and inflation. The puny investment and employment incentives will do little to change this. Investment fell by 13% last year and a recent DTI survey shows that it is expected to fall another 5 to 8% in 1976. A partial levelling-off of unemployment figures will not prevent continued redundancies in ailing sectors of British industry.

In addition there is the chronic balance of payments deficit and

a record budget deficit. The loan debt of British capitalism — now estimated at 6.5% of GNP owed on interest repayments alone — places an increasing strain on state resources. Healey — as his letter to the International Monetary Fund last December shows — has to keep his creditors' wishes well in mind when deciding whether to expand the economy or not.

There will be a recovery fostered by world acceleration for certain sections of British industry. Already there are signs of a pick-up in the machine tool and engineering industry. But major sectors of the economy do not stand to gain considerably by that boom — most importantly, it will not halt the decline of the textile industry, and of ship-building. The car industry (particularly Leyland, Chrysler and Vauxhall) stands, at present, to gain very little in face of superior more productive competition. Government plans to intervene and supervise will aid those industries standing to make partial gains (including British Steel at the price of massive redundancies and 'rationalisation'). But the boom will not be sufficient to secure competitive growth rates, or to halt the rundown of major segments of British industry.

In the short term, therefore, the prospect for the British working class is one of continuing attacks on living standards. The best we can expect is a slight fall in unemployment in 1977 as world trade picks up; by any reckoning, this leaves us a long way from Healey's pipe-dream of "single-figure" inflation and unemployment at an "acceptable level".

LONGER-TERM PROSPECTS

The history of British capitalism as pioneer imperialism has increasingly presented the British bourgeoisie with major problems. Whole sectors of the economy can no longer face world competition. Plant is comparatively antiquated.

The role of the pound sterling as a world currency renders British capitalism particularly susceptible to crises and disturbances in the world money markets. In addition, the balance of payments crisis has sharpened with the decline of the colonial and neo-colonial supply of cheap foodstuffs and raw materials.

The comparatively high proportion of unproductive state expenditure (partly a result of working class pressure) and the flow of investment to more profitable areas abroad, have contributed to a rate of investment, which, as a proportion of GNP, has consistently been lower for Britain than for any major competitor.

British industry has been losing out to its major competitors since at least 1950. Then it could claim 30% of world exports in manufactured goods. By 1974 the proportion had fallen to less than 10%. Recently the downward float of the pound (over 30% devaluation against other currencies since 1972) has disguised this long-term trend by subsidising export prices. It has, however, the effect of raising import prices, thus adding to the domestic cost of living and also counteracting the effects of the original devaluation on export prices, through an increased price of raw materials.

The central features of the decline of British capitalism can be studied through an examination of the figures for profits and for investments.

The following table, showing the rate of return on assets taking account of inflation, shows how severely the decline in profitability has hit the British bourgeoisie.

Percentage	Return on Assets		
	1965	1970	1973
Manufacturing industries	10.2	7.0	6.0
Food	11.3	6.4	4.1
Metal manufacture	7.3	5.8	8.3
Electrical engineering	5.2	2.5	4.5
Textiles	12.2	7.9	5.8
Paper, printing publishing	9.7	5.5	8.6
Bricks, pottery, glass, cement etc	12.4	8.5	9.5
Timber, furniture etc	10.1	6.6	7.1
Chemicals	9.3	6.8	8.2
Non-electrical engineering	10.0	5.7	7.9
Metal goods (nes)	12.2	8.2	7.9
Vehicles	10.7	-2.5	3.9
Clothing and footwear	9.7	8.5	6.1

Source: National Econ. Dev't Org'n Report, "Financial Performance and Inflation", 6-2-76

This has brought about a major shift in the pattern and scale of capital investment. Industry has been forced to rely more heavily on external finance, i.e. from banks and financial institutions. There has been a move away from both finance from retained profits (which grew rapidly in the '60s) and equity finance — raised from stocks and shares — which fell in that period. Overseas sources have also become more important.

Percentage of total capital funds comprised by:

	Internal sources (retained profits)	Domestic borrowing	Overseas borrowing	UK Capital issues (equity)
1965	68.1	16.1	6.7	9.1
1974	56.7	29.3	14.1

Bank financing (=bank overdrafts and loans as a percentage of current assets)

1960: 7%
1974: 15%

Source: Barclays Banks Briefing, January 1976

At the same time, manufacturing industry has been less well able to cover itself against indebtedness. Its assets have tended to decline in relation to its liabilities — and many of the assets are very difficult

to realise. This led to a record number of bankruptcies in 1974, only to be topped in 1975. There has also been a decline of more than 0.2 million workers employed in manufacturing industry since 1970, reflecting the low level of investment.

Liquidity Ratio (= ratio of current assets to current debt liabilities for manufacturing industry)

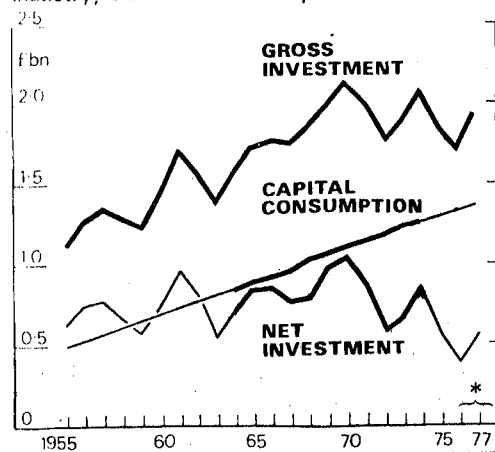
1960: 2.1

1974: 1.5

INVESTMENT

Table 4 shows that from 1970 onwards the trend in manufacturing investment across the different cycles has changed from an upward to a continuing downward direction.

Fixed capital expenditure in manufacturing industry, 1955-1977 at 1970 prices



Source: 'The Economist', 3-1-76

The picture becomes even blacker when one takes away that investment which has just replaced obsolescent or worn-out capital. The net figure has declined even more steeply across the cycles since 1970. It will be lower this year than 20 years ago — although manufacturing production has risen 50% since then!

Unless this trend is reversed — and that would require an amazing change in the confidence of the capitalists, probably realisable only through a major defeat of the working class — unemployment will rise and rise across the short term ups and downs of the cycles. This has been happening steadily since the mid-'60s, so that the "acceptable level of unemployment" at the peak of the cycle now stands around 700,000.

The government's attempts to overcome this lack of investment involve offsetting low profit rates by state subsidies, while cutting those elements of public spending which are considered 'unproduct-

ive', such as social services. So far attempts have been made to channel long term funds into manufacturing industry. The plans for the NEB had as their aim, not any concessions to workers' control, but a "regeneration of British industry" through state-encouraged investment and rationalisation.

GOVERNMENT MEASURES AND THE WORKING CLASS

The low level of confidence of the capitalist class in Britain at the start of an upswing in the economy shows that government policy will play a far greater role in deciding the course of the economy than in the 'stop-go' era of the '50s and '60s. Then a mild application by the state of a stimulus to the economy at the end of a recession would almost automatically produce a positive response from the capitalists. Against the background of an underlying growth in world trade and a low, but still positive, growth in the British economy, they were willing to accept that the boom would justify investment.

Today that is no longer the case. The situation of the world economy is such that a weak capital such as Britain can only hope for a smaller share in a much more feeble relative prosperity. The role of the Labour Government in promoting recovery is vital. The Labour Government is the best government possible for the bourgeoisie, as long as it continues to subdue the trade unions. That any statement by a trade union leader opposing the new limit can cause a fall in the pound shows the tasks and the problems of the Government.

But the TUC sees its role, not as defending its members' interests, but as demonstrating its 'responsibility'. This has involved retreat after retreat without even the semblance of a fight. The irony of the situation is clearly shown when Jack Jones, a self-proclaimed socialist addresses the Road Haulage Association employers and says that wise currency speculators should buy pounds not sell them, only to be greeted by derisive laughter. This shows that the trade union leaders have more faith in British capitalism and the coming boom than the capitalists themselves.

And that is logical. The capitalists can be cynical and 'realistic', understanding that national boundaries are to a large extent economically anachronistic, making the best for themselves while they can and noting that 'in the long term we are all dead'. The reformist trade union leaders, however, rest their position on a strategy of good wages and social services within a booming capitalism — British capitalism, of course. To realise that strategy, they must first help capitalism out of its difficulties. The 'right-wing' shift by men like Scanlon and Jones has been not so much a shift in their views as a shift in the world around them.

But the tensions in the situation are growing. The TUC has let the £6 and £4 limits go through without even the verbal commitment to do something in exchange which existed in the Social Contract. The TUC has stood by while the public spending which the government promised to increase has been cut. Yet they have to assure their memberships that this sacrifice is only temporary until the economy picks up, when "Britain" will be in a better position to cash in on it.

The government is also faced with a balancing act. To make the recent £4 deal appear to include concessions, they have done two things. Firstly, in the 3% mentioned in the Budget speech, it set a low figure for negotiations, so that in giving slightly more than that figure it could appear that Healey was giving something away. That he did not seriously expect 3% to be agreed is shown by the decision not to cancel the tax concessions. Secondly, the government has been holding out the bait of 'single figure inflation' by the end of the year, after which the government claims it will take real steps to reduce unemployment.

At the moment the statistics seem to be moving in a direction which would justify this view. The rate of inflation has fallen, the balance of payments has improved as a result of the slide of the pound. However, our analysis above has shown that this fall in inflation is not likely to last given the build-up of inflationary pressure both internally and internationally which will accompany even the limited recovery the world economy is going through. Prospects for a serious decline in unemployment are slight. Where does this leave the Government-TUC balancing act and the new pay policy?

The new pay policy will face certain tensions which did not exist under the £6 policy. This Stage 2 is the first since the War that has been tighter than the Stage 1. The reason for this — which the Government is naturally not willing to say out loud — is that incomes policy is now seen as a permanent feature of economic policy, which is adjusted to meet the changing needs of the capitalist economy, rather than a policy to be used to get the economy out of one crisis, after which it can be loosened before the pressures get too great. Only a few years ago this would have produced a loud noise from the trade union leaders about the suspension of free collective bargaining. Today, under a Labour Government, it is accepted as something almost natural.

This is also occurring at a time when, as we have pointed out, the rate of inflation is likely to pick up again once any degree of expansion takes place in the world economy. Having taken several years of falling or stagnant living standards, further cuts are going to hit increasingly at the heart of things which have been taken for granted in workers' living standards for the last 30 years. This will lead to a real intensification of the pressures against the acceptance of permanent wage cuts.

One of the strengths of the £6 limit from the government's point view was that by applying to everyone without exception, it gave a veneer of fairness to the idea of a 'temporary sacrifice'. This could not be kept in the new policy because of the way it had led to many anomalies in wage structures. The new policy, with its different rates for different groups, does not have this strong ideological factor in its favour. Already Healey has been promising that there will be no 'special cases', in an obvious attempt to show that a more flexible policy need not be looser.

However, the new policy does little to deal with 'the problem of differentials'. Although we do not favour the maintenance of differ-

entials on a basis of craft exclusiveness, we recognise that attacks on differentials by employers and capitalist governments are attacks aimed at the living standards of the class as a whole. Skilled workers have been increasingly restive under the £6 policy, and the new one does little to deal with that. As an upswing does hit certain sectors, it is likely that there will be a shortage of some highly specific types of skilled labour, leading in turn to a new pressure on rates.

The tensions are great and increasing, as they have been since the beginning of the £6 limit. But the very tenseness and brittleness tends to paralyse struggle. The trade union leaders know that a decisive break with wage- and job-cutting would mean the ruin of the Labour Government — and they can see no positive alternative. Their attitude transmits itself into the rank and file, leading to a real decline in direct-action militancy. Those who thought, in 1972-4, that the grip of reformism was being simply melted by the great industrial struggles, are being conclusively refuted.

The difficulties with any fight back at the moment is lack of focus and leadership. The working class in Britain has not been decisively defeated; rather the depth of the depression and the betrayals of the trade union and Labour leaders have brought about an attitude that it is impossible to do anything. The class feels on the defensive, in a 'doomsday' atmosphere.

This state of mind can break down very quickly once a group of workers can again show that struggle can bring real gains. Once the ice-floe is broken, there can be a very quick change of mood.

But the fight against the cuts and unemployment has remained largely at the level of lobbying, protest actions, and local campaigns — as is partly inherent in a struggle against cuts in public spending. This state of affairs highlights the responsibility of the 'left' MPs for not taking any real action which could have given a focus.

The actions which have taken place against the £6 limit have been very limited — both in the number and type of workers involved, and in the response they have had in other sectors. At Leyland, for example, the issue was one involving a small number of workers, who were presented in the press as the wrecking minority of greedy car workers. Willing to come out and stay out against the government, the employers, the press, their own trade union leaders, and even some of their workmates, but not knowing how to argue their case as one involving all workers against the limit, they remained isolated and finally buckled in the face of the vast pressures being exercised against them. Virtually the whole of society was lined up against them.

The focus which existed before, especially under the Tories, namely that of national negotiations by large unions, has also been removed. It is argued that under the new pay policy there is nothing to negotiate. This leads to quiet deals between the Trade Union bureaucrats and the employers, in which the strength of the membership is never even verbally, let alone practically, called upon.

This demoralisation without a defeat must be laid squarely at the

feet of the traditional leaderships of the working class. The 'left' trade union leaders are no longer willing to lead even limited wage struggles. Jones and Scanlon are the architects of incomes policies and Daly condemns the Welsh miners for their aim of breaking the policy. In the interests of 'unity' they accept proposals from a Labour Government which they would not even have considered under the Tories. It is not accidental that the 'Lefts' have been in the forefront of this: the Government needs their reputation as 'lefts' to sell their rotten packages to rank and file trade unionists.

The CP is paralysed by the positions of both the Trade Union and Parliamentary 'lefts', and is unable to put forward a coherent picture of what should be done here and now to defend the working class. Scanlon's and Jones' pronouncements on pay policy are printed in the 'Morning Star' accompanied by a silence elsewhere so that a pin could be heard to drop in the editors' office. Given that the CP's long term strategy is based on a bloc with these people, this is not surprising. The Broad Left formations in many unions are facing electoral defeat, and have little coherent to offer to their memberships.

The CP's activities and demands only relate to asking the government to do things, and taking protest actions to bring pressure to bear. The demands for import controls, reflation, etc, do nothing to increase the combativity of the class or break the demoralisation which now exists. Rather they place reliance on the lefts in Parliament, who have already shown themselves incapable of leading a serious fight against the Government.

The shop stewards' organisation which has emerged in the last 25 years has also proved incapable of dealing with the new kinds of attack that have been thrown up. They built their strength in a period when the long post-war boom gave them muscle at plant level. Now employers are no longer willing to buy off strikes, as they can no longer pay it out of a growing mass of profit, and they have the additional threat of just shutting down. At the same time, pressures of press attacks and of the opposition of local and national officials have intensified on plant-level bargaining. The most instructive recent example of this was Chrysler, where the state and the employers rendered a strong shopfloor movement powerless by a press campaign and the threat to close down altogether. Recently, at Blackmans, Canley, and elsewhere, employers have used the decline in struggle to launch attacks on shop-floor organisation itself — and have often been successful.

In the face of these responses from the groups to which they have traditionally looked for leadership, most workers have accepted the recent attacks as a 'lesser evil' than even greater cuts in living standards and jobs, or at least as something not much can be done about.

In this situation, more than ever, the key task is arguing class-wide answers on the shop floor. Only by knitting together a leadership equipped with such class-wide answers will the rank and file be able to fight its way out of the impasse. Central are the demands for the sliding scale of wages (automatic cost-of-living increases of £1 for 1%)

and the sliding scale of hours (work-sharing under workers' control with no loss of pay). They focus struggle against wage- and job-cutting in a way that brings out the class-wide issues and raises the possibility of a united working-class response.

Of course, the fight for these demands, however correct and appropriate, by a small communist propaganda group, will not of itself spark mass actions. It promises no such easy solution as the IMG's gathering-together of every left-reformist, centrist, or confused opposition to the government into a hypothetical 'class struggle tendency', or IS's search for a section of unscathed militant anti-Labourite workers who will carry forward the struggle just the same as against the Tories. What it can do is push forward and draw out political lessons from the industrial battles that actually do take place (as far as our resources allow), and prepare and educate a cadre and periphery of industrial militants for the revival of greater battles.

What are the chances of a revival? The coming moderate upswing in the economy, probably concentrated in a few sectors, will help. It gives confidence to trade unionists that the current freeze cannot and should not continue.

But, given the attitude of the trade union bureaucracy, the first step has to be taken at an unofficial, rank and file level. It is naturally very difficult to take on the press, government, trade union leaders and employers at this level. However, such action, even if not initially successful, can put pressure on the union bureaucrats and have a cumulative effect on workers' self-confidence. Until now, there have only been isolated attempts to break the limits, which have been presented as purely sectional rather than class-wide battles.

There are problems involved in the fact that this is likely to be the only way to break the limit. One is that it is no longer possible to present wage demands as being a purely local affair involving only the employers and the workers. Every serious attempt to fight the wage limits is a fight against the government and against the trade union leaders. It raises political questions and needs political answers. To win these battles, solidarity on the widest possible front is needed for every group of workers fighting the limit. Without it, all these sections will be doomed to defeats which will reinforce rather than dissolving the present demoralisation.

It is no use waiting for the great upsurge in the British economy which Healey uses as a justification for freezing wages. That wait will be very long. It is not that a recovery of the economy will bring higher wages; such a recovery will only take on substantial proportions if the level of real wages is lowered significantly now. Instead the fight-back to restore living standards must begin here and now with the fight against the £4 limit. To be successful, it needs to be generalised into a fight against the Labour Government. The time when easy pickings could be made without a policy to meet a general attack are over. The promises of the TUC and the Government that the boom will pull us out of the mess are illusory. The choice is clear: a fight-back here and now, or a continuing decline in our living standards.

TWO YEARS SINCE THE FALL OF CAETANO

by MIKE EVANS

THE PHASES OF THE PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION

Two years ago one hundred thousand workers packed the streets of Lisbon in the most joyful and triumphant May Day celebration Europe had seen for a quarter of a century. Soldiers fraternised with the crowd, with red carnations in the muzzles of their guns. A well-organised military coup, aimed at liquidating the bankrupt dictatorship, ending the hopeless colonial war in Africa, and modernising Portuguese capitalism, had overthrown the old regime; but when Caetano handed over power to Spínola, he said:

“General, I surrender the government to you. You must take care. I am frightened by the idea of power loose in the streets.”

The next 18 months saw a series of major waves of working class advance. Firstly, the workers hunted down and rooted out the hated secret police of the old fascist regime, the PIDE. In factories, in offices, and on the land, the most reactionary supporters of the old regime, were purged, thrown out, by the workers themselves. A great strike wave swept Portugal as workers fought for decent wages and conditions long denied them.

Spínola and the senior officers of the MFA, to control the situation, took into the government representatives of the Portuguese Communist and Socialist Parties. With their support, a number of anti-strike laws and curbs on the freedom of the press were enacted. The workers were not cowed by these measures, and speedily rendered them ineffective.

Driven to desperation by working class militancy, Spínola and the more conservative elements in the MFA launched two abortive counter-coups — the 27th-28th September 1974 “march of the silent majority”, which was crushed by armed workers and rank and file soldiers, and the 11th March 1975 attempted coup which led to Spínola’s flight abroad.

Those events opened a new phase of the Portuguese revolution. In February 1975 30,000 landless farm-workers in the south of Portugal began to seize the land, confiscating the huge latifundia and setting up agricultural cooperatives. Particularly in and around Lisbon, workers began to create commissions in the factories, to demand and to win workers’ control. In the banks, the newspaper offices, and the radio stations, workers seized control or exercised close supervision over the bosses.

In the army discipline began to crumble. The barracks became centres of political debate and discussion. The MFA itself was increasingly riven with divisions between the more conservative senior commanders and the radicalised junior officers. Instead of the MFA embodying “the Revolution” ‘above parties’, different elements in the MFA aligned themselves more and more clearly with different parties.

The election of a Constituent Assembly on 25th April 1975 gave the Socialist Party 38% of the vote, while the MFA’s call for blank ballot papers won only 7%. The election result — 58% in total for parties claiming allegiance to the working class and to socialism — undoubtedly demonstrated a massive popular will to fight for socialism. The SP won votes by its demagoguery about socialism — after all, if you want socialism, why not vote Socialist — and because it appeared to stand for socialism and democracy. The concrete evidence for this was the SP’s defence of elections against the CP/MFA attempt to put them off indefinitely, and the SP support for strikes which the government denounced and attacked. In addition, large numbers of petty bourgeois voted SP because it seemed a bulwark against ‘dictatorship of the right or of the left’, and the party most in favour of civilian rather than military rule.

Yet before the election the CP and SP had already promised slavish subjection to the military leaders. Soares used the SP’s support to launch an offensive against the workers who had occupied Republica, a paper he wished to use as the exclusive mouthpiece of the right wing leadership of the SP.

THE ‘REPUBLICA’ AFFA.

Republica had formerly been an independent anti-fascist paper. Under Portuguese press law, which requires papers to state their political affiliation, it claimed still to be such. Yet the SP owners were turning it into a narrow SP factional organ. Journalists unsympathetic to the SP were forced to resign. The printworkers, alarmed by the underhand editorial clampdown, and alarmed also by the falling circulation and the possible consequences for their jobs, asked that the paper be openly declared a SP organ. The management refused.

A series of disputes finally led to the workers taking control and the management calling in the military to close the paper down. The management refused to reopen the paper unless the armed forces took measures against 'troublemakers' among the workers. Because of widespread popular support for the Republica workers, including in the Armed Forces, the workers were able to re-establish the paper under their control. They ran it as an organ of workers' democracy, publishing communiques of workers in struggle regardless of their factional allegiance.

The SP's claim that this was a Stalinist-inspired blow against the SP's freedom of expression (a claim unfortunately backed by many avowed Trotskyists) has little credibility. Certainly it is true that Marxists stand for freedom of the press being realised through material facilities being made available to all currents of opinion (including reactionary currents: their freedom of expression would be suppressed by a workers' government only as a matter of overriding revolutionary necessity, and we would oppose suppression by a bourgeois government). We do not subscribe to the notion of an 'impartial' press or a 'non-party' press, or a press controlled by those who work on it. We uphold the right of the Portuguese Socialist Party to publish its views. Yet those principles do not justify the SP's account.

Few of the printworkers involved were CP members — indeed, the majority, at least at the outset, were SP supporters. The CP-dominated Intersindical gave them little support. The SP, a powerful and rich party, with two other papers supporting its line (Jornal Novo and Portugal Socialista), and with the means to import a new printing press and staff it with SP members whenever it wished, was in no danger of having its voice silenced. In its earlier control of Portuguese television, and its later participation in press censorship under the 6th Provisional Government, the SP has showed itself no friend of media freedom. When, under the 6th Provisional Government, the worker-controlled Republica was finally suppressed, the SP did not bother to take it over. The Republica affair had served its purpose. By abstractly counterposing the forms of bourgeois democracy to the growth of workers' democracy and workers' control, it had served as a cover for counter-revolution.

THE ANTI-COMMUNIST CAMPAIGN IN THE NORTH

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Hiding under slogans about "pluralist democracy", the SP withdrew from the Government and launched a vicious anti-communist and anti-trade union campaign centring in the North. All the forces of reaction lined up behind the SP offensive. CP, Trade Union and left wing party offices were attacked by mobs led by the open fascists of the Portuguese Liberation Army and encouraged by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Many rank and file Socialist Party members were alarmed and shocked. But it was their party's demagoguery that had unleashed these attacks.

The CP at first tried to meet this offensive by bureaucratic and sectarian manoeuvres, by putting up barricades to prevent SP rallies

and calling on the army to prevent them. These manoeuvres were a dismal failure and indeed, only drove workers and petty bourgeois towards Soares and his party. The CP's counter-rallies in the North were defeated, the army refusing to support them and fire on counter-demonstrators.

On 20th August the working class response began, with a huge demonstration in Lisbon around the demands of the 'Copcon document'. Important sections of the Lisbon proletariat, particularly from the Lisnave and Setenave shipyards, where the struggle for workers' control was particularly vigorous and the left groups were strong, took the lead in organising mass mobilisations against the right wing threat. The CP, terrified by the impotence of the Goncalves government and by its increasing isolation, turned to the revolutionary groups for a "united front", which was concluded on the 24th. The CP included in the platform the 'defence of the 5th Provisional Government', and succeeded in diverting the massive rally of 27th September into a demonstration of support for Goncalves and Costa Gomes.

The fall of Goncalves and the 5th Provisional Government, and the creation of the 6th Government led by Admiral Pinheiro d'Azevedo — in which the Antunes 'group of nine' are predominant and in which the SP and PPD have much more influence than the CP — marked the beginning of a whole new period of sharp confrontation between the government and the workers of Lisbon and the south.

Its features were:

1. The strengthening and growth of the workers and neighbourhood commissions; the intensification of the struggle for workers' control.
2. The increasing attempts to coordinate these various bodies and their role in the mass mobilisations of the autumn.
3. The wave of massive and militant economic struggles.
4. The rise of the mass movement of rank and file soldiers, the almost total breakdown of military discipline, and the emergence of SUV.

This massive wave of struggle was accompanied by and to some extent facilitated by the acquiescence of the CP in mass struggles in order to weaken the d'Azevedo government and to increase its own power within it at the expense of the PPD and SP. The manoeuvres of Saraiva de Carvalho and his supporters, opportunistically posing as the champions of workers' and soldiers' mobilisations, also contributed.

But how did the revolutionary left try to take advantage of this mobilisation, and to disentangle it from the webs of Stalinism and of 'military leftism'?

THE 'REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT' (FUR)

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After the collapse of the 25th August platform, the revolutionary groups which had supported that platform — MES, PRP, LCI, etc —

came together in the FUR. The FUR confused the question of the united front with that of the building of a revolutionary party, and thus ended up blocking the solution to either question.

Its manifesto stated: [the FUR] "sets itself the task of uniting revolutionaries around a revolutionary platform of struggle that the popular masses accept as theirs". It represented "a contribution to the unification and organisation of the class vanguard".

As a programme for revolutionary unity, for forming a revolutionary party, it was totally inadequate. It did not define the front's attitude to the CP or the MFA bonapartists. Its governmental slogan was the vague and opportunistic "struggle for a government of revolutionary unity". It neither defined itself against the other tendencies within the workers' movement, nor clearly set as its goal the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The very concept of a 'revolutionary vanguard' was a muddling of a number of uses of the term. It confused the actual organised leadership of the class which, both in the commissions and the unions, was still under the political and organisational leadership of the CP, with that radicalised stratum of younger militants who adhered to no particular programme or party, and who were, in fact, strongly influenced by anti-party ideas, and confused about the role of de Carvalho and the Copcon lefts. This stratum was certainly extremely radical but it had not, and could not without being consolidated round a revolutionary programme and party, win the leading positions in the commissions and the other mass organs. The FUR could lead these forces in mass demonstrations, especially when the CP was mobilising its forces for its own bureaucratic purposes, but against the CP's opposition it could not centralise the commissions into workers' councils. It could help link the struggles of workers and rank and file soldiers, alongside the SUV movement, but neither the FUR nor MES raised the central demands for the arming of the workers and for a workers' militia. The grievousness of that failure was shown on 25th November, when crowds of workers gathered outside barracks asking for guns.

With the 'nebulous blot' of the FUR hindering the clarification of a revolutionary nucleus, there was not the essential instrument for the revolutionary use of the united front tactic. But, in any case, as a manifesto for a united front tactic aimed at the CP, SP and non-party masses, the FUR platform was disqualified by being aimed at revolutionaries alone. It ignored the question of democratic liberties, characterised the elections as "bourgeois" and demanded the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly when no alternative basis for a workers' government was actually in existence. (In the real situation, that demand could only mean a call for the military to dissolve the Constituent Assembly. In other words, for unconstitutional bourgeois rule as against constitutional bourgeois rule, or the shadowy form of it). It repeatedly lumped together the fascists and social-democrats, drawing no distinction between the mass base of the SP and the counter-revolutionary policy of the Soares leadership. On the other hand, it did not mention the CP or its policies. It was clearly aimed at the

non-party 'vanguard' — and could only hinder the crystallisation of a genuine revolutionary Marxist vanguard.

Thus, despite huge mass action by the working class (the siege of the Constituent by the building workers), despite successful struggles to expel right wing officers from the barracks, no centralisation of the workers' and soldiers' rank and file organisations into workers' councils occurred in time to meet the right wing offensive. The tactics of the revolutionary left did not help the stratum of the most revolutionary militants to tackle the question of prising the dead hand of the CP from the workers' organisations and to give an active lead to the masses of workers and petty bourgeois still under the CP's sway. To do that required and requires a clear understanding of the nature and role of the SP and CP, of the MFA and its various factions.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY

The Socialist Party, despite its demagogy about socialism and workers' control, holds up before the working class the transformation of Portugal into a "normal" bourgeois democracy. This attracted to it those workers and petty bourgeois who had the strongest illusions in 'democracy' and the least confidence in their own strength and organisation. The bureaucratic manoeuvres of the CP with the MFA, its attempt to stamp out opposition to itself within the Intersindical, and its opposition to strikes during the first five provisional governments, led many of these workers to see Soares' party as the standard bearer of democratic rights.

Yet the Socialist Party was not opposed to the subordination of "parliamentary democracy" and the constituent assembly to the military governments. It has signed the various pacts with the Council of the Revolution of the Army hierarchy which condemn both the Constituent Assembly and the new Legislative Assembly to impotence. Soares merely wanted to use the Constituent Assembly as a power base to squeeze the CP out of the state apparatus and its alliance with the MFA, and to install the SP there instead, to pursue an anti-working class policy of crushing the self-activity and gains of the masses.

Throughout the summer of 1975, he was quite prepared to use the SP to mobilise the reactionary peasants of the North in collusion with extreme right-wing elements, to launch vicious onslaughts on CP and trade union offices in the North and Centre of the country. After Soares' success in squeezing out the 5th Provisional Government, in early September, the SP allied itself with the d'Azevedo government and the right wing of the MFA.

At the peak of the massive strike wave and rank and file soldiers' mobilisations against the government in October and November, Soares called for the removal of the government and the Constituent Assembly to the North, aiding the reactionary officers who were contemplating civil war should the working class of Lisbon and the south seize power. Soares was quite prepared to use the SP to give 'democratic' cover to a 'white-guard' offensive against a potential Lisbon commune.

The treachery of the CP and the confusion of the revolutionary left made this unnecessary. Yet Soares hastened to hail Jaime Neves, who masterminded the crushing of the paratroopers and Copcon on November 25th, as the saviour of "the revolution". "November 25th", he said, "saved the revolution. In one blow November 25th wiped out the suicidal inclinations of the far left and cut the ground from under the far right. Democracy emerged from the test victorious and strengthened."

Since then Soares and the SP have supported every anti-working class measure — the restoration of "order and discipline" in the army and the arrest of hundreds of rank and file soldiers, and the renegeing by the employers (with the aid of a government wage freeze) on the contracts extracted by the workers in the autumn. "The suspension of contracts", claimed Soares, "was the only realistic policy for dealing with the chaos that was threatening".

The SP has signed the new pact with the MFA on 25th April 1976, allowing for an all-powerful president, most likely a military figure, and rendering the legislative assembly subordinate to the 'forces of order'. Throughout the election campaign, it presented itself as the 'party of government', stressing to the workers its unwillingness to govern with the increasingly unpopular PPD and to the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, its implacable hostility to the CP and the Intersindical.

The SP remains bitterly hostile to the land occupations and the cooperative farmers of the Alentejo, even to the extent of virulently attacking the SP Minister of Agriculture, Lopes Cardoso, who stands on the left of the party, as a "secret communist" because he defends the "legal occupations" in the south.

Yet the SP, despite its bourgeois counter-revolutionary leadership and policies, still has substantial working-class support. Rank and file SP workers, organised in factory nuclei, have joined with rank & file members of the CP and the revolutionary groups in organising support for workers in struggle. This 'left wing' of the SP is allowed no free expression within the party. It is hounded and persecuted. A series of purges and expulsions have been organised by Soares and his cronies.

A group of Socialist Party militants, anonymous because of the witch-hunt against "CP infiltrators", published a "Revolutionary self-criticism" after the November events. It stated:

"In order to shake hands with Pinheiro d'Azevedo..., to maintain the ministerial positions of our doctors, we are supporting press censorship, the freeing of fascists and PIDEs, the imprisonment of progressives, increase in the cost of living, the payment of indemnities to capitalists and latifundists, and the repression that is beginning to return.... Comrades, we are going to reflect and act. We are going to organise meetings in our branches to discuss the situation impartially and internally, and define the strategy to be followed. We are not going to leave the Socialist Party. We are going to transform it into a genuine socialist party (Marxist). We are going to be revolutionaries

(and not splitters and followers of Soares). We are going to struggle for Socialism before it is too late!"

In the period around the elections Soares was bitterly hostile to a coalition with the CP. But though privately he would like to rule with the PPD, he has enormous difficulties in doing that. As 'The Economist' pointed out on May 1st, "His admirers abroad sometimes forget that his party contains a powerful faction sympathetic to the Communists. Unless Mr Soares is prepared to watch it hive off — which might in the end be the best thing — he has to pick his way very cautiously between the rivals on his flanks".

The SP is not the monolithic bulwark of "pluralist democracy" or of "social fascism" that either its bourgeois friends or its semi-Maoist opponents think. Revolutionaries must relate to the crisis in its ranks, or it will be solved to the benefit of Messrs Soares and Cunhal and the great loss of the vanguard of the Portuguese working class.

THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY

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The PCP is the majority party of the industrial and rural proletariat, comprising the best-organised and most experienced militants. Yet it has, since the 25th April 1974, criminally misled the working class.

Entering the first Spínola provisional government, it denounced the striking bakery workers as fascists and attacked the postal workers' strike. It supported the notorious anti-strike law of 29th August 1974. It has been the principal advocate of the "special role" of the MFA over the past two years. In the Intersindical the CP has bureaucratically suppressed the right of other working class tendencies to have a voice, thus playing into the hands of Soares. Its grip on the workers' commissions helped limit them to economic issues and obstructed their development as organs of working class mobilisation and power.

During the summer 1975 offensive of the SP and the reactionaries, the CP tied the working class response to support for Vasco Goncalves, turning massive working class demonstrations into an auxiliary of his grouping within the MFA.

The CP made an apparent 'left' turn after the fall of the 5th Provisional Government and, whilst participating in the 6th Government, used the massive mobilisations of the autumn as a bargaining counter to squeeze PPD and SP ministers out of the government and to install CP ministers in their place. One of these manoeuvres coincided with a spontaneous revolt of the paratroopers in response to a deliberately engineered right-wing provocation. During the events of 25th November, the CP at first called a two-hour general strike, then beat a retreat, telling the workers to go back to work and "remain calm". It left the paratroopers to go down to defeat.

Since the treachery of November, the CP has continued to hold back and cripple the working class counter-offensive, in the interest of staying in the very government which was attacking them, and in

the hope of making electoral gains. In a statement on the nurses' and bankworkers' struggles, the Political Committee of the CP condemned these manifestations of the recovery of working class confidence.

"The withholding of care from patients in hospitals, power cuts, cuts in essential services, the closure of banks, as well as strikes in the civil service and in local authorities, can only in the present circumstances serve the plans of reaction".

The chances of workers' revolution in Portugal depend on the building of a new revolutionary party, independent of both Social Democracy and Stalinism — that is clear. The task is one of achieving programmatic clarity, of overcoming and fighting the confusion of the fragmented left centrist groupings, of winning the subjectively revolutionary 'non-party' workers. A revolutionary nucleus, once consolidated, must also fight, using the united front tactic, to win mass support in the SP and CP ranks, and to break those ranks from the leadership of Soares and Cunhal.

The first essential for political clarity is an understanding of the role of the MFA.

THE MFA AND THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT

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The partial disintegration of the old bureaucratic state apparatus after the 25th April 1974, the discrediting and driving from office of many figures associated with the Salazar and Caetano regimes, the disbandment or discrediting of the various police and paramilitary bodies (though the PSP and GNR remained in being, to come to the fore again after 25th November), the flight of thousands of bureaucrats and businessmen, left only one force capable of holding the ring between the weakened bourgeoisie and its American and European masters, and the resurgent working class movement — the Army.

The initial Spinoist strategy was to reform Portuguese capitalism, integrating it into the EEC, carrying out strictly limited nationalisations, while keeping tight control over the working class. In pursuance of this policy, Copcon, the new internal security force set up after April 25th, several times moved against strikers. In Africa, while Guine's independence was unavoidable, the Spinoists sought a neo-colonial solution for Mozambique and, more especially, Angola.

Nevertheless, working class militancy and radicalisation in the army outpaced the Spinoist project. After the defeated coups in September and March, the MFA's policy shifted substantially. Wide-ranging nationalisations — explicitly rejected only a short time before in the MFA's "Economic Plan" — were carried through: many of the leading elements of the bourgeoisie were jailed or left the country. Attempts to retain Portuguese control in Angola and Mozambique were abandoned. Military discipline broke down to a large extent. Units (particularly of Copcon) sent against workers in struggles such as Radio *Renascença* would decide after discussion with the workers not to carry out orders after all.

The MFA, raising itself above society as the only force to control the social contradictions — albeit shakily at times — pursued a state capitalist policy. They struck at the private ownership of important sectors of industry, but they remained vigorously hostile to the struggle for workers' control waged by workers in the factories, in the countryside, and in the mass media, and they retained the essential hierarchic apparatus of the bourgeois state. The more left-wing officers, some of whom aspired to introduce what they thought to be socialism in place of 'state capitalism', were nevertheless tied into the framework of the "MFA/People Alliance".

The armed forces hierarchy, while unable for a period to wield strict discipline, remained intact, ready to reimpose its discipline at the best opportunity. Even at the highest points of the struggle during 1975, abolition of military ranks, election of officers, and — most importantly — systematic arming of the workers and forming of workers' militias — did not become reality. The workers' control exercised at workplace and neighbourhood level never centralised itself and equipped itself with armed self-defence.

Some of the more left-wing elements of the MFA consciously modelled their politics on the national liberation struggles in Guine and Mozambique, and others adapted to those politics. The MFA's policy could be compared to Egypt, Iraq, or Syria, where a military-run state apparatus, acquiring a high degree of autonomy, drastically restructured a decrepit capitalism along statist lines.

In Portugal that military-state-capitalist strategy found itself in a unique and original combination with a working class upsurge in the tradition of France 1968 or Italy 1969, and an advanced radicalisation in and decomposition of the armed forces (analogous to the situation in the CRS and other forces in France immediately post-world war 2 — though the 'film' of events in Portugal was, until 25th November 1975, running in the opposite direction to that in France, where the bourgeoisie gradually asserted complete control of forces initially dominated by working class ex-Resistance militants).

The Portuguese CP supported the military, as its sister Stalinist parties in the Middle East had done. In doing that, it incurred the disapproval of the Socialist Party, and of the Italian and Spanish CPs. But the PCP's tactics did not represent any radical break to the left from modern Stalinism. They simply corresponded to the needs of containing an insurgent, militant working-class base, and above all of adhering at all costs to the 'progressive' forces, namely the MFA.

The more astute bourgeois commentators had a cool assessment of the MFA. Arthur Schlesinger, in mid-1975, said:

"Portugal going Communist is not a happy prospect. It is also a considerable exaggeration. The immediate prospect, if the democratic forces fail to sustain themselves, is not a Communist takeover. It is rather the establishment of a military regime, Nasserite in its model and neutralist in its foreign policy, using the Portuguese Communist Party for counsel and support. Such a regime might well deny military bases to the United States, but there is no reason to suppose

that, any more than Egypt or Peru, it would turn overnight into a Soviet satellite".

Yet, fearing the radical nationalist measures of such a military regime, and the obvious instability of the Armed Forces Movement, international big business has hoped and worked for a bourgeois democracy in Portugal headed by a Socialist Party government.

The SP, therefore, has consistently acted as the Portuguese party of NATO and the EEC. The established leadership of the Portuguese working class movement has been split between two petty bourgeois alternatives, each of which could be presented as 'left-wing' compared to the other. That these alternatives were not fundamentally opposed in class terms was demonstrated by the fact that the CP and the SP have served together in government for most of the time since 25th April 1974, and that the two alternatives have to an extent reached a compromise since 25th November.

Yet many revolutionaries have tailed one or the other petty bourgeois alternative.

The task of revolutionaries was and is to cut through demagogy about "the" classless "Revolution", to fight for democratic rights as a means of mobilising workers against the military regime and of facilitating free organisation and free political clarification in the workers' movement while resisting any use of abstract democracy as a block on the development of workers' control and workers' power. Thus revolutionaries would oppose the CP's attempts to impose trade union unity through state decree, the right-wing attacks on the CP, and the vague and dangerous slogans of 'dissolve the Constituent Assembly' and 'a government of revolutionary unity'; while, at the same time, opposing the SP's demagogy over 'Republica' and the slogan of 'all power to the Constituent Assembly'.

No tendency has steered such a course.

SARAIVA DE CARVALHO AND MILITARY LEFTISM

The consistent aim of the top brass of the MFA was to present it as a united body. In this they were assisted by the PCP, particularly during the period of the 5th Provisional Government of Vasco Gonçalves. The CP and the MFA leaders propagated the idea of the special role of the army in the Portuguese revolution. The MFA leaders toyed for a whole period with the idea of a 'non-political' movement. They recommended abstention in the 1975 elections as a vote for the MFA — a strategy which received a rude rebuff from the overwhelming majority of the electorate. They extracted from the political parties a pact which rendered the Constituent Assembly virtually powerless.

But, from early 1975, with growing working class militancy, the MFA leaders realised more and more that they would have to manipulate and ally with the parties rather than by-passing or smothering them. Pro-CP (Goncalves...) and pro-SP (Antunes...) factions developed in the MFA. Given the size of the layer of workers which was, in

an incoherent way, to the left of the CP and SP, it was inevitable that a 'revolutionary left' faction should also develop in the MFA. There is no need to assume a MFA 'conspiracy' to divert the revolutionary left. Nevertheless that was the effective role played by the tendency personified by Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, commander of Copcon.

In September 1974 Carvalho complained it was left to the workers to repel the Spinoist 'march of the silent majority', "which should be the task of the forces of order". By the time of the March coup he was advocating precisely this mobilisation. Carvalho, with his visit to Havana, began to present himself as the Portuguese Castro. Whilst jockeying for power within the shaky state machine, he went along with plans for 'popular assemblies', linked to the MFA but supposedly 'independent' of political parties. The rank and file and junior officers of Copcon produced a scheme for popular assemblies of workers and soldiers — the 'Copcon document'. Carvalho endorsed this document, whilst flirting with the more right-wing opponents of Goncalves and the 5th Provisional Government, Antunes and Fabiao, in August 1975.

The MFA never set about organising these 'Popular Assemblies' officially, but in some areas, especially around Lisbon, they were set up by rank and file initiative. Despite the written scheme for MFA tutelage, the Popular Assemblies actually took on the form of embryonic workers' councils. Revolutionaries could have drawn out from the 'Copcon document' the proposals that allowed the promotion of working class mobilisation, presenting them from a clear working class angle and ruthlessly criticising the overall trend of the 'Copcon document'. The document lumped together fascism, social-democracy, and 'state-capitalism', opposed 'bourgeois elections', and affirmed the 'MFA/People Alliance'.

In short, revolutionaries had to fight all varieties of military bonapartism. Instead, most of the so-called revolutionary groups flirted with Carvalho. After all, he had taken up their woolly and opportunistic slogans of 'people's' power, 'popular' assemblies. He had taken up their dangerous anti-bourgeois-democratic slogans 'out with the scum' (meaning the parliamentary politicians), 'down with the Constituent Assembly', for a 'revolutionary' or 'anti-imperialist' government.

Concentrating all their fire against the Soares anti-communist offensive of the summer of 1975, they sacrificed or confused the fight for independent organs of working class power, for rank and file soldiers' committees independent of the MFA hierarchy, for the election of officers and the creation and arming of a workers' militia, to slogans which led to a continued dependence of the workers on military leaders and saviours. The left groups also adapted to the anti-political current among the most militant workers. They saw it as an overcoming of the influence of the reformist parties, and failed to see that it involved illusions in the left military and dependence on them. Under the impression of the temporary alliance of Soares with extreme right-wing elements in the North, semi-Maoist ideology

about 'social fascism' was allowed to run riot.

When the working class counter-offensive got under way in the autumn, it saw the most advanced elements of the working class under the sway of a programme of confusion, certainly eager for a socialist revolution, but unclear as to whether this might mean a Carvalho coup or a stronger role in the government for the CP. It is a contemptible revolutionary who blames the masses' or the vanguard's 'lack of maturity' for the collapse of the 25th November.

What was involved was a failure of leadership. When these workers were suddenly deserted by Carvalho and the left wing officers, when the CP suddenly obstructed and demobilised the general strike, when the revolutionary groups did not know what to do and were revealed to have made no preparations for the 'armed insurrection' they had been talking about so hotly in the pages of their papers, the workers of Lisbon were not unsurprisingly unable to overcome these betrayals by some sort of spontaneous exertion of revolutionary consciousness.

THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT: THE U.D.P.

The UDP is the largest of the groups of the far left, mainly as a result of support for rank-and-file militancy, unaccompanied by any clear revolutionary socialist perspective. It had one member in the Constituent Assembly, and one in the Legislative Assembly.

The UDP's programme is for a two-stage revolution on the Stalinist model. Speaking in July 1975, Vladimiro Guinot, a leader of the UDP, declared:

"It is not a socialist revolution which is underway, what our people demand, what is under way, is the need to advance the Popular Democratic Revolution.... let us install a true democracy, a popular democracy. Socialism will come later!"

The UDP combines advocacy of the reformist tactic of the popular front, "a front of the whole people", with a characterisation of the CP as 'social-imperialist'. It isolates the 'foreign imperialists' as the main enemy, and calls for a 'government of national independence'.

All these slogans sow confusion. The popular front is supposed to include 'progressive' elements of the MFA, although the bankruptcy of policies which urge the workers to rely on 'left wing' generals and officers was amply demonstrated on November 25th, when Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho appeared with the prime minister to urge calm. The characterisation of the CP as social imperialists makes even a limited defensive united-front with them impossible, and plays into the hands of right-wing anti-communist demagogy. Concentration on foreign imperialism panders to chauvinism and takes the focus off the main enemy at home. The UDP has helped sow confusion in the workers' and tenants' commissions and obstructed their centralisation into potential organs of working class power.

THE P.R.P./B.R.

The PRP-BR, originating in a guerrillaist split from the CP, combines a militarist view of the party with a spontaneist conception of mass action. One of the most successful practitioners of armed struggle against the Salazar and Caetano regimes, it failed to emerge into legal activity until several months after the April 1974 coup, believing, as it still does, that bourgeois democracy is not possible in Portugal. Its military orientation gave it a considerable following among rank and file soldiers and officers.

During the spring and summer of 1975, the PRP launched a campaign to build 'revolutionary workers' councils', CRTs. But this tactic distracted attention from the task of winning the existing organs of working class mobilisation, the workers' and tenants' commissions. It posed the question of 'soviets' in a flat propaganda sense. The PRP's programme for the CRT movement confused the tasks of party and of soviet. The CRTs were to "carry out a constant ideological struggle — to destroy the bourgeois state apparatus — to be organs of the application of revolutionary violence — to overcome the bourgeois division of labour", etc. This approach, when the great majority of workers remained under the influence of the reformist parties, failed to see that only a genuine united-front tactic, posed round concrete aims of struggle and not general revolutionary declarations, could expose the reformist leaders and forge unity in action. The PRP's participation in the FUR reflected the same mistake. As Trotsky pointed out during the Stalinist Comintern's ultra-left Third Period, and in polemic against the ultra-lefts at the CI's Third Congress of 1921, to have only a united front 'from below' is to take as solved the very problem the united front tactic attempts to deal with, the adherence of masses of workers to the reformist parties and leaders.

In reality, the PRP saw it as only necessary to propagandise for soviets. The masses would turn this propaganda into reality. The mass upsurge of the autumn led the PRP to suppose that the hold of reformism was broken. As early as September 10th, the PRP paper 'Revolucao' declared: "It is now time for the revolutionary forces and the workers to pose the question of an insurrection".

This ultra-left semi-anarchist approach was 'topped off' and complemented by gross opportunism vis-a-vis Carvalho. "Otelo", the PRP declared, "had kept faith with the revolutionary left". The question of the power of workers' councils was confused with that of a left-wing military government, by slogans of 'popular power', 'government of national independence', 'government of revolutionary unity'.

25th November was an indictment of the PRP's evasion of the political tasks of a revolutionary party. They had failed to observe that one reason for the autumn's mass upsurge was that the CP and some of the MFA lefts were encouraging working class militancy in order to redress their weakened position within the new government. When, on the 25th, the reactionaries dared them to act, they retreated, leaving the soldiers and workers to bear the brunt of the reaction.

The PRP, despite "posing the question of an insurrection", had not organised it, and were caught in a state of total confusion. They had taken up the question of arming the workers only in the sense of arming the PRP, not of forming united-front workers' militias. Reliance on left officers also meant that SUV proved a broken reed when those officers deserted their posts on 25th-26th November.

The PRP has not learned the necessary lessons. It refused to participate in the elections, because they were a bourgeois trick. As when it called for the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in summer 1975, the PRP imagines that democratic illusions can be overcome by flatly denouncing them. It has raised the foolish slogan, "No to bourgeois election". Parallel to this anti-parliamentary cretinism is a continued opportunism as regards military leftism. The PRP, far from fighting the bourgeois strategy of a military president — a bulwark for a continuation of the army's bonapartist role — calls for Carvalho to stand for president.

The International Socialists, who have fraternal links with the PRP, have tardily begun to criticise some of their failings. Through, most of the summer and autumn they kept silent, or rather, bathed in the reflected glory of the 'successes' of their Portuguese brethren.

In their pamphlet, "The Lessons of the 25th November 1975", Tony Cliff and Chris Harman read the PRP a lesson out of Lenin on putschism and Blanquism. They decide retrospectively that a revolutionary situation did not exist, because of the unevenness between the workers' and soldiers' mobilisations, and the lack of a mass revolutionary party. Their recipe, in Portugal as in Britain, is to build the party and return to the economic struggle.

As in Britain, however, they have no strategic notion of how to break the hold of the reformists. Yes, the party is necessary: but around what strategy will it be built? Yes, the economic struggle is important, but political tasks, albeit different ones, are just as central now as then. IS has rejected the key lessons of the Leninist CI and of the Trotskyist movement on the use of the united front tactic and on the fight for transitional demands. In the last analysis, IS has no tactics for fighting reformism in Portugal or in Britain — it can only adapt to it or denounce it. The PRP has little to learn from these mentors.

THE L.C.I.

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The LCI — sympathising section of the USFI — has a record of considerable political and programmatic confusion, in no way corrected by the International of which it is a part. The USFI's conception of "the revolutionary process" led the LCI, a tiny organisation, to regard itself as being on some sort of historical conveyor belt leading to the socialist revolution. The concept of a "broad workers' vanguard" "independent" of the Socialist Party and Communist Party filled it with optimism that those parties would present no real obstacle to the process whereby the workers' and neighbourhood commissions would be

transformed into "organs of dual power". As to the tasks once that dual power was achieved, they were, in line with the 1973 USFI European Perspectives Document, entirely vague.

Certainly, particularly in the Lisbon area, there existed large numbers of workers — the workers of Lisnave and Setenave, for example — who supported initiatives by groups to the left of the CP on issues of workers' control, and which would join demonstrations against the 6th Provisional government. It is, however, one thing to struggle for workers' control in the factory, to vote for abstract resolutions on the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', to demonstrate in solidarity with the soldiers, even to leave or express dissatisfaction with the CP. It was quite another to organise those workers into a vanguard positively independent of and opposed to the CP. The strength of the CP was indicated by its hold on the workers' commissions.

The result of the LCI's positions was to underestimate the hold of democratic illusions and of the parties which propagated them. The faith in 'the revolutionary process' led the LCI to overestimate the 'radicalisation' of the CP and virtually to write off the SP as any sort of workers' party, and to underestimate the need to orient the workers and rank and file soldiers against the MFA right and left. Thus the LCI signed the 25th August accord supporting the 5th Provisional Government — a government administering capitalism. Its rationale for signing — that the 25th August front, though perhaps dubious from the point of view of principle, was necessary in order to repel a probable right wing advance — shows that the LCI had come to consider themselves, not an intransigent ideological minority, but 'inspectors-general' of 'the revolutionary process'.

After the expulsion of the CP from the 25th August bloc, the LCI signed the confused manifesto of the FUR, which was an obstacle to the crystallisation of a clear revolutionary nucleus and to the struggle for a genuine united-front offensive on the CP and its members. There it merged itself with the other groups of the 'independent mass vanguard'. A clear-headed position on the united front, a merciless exposure of the errors of these centrist formations, could have warned their supporters and brought the LCI substantial gains after 25th November.

At an extraordinary congress held on January 10th-11th, the LCI, following criticisms made by the USFI, published a self-criticism of its participation in the errors of the FUR. The criticism does not, however, extend to the roots of those mistakes. The present policies of the LCI focus on the call for a national congress of workers' commissions and a democratic congress of all the trade unions. Again a united front of the reformist, centrist and revolutionary workers' parties is given no priority. The governmental slogan, "for a workers' and peasants' government responsible to a national congress of workers' commissions and a democratic congress of all the trade unions" is maximalist, ignoring the reality of the workers' parties' alliance with various bourgeois forces and the parliamentary situation.

The commissions and trade unions are viewed teleologically as 'future soviets', whilst neglecting the need for them to coordinate unit-

ed action to ward off the capitalist offensive.

The immediate governmental slogan addressed to the workers in the commissions and the trade unions should be to force the CP and the SP to break with the bourgeoisie and to form a government. The question of what it would be based on depends on the success of building a real united front, on the relationship of forces. The SP and the CP would cling to alliance with the army and the bourgeoisie, they would hide behind the constitutional forms of the legislative assembly. The workers would fight to force it to carry out the policies of a workers' united front. That fight could only be grounded on battles round concrete demands, not general slogans as to what the government should be based on. The government would be a workers' government only if the workers forced it to carry out those policies and to arm the workers against reaction. Given the growth of a revolutionary party, such a government could be a transitional stage to the seizure of power and the proletarian dictatorship, based on workers' councils.

THE STRUGGLE FOR WORKERS' CONTROL

The essential feature of the Portuguese economy, inherited from fifty years of military dictatorship and fascism, was its extreme backwardness. Heavily dependent on an old fashioned colonial empire which outlasted the French and British, on its cheap and abundant raw materials, the Salazar regime maintained a domestic economy which had an extremely large and conservative agriculture. This consists of minifundia in the North run by a small peasantry, extremely conservative and dominated by the church. Salazar saw the maintenance of a stable and patriarchal peasant society in the North as the most secure social basis of his regime. At the same time for 40 years he tried to avoid too much industrial development, sensing that a large industrial proletariat would spell doom for his Portugal. In the South, huge estates, latifundia, with an extremely poor agricultural proletariat, exploited and impoverished the land.

Portuguese industry was dominated by the banks heading huge conglomerate industrial/financial empires, relying unduly heavily on sources of funds such as remittances from migrant workers, because of the low domestic rate of capital formation.

From the early sixties this picture began to change with a massive and increasing influx of foreign capital. Between 1961 and 1965 direct foreign investment went up by five times. Between 1970 and 1973, it rose by three times, reaching a third of all private investment in Portugal in the latter year. This investment was based on the exceptionally low wages of the working class and the military/police repression which prevented any real struggle to improve them. Wages

paid in 1973 were 1/5 of those paid to equivalent British workers—60% of the population received a weekly wage of less than £12.

However Portugal's non-integration into the EEC did not make sense either to the foreign multinationals or to the leading sectors of Portuguese big business. The mounting cost of the colonial war was increasingly acting as a brake on the economy i.e. a 'modern' neo-colonial situation was required which guaranteed Portuguese and foreign investments in Africa, whilst off-loading political rule onto the shoulders of a local ruling class on the pattern of Britain's and France's decolonisation policy of the fifties and sixties.

Alas for the ruling class this solution was not to be. The military hierarchy proved obdurate and the coup of April 74 got out of control and opened the Pandora's box of class struggle.

After April 74, the working class erupted into a series of wages battles, which the Provisional Governments could not contain. In addition, large numbers of businessmen and managers closely associated with the old regime, fled to avoid the retribution awaiting them from the working class. A wave of occupations, of workers having to take over their factories due to the flight of their bosses, ensued.

Political instability, the flight of foreign and domestic capital plus the effects of world inflation and recession, threw the Portuguese economy into confusion. The economic policy of the first 5 Provisional Governments was vacillating and unstable. On the one hand, they tried to hold the concessions to the workers to a minimum, imposing wage restrictions and anti-union legislation. On the other, the wave of working class militancy, particularly after the right-wing coup attempt in March 1975, forced massive nationalisations. The banks had been closely involved in the preparations for the coup. The bank workers successfully forced the government into taking them over. Because of their ownership of nearly 2/3 of Portuguese industry, a huge state capitalist sector was suddenly created. By the early summer of '75, 70% of Portugal's industrial plant was in the hands of the state and the workers commissions exercised varying elements of workers' control within them. In a whole series of firms, particularly the smaller ones, workers were forced to take over their management after the management fled.

The MFA "economic programme" elaborated by the third Provisional Government talked about "the cessation of all forms of exploitation existing in and characteristic of the capitalist system". This however was pure rhetoric. What was envisaged was a strong state capitalist sector under the control of the military and the state bureaucracy, not a democratically planned economy under workers' management. Certainly they did not want, and resisted as far as possible every struggle of the workers for real elements of control in the factories and on the land.

The Sixth Provisional Government, faced with a catastrophic economic situation, was pledged from the start to 'solve' it at the expense of the working class.

Since the 25th, although the organisations of the working class

remain intact, the working class has lost the initiative and has been restricted to largely sectional battles. Unemployment is now well over 400,000 or around 14% (in Britain this would mean 3 million out of work). In January the cost of living index showed a 50% rise on the previous 12 months. After the 25th the government imposed a 3 month total wage freeze.

Factory closures threaten on a massive scale. There is evidence that many of the big multinationals are preparing to withdraw from Portugal — not to sabotage a government they basically approve of but because their whole operations were based on super-exploitative wage rates. Timex has made nearly 700 of its workers redundant and wants to get rid of another 500.

The Government, desperate to attract foreign capital, is frantically trying to persuade the old bosses and managers to return, offering to hive off the nationalised enterprises and break the hold of the workers organisation on them. In a number of small or medium sized firms, particularly in textiles, the government and the old bosses have split and confused the workers into calling for the return of the former owners.

The struggle for workers' control in Portugal has demonstrated once again the fantastic creativity of the working class in struggle; against economic sabotage, in the pursuit of improvements in the appalling conditions and near subsistence wages, workers established a whole system of workers' control and inspection. The lessons of this struggle are invaluable to the working class in Britain and beyond. In the Setenave shipyards the workers committee has a sub-committee charged specifically with overseeing workers' control. Five workers' control programmes were discussed by the general assemblies of all the Setenave workers and the one adopted received 53% of all votes. Amongst its proposals it lays down:

" 2. The role of workers' control is not to endorse the Administration policies but to watch closely its decisions and to denounce those amongst them which are against the interests of the workers".

" To request from the Administration any documents or management reports; some of these elements should be submitted regularly to the sub-committee in order that the workers know the main activities of the shipyard at every moment".

The programme goes on to enumerate the tasks of this control and inspection and to demand the availability of specialists under the worker delegates' inspection to assist in interpreting information documents etc. The aim is, according to this programme, is " that the workers should view the exercise of workers' control as a necessary practice, heading for a new kind of production relations".

The struggles of the bank workers, the workers in the media, most notably the workers' newspaper "Republica" and the radio station "Renascensa", demonstrated the willingness and the ability of the working class to take control of the nation's economy. The reverses suffered in these struggles, the onslaught of the forces of reaction and the state likewise demonstrate that the battle is a political one. To avoid economic chaos and sabotage a national planned economy

based on working class democracy becomes more and more vital. To achieve this, more than 'dual power' in the factories and offices is necessary. Indeed even total workers management in isolated factories or in the agricultural cooperatives can only be a temporary solution, for as long as political power is in the hands of the bourgeoisie and their agents, as long as the economy as a whole is capitalist, dislocation and sabotage will still run riot and will ultimately disrupt the workers' efforts and demoralise the workforce. This is why unless the democratic organs of workers' control and struggle, the commissions, the factory committees move on to the road of the struggle for political power, the gains already made will be lost.

CONCLUSIONS

Since 25th November there has been a stabilisation. Yet the acute economic crisis, and the fact that the workers' organisations remain essentially intact, pose the continuing possibility of new working-class explosions — or of a sharp attack by the right wing to impose an Argentine-type solution to the economic crisis.

Revolutionaries should of course be involved in every economic and political struggle waged by the industrial and agricultural workers against the return of factories to their old owners, against unemployment, against rapidly falling real wages. In each and every one of these fights, they must argue for maximum unity in action of all sections of workers, for solidarity and support action. But they must also argue for full freedom for political tendencies in the workers movement to argue their strategy. Over the last two years the Portuguese workers have suffered both bureaucratically imposed 'unity' from the CP, the crushing of free speech within the workers' movement, aimed sometimes against the SP, sometimes against the revolutionary left. They have also suffered from the left groups' internecine factionalism which disrupted unity in action. Revolutionaries must offer to fight alongside CP, SP and non-party workers for a united front against the bourgeois offensive.

The fact remains that the vast majority of workers and sections of the petit-bourgeoisie still give their allegiance to the reformist workers' parties, the PCP and the PPS. Despite their respective protestations during the elections, both Cunhal and Soares want to govern in alliance with forces representing the bourgeoisie — either the MFA generals or the PPD. Any perpetuation of this sort in the context of Portugal's deep economic crisis will be an anti-working class government attempting to solve this crisis at the expense of the working class gains made since 1974.

The millions of CP and SP voters did not vote for this. At the very least, they voted to keep the CDS, the PPD, and the right wing generals off their backs. The fight for a workers' united front must start here and now in every struggle but it cannot be predicated on workers leaving their parties behind or ignoring

them. The call for the front cannot exclude these parties themselves. Indeed, to specifically exclude one or other or both of them because they are "social-fascist" or "the main bulwark of reaction" is stupid ultra-leftism.

What are the basic planks of a united front platform in the present situation?

- (1) Defence of and solidarity with all struggles over wages, conditions, and workers' control. Defence of the nationalised industries against return to their former bosses.
- (2) Defence of the agricultural workers and their cooperatives against economic sabotage and against the restriction or reversal of the agrarian reform.
- (3) Opposition to repression against soldiers. For full democratic rights for soldiers, including the election of officers by assemblies in the barracks.
- (4) Against unemployment. For full maintenance and a programme of public works under workers' control.
- (5) Defence of the democratic rights won by the workers, freedom of assembly, workers' control of the media, against legal restrictions on the trade unions. For disbandment of the paramilitary police and for armed workers' defence squads.
- (6) Against the military presidential system. Sovereignty of the Legislative Assembly.

A Revolutionary nucleus in Portugal shall fight for the united action of the workers' organisations round each of the demands of this platform.

The united front tactic does not stop short at the question of what sort of government the workers need. Of course revolutionaries believe and say that the only government that can act consistently, wholeheartedly and effectively for the workers is one based on workers', peasants' and soldiers' councils — a government which is the executive of the dictatorship of the proletariat itself. We support, if necessary, the forcible dispersal of bourgeois-democratic parliamentary assemblies in favour of the power of workers' councils and reject the idea of a peaceful coexistence of the power of workers' councils and a bourgeois democratic state.

However revolutionaries do not simply wait for this and make propaganda about it. Within the ranks of workers in struggle, as part of the struggle for the united front, they call for a workers' government which would carry through these vital measures which would above all arm the workers against reaction. Revolutionaries would support such a government, though it consisted of non-revolutionary socialists, against all reactionary forces — arms in hand, if necessary. They would also fight to make it answerable to the various workers' councils and commissions. They would criticise every vacillation, every weakness, not hiding the fact that such a government would either be transitional to the dictatorship of the proletariat or it would again go down before the forces of counter-revolution.

This situation is of course not on the order of the day, though any massive resurgence by the working class could put it there.

At the moment, the workers' parties have a majority in the Legislative Assembly. Revolutionaries should urge the workers' in the CP and the SP to force their parties to break with the generals and the bourgeois parties and form a government. Given the nature of the SP and CP, of Cunhal and Soares, this government would only act in the workers' interests treacherously and episodically to the extent that the workers forced it to — revolutionaries would support every action of this type while mercilessly criticising and joining with the rank and file of these parties in fighting every anti-working class act.

Only these tactics and demands, fought for in every workers' peasants' and soldiers' organisation — in the unions of the Inter Syndical, in the workers and neighbourhood commissions, in the agricultural cooperatives in the barracks — can mobilise the forces necessary to stem the tide of reaction and put the question of workers' power firmly on the agenda again.

BUKHARIN'S ECONOMICS

Ken Tarbuck has asked us to say that his article in 'Permanent Revolution' no. 3 should have been published under the title "Bukharin's Theory of Negative Expanded Reproduction". "The theory has a wider significance than the transition period, and is only marginally related to it. As the body of the article makes clear it (the theory) is more readily applicable to late capitalism".

He has also asked us to correct the mathematics.

If M is money capital, C is commodity capital, lp is labour power, mp is means of production, P is production process, Δc and Δm are increments in C and M , then we have the formula for capital circulation:

$$M \dots C \left(\frac{lp}{mp} \dots P \dots C + \Delta c \dots M + \Delta m \right)$$

(cf. p. 25, PR3); or, if there is a negative increment,

$$M \dots C \left(\frac{lp}{mp} \dots P \dots C - \Delta c \dots M - \Delta m \right)$$

(cf. p. 26, PR3).

If the portion of surplus value consumed unproductively by the capitalists is prefixed with a , and that used for accumulation with b , we get the following schemes:

$$\text{Dept. 1} \dots 10834c + 2166v + 1083as + 902.5bc + 180.5bv$$

$$\text{Dept. 2} \dots 3166c + 633v + 316.5as + 263.5bc + 53bv$$

and for "DEMAND — Production Period 2 (PP2)"

$$15166 \text{ made up of } 10834c1, 902.5bc1, 3166c2, \text{ and } 263.5bc2 \text{ (Department 1); and}$$

$$4432 \text{ made up of } 2166v1, 180.5bv1, 1083as1, 633v2, 53bv2, \text{ and } 316.5as2 \text{ (Department 2).}$$

$$\text{New capital added during cycle} = 1400 (902.5bc1 + 180.5bv1 + 263.5bc2 + 53bv2)$$

(cf. p. 27, PR3).

Or, in the case of 600 of surplus value being directed to arms production, we obtain:

$$\text{Dept. 1} \dots 10834c + 2166v + 1083as + 516bc + 103bv$$

$$\text{Dept. 2} \dots 3166c + 633v + 317as + 150bc + 30bv$$

(cf. p. 28, PR3); and for "Demand Production Period 2 (PP2)":

$$15166 \text{ made up of } 10834c1, 516bc1, 3166c2, 150bc2, \text{ and } 500cu3 \text{ (Department 1);}$$

$$4432 \text{ made up of } 2166v1, 103bv1, 1083as1, 633v2, 30bv2, 317as2, \text{ and } 100vu3 \text{ (Department 2).}$$

If we move to Production Period 3, we obtain for "Demand (PP3)":

$$15888 \text{ made up of } 11350c1, 559bc1, 3316c2, 163bc2, \text{ and } 500cu3 \text{ (Department 1);}$$

$$4642 \text{ made up of } 2269v1, 111bv1, 1098as1, 663v2, 32bv2, 321as2, 100v3, \text{ and } 48s3 \text{ (Department 2).}$$

Here the total as is divided up between the three departments in the same proportion as the capital in each department.

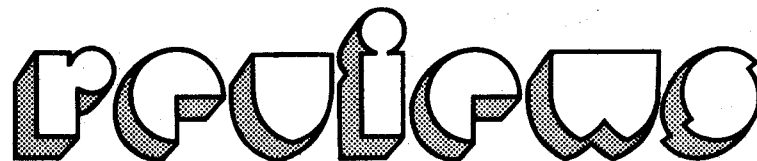
The rate of profit computed as

$$\frac{S}{C+V+U}$$

is 16.13 per cent.

Finally, proceeding to PP4, we get the following scheme for "Demand PP4" in Department 2:

$$4869 \text{ made up of } 2348v1, 1151as1, 685v2, 337as2, 300vu3, \text{ and } 48as3.$$



"MONSTER", a book of poems by Robin Morgan. Reviewed by Alan Haslam.

ROBIN MORGAN is an American feminist, long active in the women's movement in the USA. "Monster" is a collection of her poetry, written over a period of ten years, and produced recently in Britain in a pirate edition by a women's printing collective.

These often powerful poems capture important strengths and problems — an elemental revolt against the conditions of female oppression in bourgeois patriarchal society, and the frightening confusion of identity experienced by women as they attempt to question and fight this oppression. But the poems also show the weaknesses of a viewpoint that sees the domination of men over women as the prime cause of all this, and counterposes feminist "revolution" to the organisation of women as a specific but integral part of the revolution of the working class as a whole against capitalism.

In the earlier part of the collection, Morgan is concerned with the destructive nature of personal sexual relations in bourgeois society. The violent language and imagery of these poems conveys the intolerable stifling and perversion of personality in relationships based on domination and submission. In "Eight Games of Strategy", there is a harrowing vision of alienated sexuality, in which mutually destructive conflict is necessary to keep the couple's relationship going. Images of battle and destruction run throughout, and inseparable from this is their mutual isolation that keeps them hacking each other. These strategies of destruction are seen as part of a world in chaos, out of control of the participants, whose passion is hopeless and deadly.

In "Satellite", we see the woman's subjection to domesticity beneath the myths of equality, and she looks in despair at alternatives of suicide and lesbianism, before asking "Who set me orbiting this bed?". Another poem shows a woman meeting at every turn male authority figures, who threaten a punishment she is expected to accept and want. In these early poems, Morgan is concerned with the hatred and despair engendered in personal relationships by female subjection, and how it could be confronted with men on a personal level.

But increasingly, the sexual conflict is generalised and made social and political. "Annunciation" is about five white American workers who beat up a homosexual (Morgan's husband), who is also a poet and a political radical. The tragic thing is that they are oppressed workers who do this, "straight

patriotic clean Americans", pulverising "some hippie commie bastard queer", reinforcing their sadism in "poolrooms, barrooms, war". Morgan relates the suffering of the man to that of black Americans, Vietnamese- and raped women, yet asks, would "Vietnamese and Panther suffering" even be subordinate to the bond of male chauvinism? She ends in defiance, "I am pregnant with murder", affirming the struggle against "masculinist pride", but going no further in analysis.

More and more the poetry despairs of fruitful relations between the sexes in this society. In "Quotations", the woman cannot free herself of the consciousness of her oppression, finding no consolation in her child, and her husband's bewilderment makes the situation even worse. A poem like "Freaks" locates such feelings of helplessness within political and social violence, while "The Butchers" is concerned with the paranoia attendant upon a woman in urban life, facing lechery, deceit, solitude, mockery, and the wailing of a child which brings thoughts of murdering it.

The desire for revolution becomes uppermost. "Four Visions on Vietnam" depicts the female artist as revolutionary fighter, and vice versa. The strength of this piece comes from its ability to face the tragic, while asserting a revolutionary struggle against it, seeing the development of consciousness as a very painful thing, in which human weakness and despair are very much related to human power and creativity, and in the "rage" of liberation she scorns those who would "return her without fuss to the brothel".

Morgan's profound rejection of the role allotted her as a woman, and her portrayal of the reality of this, produces poetry that is both powerful and moving. There is a strong sense of the necessity of a creative transformation of existing relations between the sexes, and at the same time an awareness of how difficult this is, due to the depth of society's conditioning. But the change is seen idealistically, often being presented as a yearning, a dream dashed upon waking. The crisis in human relationships that is recognised is not rooted historically or in the ways in which human beings concretely produce their conditions of life through labour. As a result, Morgan's "revolution" has no relationship to class struggle, and is seen as an act of violent assertion on the part of women, which men will always oppose. Hence we get a romantic and often melodramatic conception of revolution, seen as an act of madness, transforming but suicidal.

In the final section of the book, Morgan ditches the development of technique in favour of a feminist rhetoric that avoids more than it asserts. There is, of course, a very strong expression of revolt against intolerable conditions, but as all men are viewed as enemies, because they are men, the real complexities of revolution are not faced, and the writing becomes simplistic accordingly. The conception of men being saved from themselves by women means that there is no effort made to ask how we can begin the transformation of sexual life now, as part of the social revolution that will free both

women and men, separately and together, from capitalism and all its murderous conditioning. There is no asking how men can fight against male chauvinism, and of how men and women could create an alienated sexuality. This would involve dealing with complexities that go beyond the techniques of rhetorical assertion, and would mean bringing the problems dealt with in the earlier poems into a dynamic political conception.

In so far as the rhetoric asserts the pride and independence of women it is good — and certainly the assertion of lesbianism as a right of women in the recognition of their own humanity is important. But in so far as rhetoric drowns analysis it is not so good. Crucially, Morgan never explores the problems of class and class struggle in relation to women's liberation. Thus "Monster" closes in the form of a 'prayer' for a classless liberation, and it is a very subjective and inadequate conclusion indeed.

"RACE, CLASS, AND THE STATE: THE BLACK EXPERIENCE IN BRITAIN"

by A.Sivandan. Published by the Institute for Race Relations, price 30p.

Reviewed by S. Richardson.

IN THIS PAMPHLET Sivandan provides an analysis of the politics of and the historical background to the recent Government White Paper, 'Racial Discrimination', and the latest Race Relations Bill, now before Parliament.

The analysis begins with immigration, because "to understand the politics of the White Paper, to see what it tells us about state power in one particular aspect — black labour — but an aspect which, like a barium meal, reveals the whole organism of the state, and relates black experience to white struggle — one must first reappraise the Immigration Acts".

Post-Second-World-War immigration into Britain from the colonies and the ex-colonies was motivated by the labour shortage which gripped most of Western Europe in the 1950s. In this period of full employment, there was no restriction of the number of immigrants. However, the colonial legacy left the "New Commonwealth" people usually unsuitable for anything but manual work, while British workers' racialist attitudes reinforced this restriction of the immigrants to the "dirty, hard, low-paid work".

The immigrant workers, who had cost Britain nothing to rear or to educate, were repaid for their involuntary philanthropy by being driven into the already crowded conurbations where such work was to be found. The racism of the landlords in the slums exacerbated the situation, and led to the creation of ghettos where overcrowding was the norm. This forced overcrowding, itself the product of racialist rejection, was then used by the indigenous population as a justification for precisely those racialist ideas. "The forced concentration of immigrants in the deprived and decaying areas of the big cities highlighted (and reinforced) existing social deprivation; racism defined them as its cause. To put it crudely, the economic profit from immigration had gone to capital, the social cost had gone to labour, but the resulting conflict between the two had been mediated by a common 'ideology' of racism".

Racist reaction on the part of the white indigenous population showed the social limits to the gains of importing cheap labour, kept cheap by a racist definition of inferiority, which ensured that few immigrants could rise out of the worst conditions. "The first step was to slow down immigration, thin out the black presence, the second to manage racism, keep it within profitable proportions — relief for the depressed areas, urban aid, would follow. The economy

had in any case absorbed all the unskilled labour it could (though it still required skilled and professional workers). Additional units of labour applied to existing (outworn, outmoded) plant would not yield the returns that would make such addition justifiable. On the other hand, automation and new technology — capital-intensive production — would help Britain to compete with the rest of Europe in markets made more competitive by the loss of its colonies. That same 'loss', however, would make it possible for Britain to renege on its Commonwealth ties and look to the Common Market for the labour it required — when the time was ripe. The stage was set for immigration control".

The pamphlet traces through the '60s the changes in the law which the state introduced in response to the social problems thrown up by "laissez-faire immigration and laissez-faire discrimination", and the increased orientation towards Europe. Firstly, the immigration laws (of 1962, 1965, 1968, 1971) were designed, according to Sivanandan, to effect "the transition of Commonwealth (and therefore British) citizens from the status of citizens to labourers on contract". As Britain moved towards the EEC, the Commonwealth connection could be transformed so that what were black immigrant settlers took on the status of migrant workers hired on contract.

This contract labour, widely used in Europe, was defined as alien by the nationality and immigration laws. Migrant labour — as opposed to settler immigrants with citizen status — was disposable and cheap; could be discarded without the social consequences of domestic unemployment; was labour 'voluntarily' and 'legally' denied rights of citizenship; and was labour outside of the "indigenous proletariat and thereby mediating class conflict".

The steps Britain took to effect this change of status for its imported labour were designed "to move gradually towards the European model of contract labour (and a European configuration with the poor south as its periphery) without foregoing the 'Commonwealth' relationship". With the coming into force of the 1971 Immigration Act (in January 1973) the British Commonwealth immigrant was no more. Those who come before this date are black settlers, those who come afterwards, black migrant workers on a par with the European migrant workers. The super-exploitation that the black workers always suffered in Britain is made worse for these new-comers by rendering them disposable. The 'non-patrial' Commonwealth citizen is for Britain an alien, and the 'New Commonwealth' joins Southern Europe (with Britain's entry into the EEC) as a source of cheap, super-exploitable contract labour. Distance and cost make the former less accessible, and the more obvious 'black' manual migrant is now the least likely to be hired.

The conversion of the black immigrant settlers to black migrants had to be coupled with government action to deal with that aspect of the 'black problem' already present in Britain. Thus each successive limitation and final redefinition of the type of labour being imported was linked to an attempt to manage racism. This managing took the form of educating the whites into accepting the blacks, and defusing and confusing the black resistance, deflecting its revolutionary potential into legal pressure politicking.

This management and diminution of racially discriminatory practices was undertaken by successive governments in the "long-term and overall interests of capital", not concern for the black immigrants. Racism was useful to capitalism only up to a point. Capital found no psychological self-justification for it, and therefore when racism turned from an aid to exploitation into a positive hindrance to capital's real needs, it had to be tackled.

But the two-pronged strategy, as Sivanandan notes, was contradictory. Not just the 1971 Act, but all Immigration Acts were racist. "The British government... had... no wish to change the nationality laws in order to stop 'coloured' immigration" until recently, given the advantages that accrued to it before the establishment of the European connection... Hence it resorted to a system of control which, in being specifically (though not overtly) directed against the 'coloured' Commonwealth, was essentially racist". The racist who blamed the 'blacks' for all the social evils of British society had his view confirmed, sanct-

ioned, and given widespread credibility by governments agreeing to limit the 'problems' by controlling the blacks coming in. "The basic intention of the government, one might say, was to anchor in legislation an institutionalised system of discrimination against foreign labour, but because that labour happened to be black, it ended up by institutionalising racism instead".

Typical British hypocrisy was coupled with naivete as governments set about the job of managing domestic racial discrimination, while institutionalising and promoting racist attitudes in the population at large via immigration control. **Within their own terms** they were ultimately successful, but the first attempts were half-hearted and un-thought-out.

The first integration gesture was the establishment of the Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Council in 1962, later replaced by the far more substantial National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NCCI) in 1965. 1965 was also the year of the first Race Relations Act, which established the Race Relations Board and local conciliation committees. That Act and the Board were little use to anyone. The Labour Government at that time, along with the majority of the nascent 'race relations industry', still saw integration as mainly about bringing the Asian communities — remote in language, culture and family structure — into a multi-cultural society. But the resources allocated to the RRB and the NCCI were far too small for even this limited programme, and anyway the situation was changing.

In the mid-'60s the West Indian community started a militant resistance to the racist discrimination they suffered in every sphere of social life, and thereby revealed themselves as unassimilated, unintegrable, and a threat to 'consensus' politics. Inspired by the American movement, the West Indians were showing a tenacity and independence which forced the Race Relations Industry and the Government to recognise that West Indians too required 'integration'. A new Act plus an urban aid programme was the response.

The 1968 Race Relations Act was wider in scope than the 1965 Act, yet it was, in the main, unenforceable, leaning heavily as it did on conciliation processes. "Basically, the Act was not an Act but an attitude". As Sivanandan puts it, the 1968 Act's "sole purpose... was education — the education of the lesser capitalists in the ways of enlightened capital". Alongside the transition from Commonwealth immigrant settler status to migrant status, another complementary transition was to be effected, but this time internally — changing the once profitable "institutionalised racism to domestic neocolonialism". Sivanandan claims that the 1968 Act "succeeded in what the State meant it to do: to justify the ways of the State to local and sectional interests — and to create, in the process, a class of coloured collaborators who would in time justify the ways of the State to the blacks". Thus, those like the 'Communist' Party who bleat about the failings of the Race Relations Act and argue for a better one to "out-law racism", miss the point of the Act and all such legislation.

Having thus coped with the Asians by 'integrating' their culture and the West Indians by 'integrating' their political protest, the State could dispense with its educating Race Relations Board and Community Relations Council, and establish in its new Bill a Race Relations Commission (RRC), and a law which has teeth. The new Bill aims to fight racial discrimination, and the new strategic role of the RRC will be to do precisely that.

But once again, this is not done for altruistic motives; it is done in the interests of capital, in the interests of social stability. For there is one group of Blacks in Britain — besides the migrants — who are not 'integrated' — the 'second generation' West Indian youth. This, as yet, largely romantically and incoherently rebellious group, still threatens the State with the generation of a mass political struggle, in the black under-class and among migrant workers (and perhaps in the working class as a whole — particularly in a time of massive unemployment and urban decay. By creating 'equal opportunity' for these youths, and for blacks in general, the government hopes to defuse this resistance, as it defused the previous threats by the establishment of Community Relations Councils (which are to remain) and similar bodies.

The pamphlet summarises a wide-ranging analysis, but certain aspects of State action have been omitted. The use of the trade unions as part of the State means of social control in 'race relations' has often been more direct than accounted for in Sivanandan's remark: "state policy had helped trade unions to institutionalise divisive racist practices within the labour movement itself". Take two recent examples from both sides of the coin, immigration and 'race relations'. The TUC was able recently to successfully pressurise the government to cut work permits in the catering industry. The recent commitment to oblige firms to advertise all vacancies in British Job Centres for three weeks before offering them to 'foreigners' was certainly in part the work of the trade union bureaucrats. Meanwhile the TUC have recently established an Equal Opportunities Sub-committee which will be a trade-union outpost of the Government's Equal Opportunities Commission and Race Relations Commission.

Sivanandan also fails to note how the contradiction of limiting numbers by law (and thereby defining blacks as the problem), while attempting to reduce racial discrimination through other laws, has been reproduced inside the Race Relations legislation itself. For example, the 'Racial Balance' provision in the 1968 Act permitted employers to discriminate on racial grounds, in order to preserve a racial balance within a particular work-place, where an imbalance could 'reasonably' be expected to cause racial friction. In other words, 'large' numbers of blacks are defined again as the cause of racial tension, and limiting the numbers as the solution. The provision is to be left out of the new Bill, but only against the advice of the CBI and other employer groups. This would suggest that the success of the RRB and the CRC in their education work was not unqualified.

Another expression of the contradiction between government immigration policy and race relations policy has been the quite widespread maltreatment of blacks by state officials. Most notably we have had the savage attacks and harassment by the police, and the inhuman racist treatment of new immigrants and dependents at airports and sea ports by immigration officials. Both these forms of racialism have quite correctly been seen by the black communities as receiving the sanction of the government — even if only negatively. This crack in the government's integration of Asians and West Indians has, for the most part, been papered over by the black communities, agreeing to work through the government-blessed pressure committees, etc. However, it is a crack — one which the government is not going to fall into — and paper doesn't hold forever.

These omissions do not detract from the fundamentals of the analysis. But a more important omission, it would seem, is the lack of policy-type conclusions, or even speculation as to the possibilities of success for the government's strategy.

The pamphlet notes that the government aims to 'solve' the 'black problem' within ten years, that "racism dies in order that capital might survive", but beyond this it does not go. We might have expected Sivanandan at least to weigh up the possibilities of success of this latest government attempt "to carry the fight against discrimination into every area of society", particularly in the light of government cuts which threaten to undermine the project. (At least part of the reason why Lyons left the Home Office recently was the refusal of the government to allocate enough funds to tackle what is now politely called 'racial disadvantage').

But the crucial lack on the British left has been of conviction (and, often, courage) — born of a clear understanding of the situation and how it developed — that racism is in the white working class, and must be fought there, but not through the State agencies or their trade-union-bureaucracy parallels. Sivanandan's analysis of state activities on racialism and immigration could be a springboard for educated speculations, and action-backed policies.

"LEON TROTSKY: WRITINGS 1929". Published by Pathfinder Press, price £2.10.

This volume, the twelfth, completes Pathfinder Press's collection of Trotsky's writings from 1929 to 1940.

The third item, the article "How Could This Happen?", recalls Trotsky's declaration to the Central Committee of the CPSU in August 1927: "To sum up: for the socialist fatherland? Yes! For the Stalinist course? No!" — which is the theme of a series of articles exposing the circumstances of Trotsky's exile from Russia (decreed in January 1929), and another series criticising the third and fourth waves of capitulations to the Stalin faction from the ranks of the Opposition.

To the leaders of the third 'wave', Radek, Preobrazhensky, and Smilga, Trotsky replies: "How bureaucrats count parties is a matter of tenth-rate importance. The historian of the future will say that the cause of Marx and Lenin was continued by the Opposition... Our fidelity to the October Revolution remains unshakable. It is the fidelity of fighters, not parasites".

The last article in the volume records the death of Jakob Blumkin, the first Trotskyist victim of Stalinist murder.

Trotsky's writings of 1929 also record his struggle against sectarianism and coterie politics in the ranks of the International Left Opposition, then in the process of formation. The pamphlet "Defence of the Soviet Republic and the Opposition" (p.262) argues for the USSR's right to retain the Chinese Eastern Railroad, and against the slogan of the German 'Leninbund', "Hands off China". Other articles record the process whereby the Opposition freed itself from people like Souvarine and Paz in France, who wanted an eclectic discussion circle rather than a serious communist faction. "You can have revolutionaries both wise and ignorant, intelligent or mediocre. But you can't have revolutionaries who lack the willingness to smash obstacles, who lack devotion and a spirit of sacrifice".

Isolated, persecuted, in exile, his most celebrated co-thinkers in Russian capitulating, the non-Russian Opposition an unformed scattering mixed up with the most unworthy elements, Trotsky adheres with total inflexibility to the principle that "we need ties with the masses [not] for the sake of these ties alone, [but] for the sake of revolutionary (and therewith international) goals". "The greatest honour for a genuine revolutionist today", he declares, "is to remain a 'sectarian' of revolutionary Marxism in the eyes of philistines, whimperers and superficial thinkers."

M.T.

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