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Mass Movements in Portugal WORKERS REACH FOR POWER

Who is to rule Portugal? That is the question posed by the new stage in the development of dual power, which has followed the attempted right-wing coup of March 11th. It is an unmistakable landmark in the development of the European revolution.

As news of Spínola's bid to regain power came over the radio, barricades went up in the working class districts of Lisbon and Oporto.

Armed workers blocked the main roads into and out of the cities, searching cars for weapons, known right-wing politicians, army officers and fleeing capitalists. Over 100 were arrested. In many cases the road blocks continue as workers mop those who collaborated for years with the Caetano dictatorship.

Up and down the country the hundreds of organs of workers' power - occupation committees, rank-and-file soldiers' organisations and committees of poor farmers and tenants - rallied to oppose the coup. By its armed intervention the Portuguese working class has shown that, far from trusting the Armed Forces Movement, it is reaching out towards seizing its own power.

The universal slogan of workers in Portuguese cities is "Death to Fascism!" A mass united front against the coup emerged. The *Daily Telegraph* reported:

"Bitter electoral bickering between Communists and Socialists was forgotten as party flags and banners mingled and supporters linked arms in the parade down the Avenida de Libertad. Jeering slogans were directed against the Popular Democrats, the other civilian components of the Provisional Government, under constant attack from the extreme left."

In the immediate aftermath of the attempted coup has come a political shake-up of the two main classes. The lead was taken by the bank workers. They had been among the few sections who defied the Caetano regime with strikes and other industrial action in the years before the overthrow of fascism on April 25th 1974.

On March 14th they marched 15,000 strong through the streets of Lisbon in support of the decision by the Provisional Government to nationalise Portugal's banking system

WORKERS CONTROL

This decision had come after the banks had been taken over by workers, who had shut them down for three days, until their demands for workers' control were met.

Following the announcement of nationalisation hastily prepared banners inscribed "People's Bank" were hoisted over elegant entrances. Walls and windows were covered with revolutionary slogans.

At the mass rally in the Lisbon Sports Palace following the march the bank workers started a national campaign to open the books of finance and industrial capital. From then on leaflets and left-wing papers have carried documented details of the export of huge sums abroad, of the restriction of credit to smaller employers,

workers' management was brought out clearly by the *Financial Times* saying:

"The nationalisation decision was taken by the still unnamed Supreme Council of the Revolution in face of the workers' threats to keep the banks shut



Lisbon, May Day 1974.

and farmers, of large sums paid to support the right-wing capitalist parties and the 'moderate' Popular Democratic party. Photocopied details of correspondence cheques, deals and statements have been published revealing the whole system and its corruption.

These exposures have gone on in wholesale defiance of the 'normal' confidentiality of commercial and financial secrets. They reflect the fact that the government's 'nationalisation' of the banks was intended only to contain the real control that had already been established by the working class. What is required now is workers' management of the banking system.

MANAGEMENT

The committees of workers already established in control of the banks now must, under nationalisation become the direct management. This would give the working class control over the development of industry, and give protection (through cheap credit) to the poor farmers. This demand must also be linked to that of nationalisation of the land and of all major industry.

The hostility of the capitalists to

the capitalist state.

The groups of armed workers which have sprung up all over Portugal must be organised into a workers militia controlled by the workers councils with the trade unions. The army must be disbanded and replaced by the militia.

These are the crucial questions facing the Portuguese working class. Such demands can only be fought for by a party which clearly grasps the class nature of the present government and the need to fight now for a workers' government based firmly on the strength of the workers' councils. This party must be a revolutionary Trotskyist party as part of the Fourth International.

BATTLE

This is in direct conflict with the perspective of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, who seek to direct the whole movement along the 'peaceful' path of campaigning for the parliamentary elections in April.

The mass movement must not blind workers to the tough battle ahead. The capitalist class, though frightened and confused, is conscious of the dangers which face it, and is trying now to reorganise the state machine prior to election day - April 12th. The Armed Forces Movement has reorganised itself into a so-called 'Revolutionary Council', purged of the elements most openly compromised by association with fascism. It includes also direct nominees of the Communist Party - controlled Portuguese Democratic Movement.

Military power has been concentrated under the command of the nation-wide 'security' force COPCON (Continental Operational Command), drawn from those units regarded as loyal to the officer corps and the Armed Forces Movement. COPCON was set up last July when Spínola was still head of state, to provide a force immune from fraternisation between soldiers and workers. Such fraternisation has developed to the point where whole detachments refuse to act against demonstrations (as happened recently in Oporto and at Setubal, where workers broke up conferences of right-wing parties.) COPCON excludes regiments in which the private soldiers' committees wield real power, such as the 1st Light Artillery - nicknamed the 'Red Regiment' - whose barracks at Sacaven were bombed in Spínola's attempted coup on March 11th.

NON ELECTED

Neither COPCON, nor the Armed Forces Movement itself, are elected or answerable in any way to the working class. Pretending to stand 'above' the classes, they form the peak of a Bonapartist regime.

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SCAB TROOPS IN GLASGOW

The Labour-controlled City Council in Glasgow voted on Saturday to ask the government to send troops to break the nine-week old strike of 350 dust cart drivers, out in defence of a living wage. The council used the tale that they had "no alternative" because the growing piles of rubbish are "dangerous to health".

It is clear however that a political attack has been launched against the drivers in order to protect the Labour government's treacherous social contract. The deliberate use of troops as an organised scabbing force is designed to beat the drivers into submission, as well as establish a precedent for strike-breaking on a much wider scale.

ACTION

As we go to press the drivers were about to meet to consider action against the military intervention on Wednesday. One thing that stands out clearly is that they have been left wide open to this attack by the class-collaboration of the T&GWU leadership who have refused to make the strike official and have made no response to the Council's clear determination to smash the strike, other than the inadequate response of Alex Kitson, T&GWU National Officer, who said the implications of the move were "very grave".

GENERAL STRIKE

The back-peddalling of the bureaucracy is matched by the leisurely attitude of the local Trades Council, which has called an emergency meeting for Wednesday evening - a whole day after the use of troops is scheduled to begin.

Every class conscious worker will reject with contempt the pitiful pretences used by Glasgow Labour councillors for this action, and the Labour ministers responsible for sending in the troops. The sharpest fight must be taken up in the Labour movement to hound out these scabs and replace them with people prepared to defend the working class. The call must go up throughout the T&GWU and all unions to support the drivers, to make the strike official, and to ensure their fight is not broken by this attack on trade unionism.

General strike action is called for to defend the unions against this latest attack by the state.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

FRANCE

The determined resistance of carworkers in the giant Renault plants in the Paris area made itself felt throughout French politics during March. Renault workers faced a concerted management campaign for lay-offs and short-time working, and an equally determined attempt to victimise and sack militants.

At the Le Mans plant management unilaterally posted notices cutting the time of 4,200 production workers by four hours a shift. The workers affected replied by working the full shift. Since (like most French workers) they are monthly paid, the full crisis in the plant is suspended till towards the end of the month, when an angry and solid reaction is expected if management attempts to carry out the pay-cuts threatened.

MILITANTS

At the Billancourt plant (centre of struggle during the general strike against De Gaulle in May and June, 1968), management served sacking notices on seventeen militants — three of whom are shop stewards — several of them Africans and Algerians. The main unions, including the Stalinist-led General Confederation of Labour (CGT) took a position against the sackings, but without proposals for action.

Unofficial stoppages have taken place both at the Le Mans plant (where a mass demonstration was held a week ago) and at Cleon. Management has added to its attacks by flatly refusing to negotiate on a 250 franc (about £23) per month flat rate pay increase (in any case insufficient to keep up with the

cost of living), and with a series of one-day lock-outs at the Sandouville, Flins and Saint-Jean-de-la-Ruelle factories. The question of a fight for workers' control of production has been posed in this complex of struggles, with management claiming — against union evidence to the contrary — that 'shortage of parts' justifies their actions.

Background to the struggles in Renault is accelerating inflation and mounting unemployment in the French economy. Both Communist Party leader Georges Marchais, and Socialist Party leader Mitterand, have been forced to put Renault at the centre of their main political speeches. But they have limited themselves to demanding that Gaullist Prime Minister Chirac step in to make Renault negotiate more 'realistically'.

Chirac, for his part has made it clear that management are acting in line with government policy, as explained by him recently to the company's president.

The Stalinist and social-democratic officials in the unions have no policy to defend Renault workers Edmond Maire, leader of another main national union (the CFDT) put it, Renault's refusal to negotiate is carrying the unions 'into the Sea of Storms'. All he could propose was that 'We believe in human will, and its determining influence on the development of the crisis.' As if the crisis was just something in the heads of workers and management, which would go away if they thought about something else!

POPULAR FRONT

It is the strength of the working class, especially in the great plants, and its refusal to bear the burden of the economic crisis and inflation, which lies behind the long-running sniping-match between Communist Party and Socialist Party chiefs on the interpretation of their electoral 'common programme' (the present

form of the coalition which gave Mitterand 49 per cent of the poll in the presidential election following Pompidou's death).

The 'common programme' is in fact a recipe for Popular Front betrayals, tying the workers parties to 'liberal' parties of the bourgeoisie, thus preventing the adoption of a socialist programme. Its vague and reactionary character is producing splits even among the top Stalinist leadership.

ARMY

On March 6th Marchais was forced to step in and repudiate a letter to President Giscard d'Estaing from Henri Fizbin, leader of the Paris Communist Party federation. The Paris bureaucrats stepped into line soon enough, and the CP leadership set about 'mobilising' the rank-and-file behind a series of meetings culminating in the March 19th protest against the increase in petrol prices, which now, together with value added tax, cuts deep into workers' pay packets and into local government social spending.

On other fronts, too, the 'common programme' is showing itself increasingly tattered. Following widespread demonstrations by army conscripts in support of their political freedoms to which the government replied with a cabinet reshuffle placing General Bigeard, notorious for his role against the FLN in Algeria, in the Ministry of Defence-CP and Socialist Party leaders vied with each other in proclaiming their 'patriotic' loyalty to the 'national' forces. But on March 13th Marchais — reflecting the pressure from Moscow — was forced to attack right-wing Socialist Party leaders for 'deviating' from the 'common programme' on the 'independence' of the French nuclear strike force.

These reactionary positions on the forces of the state are the most open expression of the class-collaborationist character of the Stalinists and Socialists' 'left unity'.



Lon Nol's troops collect dead after attack by liberation forces.

CAMBODIA

THE END DOMINO

The tremendous advances of the Khmer Rouge liberation forces in Cambodia during February and March have shaken all the US-backed puppet regimes in the area.

As the Khmer Rouge — fighting almost unaided, with only a trickle of help from China and North Vietnam — tightened their grip on the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh, administration officials in Washington began to revive the 'domino' theory: that even the most corrupt and shaky of puppet regimes must be propped up at all costs, lest their collapse fracture American foreign policy as a whole. The 'domino' theory does represent the most realistic outlook of US capitalist politicians. The successes of the Cambodian liberation fighters have immediately strengthened the struggle against US imperialism throughout South-East Asia.

VIETNAM

In South Vietnam six provincial capitals fell to liberation troops in a week, despite massive airlifts of men and ammunition by the Thieu government. In Thailand, Cambodia's western neighbour, the jerry-built coalition of Seni Pramoj

collapsed only a week after it was formed, just eighteen months after the military regime was ousted by student demonstrations. This was despite Pramoj's promise to remove the 23,000 US air force men stationed in the country. And the next attempt to form a coalition, led by Pramoj's brother, immediately got embroiled in accusations that the parliamentary ballot was rigged.

The compromise Laos government — a coalition of the Communist Party and capitalist politicians — is clearly threatened by the developments in the rest of Indochina. And liberation forces continue to press forward in Burma and the Philippines.

KOREA

Even the South Korea regime — solidest bastion of US imperialism in Asia since the 1950s — feels itself at risk. As the ambassador in Washington expressed it: '... we look at the American dilemma this way: where will the US draw the line in resisting communist pressure? The question eventually boils down to the suggestion that maybe all of Asia is kind of inscrutable to the US, and that the line should be drawn in the Middle East and Europe.'

It is this 'pressure', expressed in the victories and popular support of the Khmer Rouge, that is forcing the divisions among American ruling class politicians to crisis point, and opening the door to further international blows against imperialism.

USA

WAR MACHINE REFUELS

US Defence Secretary James Schlesinger last week unambiguously repeated his war threat against the Arab countries. 'I think we should recognise that circumstances can change very rapidly, and in circumstances in which the American people feel their interests are being dramatically affected they would be no more averse to the use of power - of military power — than they were in the period after Pearl Harbour', he said in an interview last week.

Schlesinger's interview came as Congressional haggling over his 104 billion dollar 'defence' budget for 1976 reaches its height. He speaks of course, not for the American 'people', but for the US and international imperialists. With Ford and Kissinger, he hopes to steer through Congress a package that will limit spending on nuclear weapons — now being negotiated with the Kremlin in the 'Strategic Arms Limitation Talks' (SALT) — and set much greater resources free for the US to directly attack revolutionary and liberation movements world-wide. The issue at stake in US backing for the Lon Nol regime in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh was 'the questioning of the fidelity of American commitments, and that, I think, is the most important aspect'.

US imperialism, with Schlesinger's military planning and Kissinger's flying diplomacy working hand-in-

hand, is desperate to restore backing and confidence for their reactionary and puppet regimes world-wide. The crises in Indochina and the Middle East now come together in Schlesinger's plan for a massive build-up of US forces in the Indian Ocean, centred on the British Island of Diego Garcia. It is the need to invade suddenly with large numbers of ground troops that is the key factor, not the reported increase in Soviet forces in the Indian Ocean. While the US has about 200,000 troops in the Far East, and effective control of the 800,000 NATO men in Western Europe and the Mediterranean, they have only a few hundred in the Middle East and Persian Gulf.

PERSIAN GULF

Schlesinger stressed that 'Most of the industrialised world is dependent on the flow of petroleum out of the Persian Gulf. The domination of the oil resources of the Persian Gulf area would dramatically alter the configuration of world politics.' He added that the cut off, by Congress, of military aid to Turkey in January had been 'an extraordinary event'. US military schemes include not only an increased 'presence' in the Indian Ocean and the surrounding states, but plans to increase the forces' manpower by almost a quarter — from the present 2,100,000 men — by 1977, and to greatly expand military air-lifting capacity so that, for example, an entire Army division could be transported from the United States to Western Europe every few days. Similar plans are afoot for the troops in Japan, South Korean and Pacific islands.

"AID"

US military forces themselves are only part of the picture. Spending on military and connected 'aid' con-

tinues to grow as the US struggles to prop up 'sympathetic' governments. One of the things brought into the open by the scandals and investigations concerning the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has been the enormous role of the highly-secret National Security Agency (NSA). Spending over a thousand million dollars a year, the NSA is officially restricted to intercepting and decoding telecommunications. NSA personnel were recently evacuated from a station in northern Ethiopia as the Eritrean Liberation Forces in the area gained ground against the Addis Ababa regime. The NSA post was set up in 1960, the US Senate was told, following an agreement to supply 147 million dollars of military aid to the (later deposed) Ethiopian 'emperor' Haile Selassie, (for background see feature in *Socialist Press* of February 20th). One of the top priorities of US foreign policy is now to restore 'security' to the southern exit to the Red

Sea, giving access to the Israeli-held ports in the Sinai peninsula.

WAR

US military planning, in the teeth of an economic crisis in which domestic 'welfare' programmes are being savagely cut, shows with crystal clarity how capitalist crisis accelerates the drive towards war. The CIA now provides President Ford with a daily computerised calculation of the chances of war in the Middle East. Immediately before Kissinger's latest tour it was running at 60 per cent — ie. more than even! The world-wide role of US imperialism now demands of workers everywhere a principled struggle for unity on revolutionary policies.

OPPOSE

The British Labour and trade union movement must oppose the maintenance of a standing capitalist army tied into NATO, and must demand that the Labour government withdraw all US military facilities, including those in the Indian Ocean.



Schlesinger

POLAND

Polish Prime Minister Piotr Jaroszewicz has admitted that the country's economy faces a severe crisis, comparable to the situation which forced a change of leadership following strikes against food prices by Danzig shipworkers.

Speaking on 'International Women's Day' (March 6th), he said in Warsaw that the government had taken 'necessary and efficient steps' in the previous few days to control the supply and prices of meat, milk and other dairy products. His statement followed demonstrations against shortages, especially in butchers' shops, by housewives. Armed militia men were reportedly needed to disperse some of the demonstrations. Jaroszewicz told his audience that 'We are counting on your understanding and your patience at a time when we must pass through a period full of difficulties.' Blaming the weather for some shortages of supply, he went on to indicate that the state was revising its purchasing policy for dairy products to even out 'fluctuations' in supply. But, as every Polish housewife knows, the other side of the 'shortages' is an almost universal black market in foods, on which those who can afford it can buy as much as they want.

Release Sithole!

By John Lea

The re-arrest of Ndabaningi Sithole, one of the leaders of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) by the reactionary settler regime of Ian Smith a fortnight ago further illustrates the impossibility of a peaceful road to victory for the national liberation struggle in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia).

It also illustrates the fundamental mistake of any illusions concerning the ability of 'progressive' African bourgeois leaders like Kaunda of Zambia to effectively support such struggles.

The current atmosphere of 'detente' between Black Africa and the Vorster regime in South Africa goes back to last October with Vorster's famous 'voice of reason' speech.

Vorster and the Afrikaner bourgeoisie have finally faced the need to come to terms with the removal of the Portuguese colonial regime in Mozambique which up till now has served the role together with Rhodesia, as an effective buffer between Vorster and Black Africa.

'BUFFERS'

With the accession to power of the FRELIMO government in Mozambique, the whole strategy of 'buffers' has collapsed. And with it the importance of the Smith regime to Vorster.

In addition, as the world recession gathers pace, the South African bourgeoisie has become more concerned to capture Black Africa, as a market area for the continued expansion of South African capital, from dependence on US and European imports.

Kaunda responded ecstatically to Vorster's overtures as 'the voice of reason for which Africa and the world has waited'. Kaunda has his own reasons for detente with Vorster, and for settling the question of the Smith regime once and for all.

The closure of the Zambia/Rhodesia border has cost Zambia millions in export costs due to difficulty of access to the coast. Also the continued activity on the Zambian borders of the Rhodesia

army and the South African paramilitary police hunting Zimbabwe guerrillas is creating problems.

The sticking point to detente is the Smith regime itself. Kaunda and his fellow bourgeois African leaders cannot openly abandon the national liberation struggle for Zimbabwe without threatening their own stability. Therefore as a precondition for detente they have insisted on majority rule in Zimbabwe.

NO CONCESSION

But Smith cannot make this concession. It was precisely to avoid it that the regime made its famous unilateral declaration of independence from British colonial status in the first place. The whole basis of the settler regime rests on the denial of democratic rights to Africans and the control of the land by the settler bourgeoisie. A democratically elected African majority would be under heavy pressure from the masses to resolve the land question and so destroy the basis of settler power.

But Smith has to talk. He is now frightened that the FRELIMO regime in Mozambique will cut off his links with the coast. Coupled with this the guerrilla movement is gaining support especially in the north east of Zimbabwe.

Thus, earlier in the year, Kaunda, together with Nyere of Tanzania, the FRELIMO leadership and Seretse Khama the president of Botswana, persuaded Smith to release Zimbabwe nationalist leaders from jail and fly them to Lusaka for talks. During the talks, Smith pressured by Vorster, conceded the release of 300 political prisoners (which he has not yet carried out) and promised swift moves towards a constitutional conference. Vorster obligingly withdrew his police to barracks.

But in return for this Kaunda has forced the Zimbabwe nationalists to castrate themselves. As Trotsky argued in the theory of permanent revolution, the national bourgeoisie in underdeveloped countries is incapable of carrying through the elementary bourgeois democratic tasks of national independence, the agrarian reforms and democratic rights. This is because it is too tied

to imperialism on the one hand and fear of its own working class on the other.

This is graphically illustrated by the role of Kaunda. As a quid pro quo for Smith's concessions he is trying to force the Zimbabwe nationalists to lay down the most important weapon they have at present: armed guerrilla struggle. Kaunda and his fellow bourgeois heads of state in the 'Organisation for African Unity' have refused all further assistance to armed struggle in Zimbabwe while the talks proceed thus forcing the nationalists to walk 'naked' into the conference chamber at a time when, because of the victory of FRELIMO in Mozambique, the guerrilla struggle could have entered its most effective phase.

Furthermore, Kaunda has insisted on 'unity' of the nationalists under the umbrella of the right wing reformist African National Council which rejects the armed struggle.

The bourgeois leaders of Black Africa want a 'settlement' not outright victory for the national liberation struggle. Thus they have forced this compromise and left the revolutionary elements in the nationalist movement defenceless.

DIVIDE AND RULE

But it is precisely this that has played into the hands of Smith. It has given him the chance to attempt a divide and rule policy with the nationalists. The arrest of Sithole must be seen in this context.

Sithole was arrested on the grounds that he was "planning assassination of certain of his opponents whom he considers to be a challenge to his bid for leadership of the ANC". As the Financial Times observed: "The Rhodesia government strategy would seem to be to try to isolate the ZANU militants so that a deal can be concluded with the more moderate 'old' ANC element".

The Stalinist movement continues to divide the world into 'reactionary' and 'progressive' elements and to regard Kaunda as one of the latter. We can in effect see the reactionary nature of stalinism in the antics of Kaunda whose actions, intentionally or not, have the effect of assisting Smith to divide and weaken the Zimbabwe national liberation movement and delay the struggle.

WILSON'S FRIENDS AT WORK

The London-based Gulf Committee last month published a special report that makes clear the complete denial of democratic and trade union rights throughout the area.

The report, entitled *Political Prisoners in the Oil States: Oman, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iran*, gives a number of harrowing accounts of tortures, executions and extended detentions without trial in all the countries named. In Iran alone, there are well over 30,000 people working for SAVAK, the notorious secret police whose activities have been noticed as far afield as here in Britain, and there are perhaps the same number of political prisoners.

On 6th June 1974 the *Guardian* reported that 52 Omani workers involved in political and trade union activities in the nearby oil state of Abu Dhabi were arrested, tortured and deported back to Oman, where there are no trade union or democratic rights of any kind.

TORTURE

When rumours are constantly spread about that the Shah of Iran is just going to 'save' British Leyland or some other ailing corner of capitalist Britain it should not be forgotten that this regime rests on a range of torture all but unknown

anywhere else in the world. The *Sunday Times* of 19th January described a number of cases of appalling injuries done to political prisoners during interrogation, particularly by applying heated electric frames to their bodies.

One such prisoner called Massoud Ahmadzadeh, an engineer from Teheran, managed to reveal his terrible wounds to foreign legal observers who were attending one of the few open trials held in the country, before he was led off to be shot. What the *Sunday Times* report made clear was that such injuries were by no means unique, but indeed typical of the methods of the Iranian regime in suppressing its political opponents.

One wonders what British trade minister Peter Shore had to say about these matters during his recent visit to fix up a trade deal with the government of these butchers and torturers. Perhaps he swapped stories about the methods employed by British soldiers against republican prisoners in Ireland.

One wonders also whether the Stalinist rulers of China ever mention the torture and death done to many hundreds of Maoists in Iran during the junketing and frequent visits to Peking of the Shah and his representatives.

In recent weeks it has become clear that the war being waged against the liberation struggles of the Southern Prince of Dhojar in

Oman is developing in intensity. On 11th March the *Times* reported that one British mercenary and two British officers 'on loan' were shot down and killed in a helicopter by liberation fighters. The *Times* of 10th March also stated that at least one other British soldier has been killed in Oman since the beginning of the year. The liberation forces have also published the names of various Iranian soldiers they have killed in the area in recent weeks, including intelligence officers from SAVAK.

WITHDRAW TROOPS

A demonstration organised by a number of bodies including the Iranian Student Society and the Gulf Committee marched through central London on 9th March to call for the immediate withdrawal of all British and Iranian troops from Oman. A delegation from some of the London branches of the WSL participated in the demonstration in support of this demand and called for victory to the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman.

The WSL intends to continue to campaign throughout the labour movement for the Labour government to immediately cease all activity in support of this reactionary war and to break off all relations with the barbarous regimes of Oman and Iran.

WHAT IS THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE?

The Workers Socialist League was formed on December 22nd after over 200 members were expelled from the Workers Revolutionary Party.

The reason for the expulsions was that Alan Thornett, who was at the time a Central Committee member of the WRP, set out to bring about a discussion within that party on the wrong positions being taken by the Healy leadership and the Workers Press.

The issues were first raised on the Central Committee, and that committee agreed to circulate a document written by comrade Thornett, containing a statement of his differences, and to arrange a 'full and free' discussion within the party prior to the first annual conference. That free discussion never took place. Anyone who in any way supported the document was expelled.

This split was a product of particular political conditions. The rapid development of the economic crisis and the forward movement of the working class all over the world produced the conditions to build revolutionary parties. Yet it was precisely in this period that the WRP began to decline in all its areas of work. It was this decline more than any other factor which raised questions which led to an examination of the political positions of the WRP leadership and to Alan Thornett's documents. As the split emerged, the sectarianism of the WRP, its departure from the Transitional Programme, and the way its maximum programme isolates the WRP from the working class became clear.

To understand the response to comrade Thornett's document in the WRP it is necessary to recognise the period we are now in. The defence of jobs through the fight for the sliding scale of hours without loss of pay; the defence of living standards through the fight for the sliding scale of wages related to rising prices; the challenging of the employer and the preparation of the struggle for power by the fight to open the books and establish workers control in the fight for nationalisation under workers' management; are now called for in this situation in the form of a programme of transitional demands which will form a bridge between the present consciousness and struggles of the working class to the need to take power. Yet the WRP right up to the opening of the discussion by comrade Thornett had never seriously fought for any of these demands. Instead it restricted itself to the sterile maximum demand "nationalise the economy without compensation under workers control".

The impossibility of any kind of opposition within the WRP forced us to found the Workers Socialist League as an independent organisation which will maintain and fight to develop the traditions and principles of Trotskyism. We will continue to maintain a critique of the WRP leadership, but most important for us is our ability to break from WRP method and turn to recruiting and training the new forces thrown into the struggle in this period - trade unionists, professional workers, housewives, students and youth - in the fight to construct the new party.

We will fight against all forms of revisionism - state capitalism and the Pabliste revisionists of the IMG, against stalinism and reformism. Already it is clear that our struggles for Trotskyism in Britain take place under conditions which must create similar splits and discussions throughout the world. We are confident that our movement will soon be able to play an important role in the strengthening of the Trotskyist Fourth International and the development of revolutionary parties in every country to fight capitalism.

Only five weeks after forming the League we were able to assemble the necessary political, editorial and material resources to begin regular publication of a Trotskyist newspaper. We are certain we can win a big response and very rapidly go forward to a weekly paper as the organiser of a movement of considerable political strength.

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LETTERS

THE EDITORIAL BOARD WANTS TO ENCOURAGE READERS LETTERS ON ANY SUBJECT
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NEAR READING, BERKS.

G. Healy, National Secretary of the Workers Revolutionary Party has written an 8-page attack on Alan Thornett's "Second Document on Party Policy and Perspectives" (written while Thornett was still in the WRP and which was suppressed by the national leadership who expelled him and all those in agreement with his politics just before the first Annual Conference of the WRP).

Healy is only able to take up one aspect of the document - and only quotes one passage from it. This is torn out of its context and shorn of its content in the document, then distorted and finally made into a plank of Healy's argument. We begin by showing the passage in its context - Healy's quote is italicised:

"...the International Committee is polemicalising against the OCI making many correct points, but at no stage is the concrete brought into the discussion. At no point does the I.C. discuss programme (emphasis in original). Philosophy is transformed into its own field of debate [by the WRP and I.C.] divorced from the class struggle itself and divorced from practice.

All knowledge begins from the struggle of man against nature, now in the form of the class struggle - the conflict of revolutionary theory in the form of the party with spontaneity in the form of the class. That must be the starting point and central reference point in our polemic. That is not (emphasis in original) the starting point in theoretical education in our party [WRP]. The consequence of this is that cadres are not trained in Marxism. They are trained to repeat formulae of dialectical materialism and given some grounding in principled struggles which are the history of the WRP as a section of the International Committee. But, in living terms, no education takes place, because there is no real discussion or analysis within the party of the party's practice in the class struggle."

EVASION

Healy's selective quote sidesteps the points being made. The conflict between man and nature and between the party and the class is stressed here by Thornett because the WRP's propagandism and abstract approach to theory separates Marxism and the revolutionary party from the living movement which is its material base. He consciously avoids answering on the I.C.'s refusal to discuss programme, and dodges the other major points contained in the section on philosophy, which deal with the method of Trotsky's Transitional Programme. In misquoting Thornett in this way Healy reveals an important aspect of his own revisions of Marxism.

Healy also willfully obscures the fact that the document is not intended as a full exposition of Marxist but is specifically replying to his own challenge to explain the "historical, philosophical, and class content of the degeneration" of the WRP.

The truth is always concrete, as the man who fell out of the skyscraper said. But to get to it one must often pass through a certain number of abstractions and - some times - of 'philosophical' hot air. The aim of Healy's document "Some Notes Towards a Study of Thornett's Philosophy": 9th Feb. 1975. is to justify 'philosophically' (i.e. after the event) the suppression of the discussion opened by Alan Thornett in the WRP last year.

At the same time Healy's document revises the fundamentals of dialectical materialism and is a qualitative 'leap' in the degeneration of the WRP under the pressure of the middle class.

In the struggle to develop a political consciousness in the working class going beyond the reformist trade union consciousness (which arises spontaneously from workers' daily experiences), the philosophical method of Marxism is indispensable. It must therefore be defended and developed in opposition to all attempts to revise it. As Lenin wrote in *What is to be Done?*:

"...to belittle the socialist ideology in any way, to turn aside from it in the slightest degree means to strengthen bourgeois ideology." [Collected Works, Volume 5, page 384]

One thing the ruling class fears above all, therefore, is the development of Marxist philosophy, a guide to action, within the workers movement. The essence of this philosophy is the method of *dialectical materialism*, which studies the world as *matter in motion*, which develops through the *unity and conflict of opposites* within it.

Dialectical materialism is the philosophy of revolution - it sees nothing as eternally fixed, but every thing as in motion, in a continuing process of conflict. As a world-view, seeking in material reality and the struggle of classes the basis of all the ideas, moods and theories thrown up by social development, it forms the 'sinews' of the body of theory with which the revolutionary party struggles to win the

HEALY REVISES MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

conscious leadership of the working class, through the development of and fight for a programme which can establish the bridge between the as yet only trade union conscious masses of the organised working class and the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Only by grasping all of the opposed forces at work, not just within the workers movement, but amongst all classes of society, can the revolutionary movement correctly defend principles and programme and put forward tactics which can assist the strategic aim of preparing the class for power.

NOT JUST IDEAS

The philosophy of Marxism, of dialectical materialism, therefore is unlike all previous philosophies. It is not just a body of ideas, to be argued by 'theorists' outside the day-to-day struggles of the working class. If placed outside these struggles it withers into an abstract set of concepts, turning into its opposite - an obstacle to the political development of the working class.

One of the basic tasks therefore of the Workers Socialist League is to educate its members in the main ideas of dialectical materialism, to explain and discuss these ideas as clearly as possible, and always to encourage their use in developing a fuller, richer knowledge of political developments. We fight to defend dialectical materialism against all attempts to distort or revise it, or to take it out of the hands of workers and make it the sole preserve of intellectuals and theoreticians. It can only be developed by a party containing both intellectuals and workers and fighting on a programme to lead the working class to power.

This is why we now challenge the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party on their revision of the central question of philosophy - Marxist dialectics - and its relation to the *idealist* dialectics of the German philosopher Hegel (1770 - 1831), from which Marx and Engels began their struggle for scientific socialism. One of the problems in taking up the wrong philosophical positions of Gerry Healy, National Secretary of the Workers Revolutionary Party, in the past is that he has put so little of his philosophy in writing, preferring to confine himself to lectures. We welcome therefore his venture into print with an 8-page pamphlet attacking the Workers Socialist League.

UNITY

How does Healy revise Marxism? Like all reactionary thought his thinking reflects the world in a distorted form. The material world itself exists and moves through the unity and conflict of opposites - this is the kernel of dialectical materialism, manifesting itself in all areas of society and politics. The sharper the economic crisis, the

more openly the working class and the capitalist class enter into conflict with one another, the louder do the apologists of capitalism preach class collaboration in order to head off, and ultimately to crush the struggle of the working class to overthrow capitalism.

ASTMS leader Clive Jenkins mounts a platform with Enoch Powell to campaign for 'national unity' against the Common Market. Jenkins himself becomes a puppet in the rearmament of the Tory Party to enforce political and moral 'unity' on society, preparing to use the scared middle-class as shock-troops against the trade unions. Wedgewood-Benn adds his efforts in the drive to 'unite' trade unions and employers in board-room class-collaboration under the Industry Bill linking with the 'unity' of the social contract.

It is precisely this pressure to which Healy succumbs when he writes on apparently abstract ques-

tions of philosophy. The philosophical core of his document centres on the unity and conflict of two essential opposites: man and nature; thought and being. It is this question we are concerned with here. In discussing this most general unity and struggle of opposites he is of necessity expressing his approach to development in all spheres: in nature, in society, and within the WRP itself. And on the key question he is devastatingly clear. He attacks Thornett (and with him, Lenin) *precisely* for insisting that the conflict of opposites is absolute, and that their unity exists only relatively to this conflict.

Let us look more closely at the quotation Healy uses from Thornett's document:

"All knowledge begins from the struggle of man against nature, now in the form of the class struggle - the conflict of revolutionary theory in the form of the party with spontaneity in the form of the class. That must be the starting point and central reference point in our polemic."

From this quotation he undertakes to prove that Thornett holds "a vulgar one-sided materialist conception of history, which in turn leads the author into the swamp of subjective idealism." (Healy, p.1)

CONFLICT

As we shall show, the opposite is the case. Any reformist of empiricist will tell you that there are two sides to every question, but unless these two sides express the *essence* of the matter, and the *conflict between them* is grasped, thought will remain superficial, undialectical, unable to grasp the source of movement. Science evaporates and the question becomes merely which side the emphasis is placed on. This is exactly how Healy proceeds. He quotes a number of passages from Marx and Engels which minimise the conflict between man and nature, stressing instead 'unity'. For instance: "Being, that is living man's *unity and dependence* upon nature, determines all consciousness." (Healy, p.3; emphasis added)

Such quotations are interspersed with Healy's own comments, which attempt to lead away from conflict by generalisations on the "Universal Movement of Matter" (capitals in original! Healy p. 8).

Thus he states "Man is part of Nature as an *integral part* of the universal movement of matter" (emphasis added p. 3). Yet as it stands such a statement is the equivalent of saying, for instance, that the working class is an "integral part" of capitalism. On a certain level of abstraction this is true - capitalism needs the working class, and the working class is an oppressed class only because of capitalism - but for revolutionaries it *diverts* from the *essential* relationship, which is not one of unity but the harsh antagonism of *opposites*. Under the guise of philosophy Healy smuggles

in exactly such a reactionary conception.

CONTEMPLATION

Worse - by blindly amalgamating together the development of the class struggle and the "universal movement of matter", precisely the element of *consciousness* which differentiates man's actions from those of animals and the unconscious movement of the objective world he confronts is eliminated. Healy thus reduces the class struggle to a mere 'natural process' and Marxist philosophy is turned into a contemplation of the "universal movement of matter. More fully, Healy sets out his position as follows:

"Man is part of nature and in conflict with it. That is the starting point of all knowledge and *not* Thornett's one-sided assertion that knowledge begins 'from the struggle of man against nature.'"

"Thornett subjectively separates the struggle between man and nature from the *fundamental unity* (emphasis added) of man with nature, thus destroying the dialectical relationship between the subjective (mens' thoughts) and the objective material world."

Healy then goes on: "He (Thornett) then transfers the source of consciousness to the brain as something separate from nature."

SLEIGHT

This sentence is the incredible sleight of hand on which the whole of Healy's case is then constructed. The assertion that Thornett "transfers the source of consciousness to the brain" - in other words starts from consciousness determining being - is nowhere contained in Thornett's material. Lets look at the quotation Healy uses from Thornett again and see what he actually says:

"All knowledge begins from the struggle of man against nature, (which is material) now in the form of the class struggle - (which is material) the conflict of revolutionary theory in the form of the party (not in his head) with spontaneity in the form of the class." (Emphasis added)

Healy goes on: "Here is the basis of all idealism, that it is consciousness which determines being and not being which determines consciousness. Having subjectively separated man's struggle with nature from the *unity* (emphasis added) of this struggle with nature, Thornett can only start from the threadbare baggage of idealist reasoning which begins within his own head and is arbitrarily used to prove any argument which he thinks necessary to attack the Workers Revolutionary Party. That is why we designate his method that of subjective idealism." (Healy, p.4)



Healy

The problem Healy has to contend with is that Lenin polemicalised

for precisely the opposite conception - that unity is *relative* and conflict *absolute*.

There is, as Lenin said "an absolute (i.e. the *struggle* of opposites) within the relative (i.e. their unity)" [Collected Works, Volume 38, p.360] Revolutionaries will, for example, enter into a (relative) unity with syndicalist workers, reformist bureaucrats, (and even centrists like Healy!), on a basic question of workers' rights such as the release of the Shrewsbury Two. But within this unity there must be a *struggle* for the revolutionary leadership of the class. This is the 'absolute' question. The conflict of opposites *itself* conflicts with their unity. Only thus does the world change.

As Lenin puts it (crystallising his exposition of the world-view of Marxism in *On the Question of Dialectics*, Collected Works, Vol 38, p.360):

"The unity (coincidence, identity, equal action) of opposites is cond-

itional, temporary, transitory, relative. The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute." (The passage in which Lenin repeats this fundamental point - in several ways - is on a page facing one of Healy's own main quotations.)

This passage is well known to Healy and the whole WRP leadership. In the International Committee booklet *In Defence of Trotskyism*, published in Feb 1973 it is used as a basic plank in the theoretical argument against the French OCI. In fact it is the very passage quoted here which the IC correctly accuses the OCI of deliberately omitting in a quotation. At that time its omission was taken up sharply in these terms:

"As Forgontier [OCI theoretician] well knows - and here he must have decided quite consciously to obscure the point, since he had the text before him - it is precisely on this omitted paragraph (emphasis added) that the split in the International Committee turns! The relation between theory and practice, between party and class, is a relation of *struggle*. The relative *unity* of theory and practice is established, constantly re-established, *only* through the struggle of mutually exclusive opposites."

CAREFUL OMISSION

(...) Forgontier (...), by his *careful omission*, [emphasis added] finds himself able to speak about unity and conflict of opposites as *some sort of equally co-existing aspects* [emphasis added], to be contemplated: 'Lenin underlines at the same time that the conflict of opposites is inseparable from their unity', he says." [In *Defence of Trotskyism*, pp.20-21]

Yet the philosophical position put by the OCI theoretician *then* is almost identical to Healy's position *now*. This indicates firstly the continuing theoretical degeneration of the WRP since 1973, and the subjectivism and incoherence to which the mass expulsions and the internal repressions continuing within the WRP have forced Healy, along with Banda and Slaughter. Secondly it indicates the flimsy theoretical base of understanding on which Healy split the International Committee in 1971. The WRP leadership is now repeating the very revisions of Marxism of the OCI, which supposedly caused the split. This is the slippery path down which must slither *all* those who abandon the principles of Bolshevism and the lessons of Trotsky's struggles for the Fourth Internatio-

nal. This philosophical revisionism is reflected continuously now in the centrist practice of the WRP. While Healy 'philosophically' places unity on a par with conflict, *Workers Press* busily angles for 'unity' at the end of their Wigan building workers campaign on the Shrewsbury Two with fake-left Tribune MP Sidney Bidwell. It trumpets a welcome for Bidwell's support *without mentioning* that he voted for the Jenkins reactionary 'Anti-terrorism Act', which is *already* being used to jail trades unionists and Irish republicans! Truly, conflict is here subordinated to 'unity' with a vengeance.

STAMPEDE

Another aspect of Healy's document must be dealt with. It deliberately sets out to befuddle and stampede WRP members who have not had the opportunity to study philosophy, and especially Hegel's struggle for a dialectical world-view. It was the main text which Lenin read during his work on philosophy in 1914; Lenin's rough notes on it are published in his 'Philosophical Notebooks', *Collected Works*, Vol 38.

Healy has a long record of utilising snippets from Volume 38 out of context as virtual biblical references in order to give himself a bogus prestige as a "theoretician" whose word is law on philosophy. It is important to remember however that the book is not written in any

through semblance, reflection, appearance, positing, existent object, essence, actuality, causality and effect, moment, the objective idea, the Notion and (last but not least) absolute truth (to list just some). From the whole jumble emerges, like a rabbit from a hat, the conclusion that 'we again proceed to posit living perception (dialectical thought concepts) on our abstract idea (ideas). We do this not by contemplating the world but by changing it through the building of the Workers Revolutionary Party'.

We cannot begin to clear this jungle in a single newspaper article. (We intend to publish a lot of material on Healy's philosophical revision). But three essential points must be made.

Firstly, it is evident that Healy has never read Lenin's notes as they must be read - in parallel with the *Science of Logic* itself. (As Lenin put it, he was 'trying to read Hegel materialistically' (vol.38, p. 104)) This is why Healy gets Hegel's 'categories' in the wrong order (see the 'Table of Contents' to *Science of Logic*). In philosophy some 'contemplating' of books is necessary.

POINT MISSED

Secondly, for this reason Healy completely misses the essential point - that Hegel's 'categories' all arise from the conflict (or contradiction) of previous 'categories'. Healy simply unites them in a single process, and dishes up the whole



Hegel

form which can be simply read through and quotations pulled out. In many passages Lenin is merely paraphrasing the idealist philosophers Hegel and Kant, and not expounding Marxism at all.

JUNGLE

Healy, however rooting round anxiously for material with which to hit Thornett, rummages through Volume 38, and in the last pages of his document (pp. 7-8) confusingly strings together a series of philosophical concepts (or 'categories') from the *Science of Logic*, without the slightest explanation of where they come from or what their content is: (Slaughter's article in *Workers Press* of February 27th, supposedly a review of Marx-Engels *Collected Works* Vol. 1, does the same thing, but in an even more compressed form.) In two pages (after having never written any thing on them before) Healy skates

caboodle as Marxism. What Marxism takes from Hegel's philosophy is not its system of categories, but the dialectical method by which they arise from one another.

Most important of all, however, Healy's document on Thornett is an insult to the intelligence of any comrade seriously struggling to train himself in dialectical materialism. The struggle for Marxism within the party, and for leadership within the class, has nothing to do with Healy's superficial understanding of Hegelianism used subjectively to justify arbitrary expulsions. This of course is, as this article shows, the subjective idealist method.

The Workers Socialist League will take up the study of these philosophical questions, but in a way which springs from the concrete struggle and development of the party programme and leadership to develop a Marxist leadership for the working class, the only leadership which can lead the working class to power.

TROTSKY ON BRITAIN

Leon Trotsky *Writings on Britain* (3 volumes) New Park Publications 1975 £1.65 each volume

The extracts and major works contained in these volumes cast numerous shafts of light on the nature and development of British capitalism, and thus contribute a great deal to understanding the methods necessary for its overthrow and its replacement by socialism. They are essential reading for all members and supporters of the Workers Socialist League in our struggle to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class.

Though remote in both time and space from many aspects of what he describes, Trotsky showed a profound understanding of British economics and politics. This could only come from an application of the methods of dialectical materialism as a part of a life-long commitment to the emancipation of the working class on a world scale.

In the first part of this review of the three volumes, we will cover the material contained in the first of them. This includes quotations from Trotsky's many speeches and writings dealing with British history and culture in general, and also with the development of British imperialism and the working class movement until the 1920's. By looking at the first capitalist nation in the light of the subsequent international developments, Trotsky was able to say much about British politics that remains important today.

HISTORY

The earliest extracts in the collection point to the slow tempo of British social and economic and political development, to the gradual decline of feudal institutions, and the build-up of industry and empire following the bourgeois revolution of the 1640's. Many of Trotsky's statements point to the profound effect of this history on all aspects of life in Britain, in particular on the British worker: "For him.....there was not the sudden catastrophic transition from the closed little world of the village to modern industry; he had developed organically from his remote ancestors into gradually changing conditions of factory life and urban culture. In his mind there still to this day sit old, medieval craft ideas and prejudices, only modified in form and adapted to the conditions of capitalism." [Page 21]

Trotsky also shows how the fact that Britain was (p.6) "the pioneer of bourgeois civilisation" and "exploited the whole world" during the nineteenth century, "softened the inner contradictions", by providing "the upper layer of the proletariat an economic interest in her dominion of the world". Such workers developed the habit of "putting pressure on the bourgeois parties", and of identifying with various imperialist interests. [pp. 13-14].

These aspects of British historical development and their effect on the working class had been emphasised by Marxists, even before the time that Trotsky wrote. However Trotsky added two important points to this analysis. In drawing attention to the effect of the former strength of British imperialism in the creation of reformism in the working class movement, Trotsky also pointed out how this was maintained and defended through the ideological weapons provided by the middle class "friends of labour" and transmitted to the working class itself by means of the labour bureaucracy. "Ideology, by its very essence, plays an enormous part in the socialist movement" wrote Trotsky (p.172). In the past such ideology had come from capitalism



Trotsky

but in the future it had to develop through the struggle for Marxism in unity and conflict with the working class.

UNION LEADERS

In a striking passage (p.16) Trotsky points to the importance of the support given to the position of the trade union bureaucracy by the many forms of bourgeois ideology.

"The mentality of the present-day British trade union leader is a mixture of the religious and social prejudices of the period of the restoration of St. Paul's Cathedral the practical skill of a trade union official at the height of capitalist development, the snobbishness of a petty bourgeois fighting to be respectable, and the uneasy conscience of a labour politician who has repeatedly betrayed the workers. To this must be added the influence of intellectuals, of professors and Fabians; of the Socialist moralising of Sunday preachers, the rationalist schemes of pacifists, the dilletantism of "Guild Socialists", and the stubborn and haughty Fabian narrow mindedness."

In another volume of this collection, and particularly in *Where Is Britain Going?* Trotsky extended his explanation of these phenomena and of how they should be overcome. The second big contribution that Trotsky made to an understanding of the development of British capitalism was in his recognition of the significance of its decline and the social crisis which would inevitably follow. In the first World War the bloody contest for "the liberty of imperialist exploitation" brought about "a new imperialist division of the world's peoples". (p.56) After Britain and Germany had exhausted one another then, predicted Trotsky in 1918, "American capital will appear as the heir who will plunder the world". (p.67) It was to this changing balance of forces that Trotsky referred, from a socialist point of view, in the only passage quoted in a singularly philistine review of these volumes which appeared in the *Guardian* of 20th February last. The author of the review seemed unaware that Trotsky was referring to developments which were not obvious on the surface at the time, but which were to be of considerable future importance.

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

It is with the working out of these changes in the balance of imperialist forces, and particularly their relationship with the Russian revolution of November 1917, that much of the latter part of this first

volume is concerned. Trotsky makes many important points about the desperate efforts of the political leaders of the chief imperialist powers to regulate their relations with one another and to strangle the first workers' state. They failed in both of these tasks, but there are many important explanations of this contained in the first volume that cannot be even summarised in this review.

As Commissar of the Red Army in conflict with an alliance of all the capitalist powers and various reactionary forces in Russia, Trotsky naturally took a deep interest in what had until then been the chief imperialist power. The British navy was still the world's mightiest armoured force with the task of policing the entire world. Trotsky constantly reminded the soldiers who fought under his command that they had to look beyond such forces:

"Alongside the Britain of profit, violence, corruption and bloodthirstiness there exists the Britain of labour, intellectual might, and international solidarity. Against us fights arrogant and dishonest stock exchange Britain. Labouring people's Britain is behind us."

This perspective was of considerable importance in the defence of the Russian Revolution from the armies of intervention. In July 1920 the London dockers refused to load munitions to Poland for use against the Soviet Union. In the following August all the main organisations of the British working class set up a Council of Action and threatened a General Strike against any further intervention of the British army in the war. Trotsky greeted this latter event by asserting with some justice that "Great Britain has possibly not since the age of Chartism lived through such a period of working class reawakening of interests and strivings." (p.105)

INTERNATIONAL ROLE

Trotsky's emphasis on the international role of the British working class was of importance for the continued survival of the Russian Revolution. This was fought for despite and not because of the actions of the reformist trade union and labour leaders of the type of Messrs Snowden and Ramsay MacDonald. These people were more concerned with the defence of the puppet regimes set up in Georgia, Transcaucasia and elsewhere by the imperialists in a desperate attempt to present a buffer to the new workers' regime.

With the lull in the class struggle after the betrayal of the miners on 'Black Friday' in April 1921, there followed the election of the first and perhaps the most cowardly of all Labour governments in 1924. In this period Trotsky was clear that the crisis of British capitalism had not been resolved, and so the British working class was "approaching that stage of its struggle before which the most heroic pages of Chartism will fade." (p.172) For the success of this struggle he was certain that the established Labour and trade union leaders would have to be "thrust aside and thrust out" (p.204). The method for this was "through the construction of a Communist Party free from routine and sectarianism, and closely bound up with the mass organisations." (p.173)

It is with the enormous class battles of May 1926 and of how the Communist Party failed to prepare for them that the second volume of this collection is concerned. These issues will be taken up in the next part of this review.

by John Docherty

"Their country before their class"

By Rick Roberts

"The political art of the British bourgeoisie consists in shortening the revolutionary beak of the proletariat, and so not allowing him to pierce the shell of the capitalist state.

"The beak of the proletariat is its party. If we look at MacDonald, Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. Snowden, we have to confess that the work of the bourgeoisie in selecting short-billed and soft-billed has been crowned with astonishing success for these individuals are not only fit for the piercing of the capitalist skull, but indeed are not fit for anything." (Trotsky, *Where is Britain Going?* p. 53)

To read the published extracts from Richard Crossman's diaries is to have confirmed with inside detail, all that Trotsky wrote in this famous analysis of the Labour Party in 1925.

The Labour Government that came to office in October 1964, when these diaries start, was dominated throughout by the development of the world crisis of capitalism, revealed in Britain in a balance of payments deficit of some £800m, and in the complete lack of confidence of international bankers in the ability of British capitalism to take on the working class. No capitalist wanted sterling at any price.

The bankers wanted increased exploitation of the working class to save capitalism; the diaries show how the Labour Government lined up with the bourgeoisie to do just that. There are very important lessons here as we see the present Labour Government imposing the wage-cutting 'social contract' and presiding over and threatening increasing unemployment today.

The facade of 'democracy', which Crossman is so proud of, is exposed as a fraud, as any policies for the defence of the working class, who elected the Labour Government, are sacrificed one after the other to the dictates of the handful of financial magnates in the banks.

CYNICISM

This is carried out by the Labour leaders with the most brazen cynicism — principles are laughed aside. Crossman writes of his first cabinet meeting:

"a mere formality only concerned with the economic crisis and, honestly, we were told as little about it as the National Executive of the Party is ever told. It really was an absolute farce to have George Brown saying 'Naturally, you won't want to be told, for fear of the information leaking, how serious the situation is. You won't want to be told what methods we shall take but we shall take them.'" (emphasis added)

But a month later realisation of the crisis broke through to him.

A journalist friend tells him: "The City, he said, have lost confidence. After all Callaghan (Chancellor of the Exchequer) threatens the City daily with corporation tax and the capital gains tax, and the City feel they don't know what to fear, they lose confidence. You are heading straight for devaluation."

"Callaghan's budget speech really had been a flop. Confidence had not been restored, at least not in the City; and with heavy selling and speculation in Zurich, we were in the kind of classical financial crisis socialist governments must expect when they achieve power and find the till empty." (Nov. 22nd, 1964)

Pensioners are the first human sacrifices made to appease the bankers. The reformists go to the task with enthusiasm:

"George Brown got up and did magnificently, he rallied the Party, he indicated the danger and pulled the backbenchers round to drop the idea of any further concessions to the pensioners." (Nov. 24, 1964)

And social services are the next on the shopping list for those defending capitalism:

"Now so far there has been no suggestion by Harold or James that we should actually cut social services. No wonder we are still faced with

"their class"

this complete lack of confidence in the pound abroad." (Dec. 3, 1964)

"I was followed by Callaghan who said that we were going to crack up and crash unless the increase in public expenditure could be halted... even a neutral budget would fail to win the confidence of the bankers". (Feb. 11, 1965)

SPINELESS

But easily the shrewdest of the assessments made by Crossman is when he examines the helplessness and spinelessness of his fellow reformists:

"Callaghan is really representing the MacDonaldite attitude to the bankers in 1931. Like MacDonald



Crossman

he is open to moral blackmail by Lord Cromer (Governor of the Bank of England) and so are most of my working class colleagues. One could see at Cabinet how, whether they belong to the Right or to the Left of the Party, they of the City and of the Bank of England when a crisis of this kind blows up and they feel they must put their country before their class". (Feb 11th 1965)

The point is clearly made: the poor 'terrorised, pliable reformists cannot measure up as a leadership for the working class against the ruling class in its boardrooms, who on their part proceed with class determination to use their immense resources for the sabotage of the most minor social reforms. Trotsky writes:

"The resources of State destruction, and legislative and administrative sabotage in the hands of the possessing classes are immense since, no matter what their parliamentary majority, all the state apparatus from top to bottom is inseparably linked with the bourgeoisie. To it, all belongs: all the Press, the most important organs of local government... the banks and the whole system of social credit..."

"It is absolutely obvious that all these gigantic means will be brought into action with frantic violence in order to dam the activity of the Labour Government, to paralyse its exertions, to frighten it... and finally to cause a financial panic, to terrorise the upper ranks of the workers' organisations and to sap the strength of the proletariat." (Where is Britain Going? p. 80.)

CRISIS

Since the employers are forcing the pace, so that Labour policy has to step into line with the requirements of the whole chaos of capitalism in crisis, it is not surprising that Crossman continually makes helpless noises such as:

"There is no inner Cabinet, no coherent policy on home affairs, and we are drifting along. That's

really the lesson of this deplorable show." (Feb. 3rd 1964)

An important item of the bourgeoisie's "legislative and administrative sabotage" is the power of the Civil Service, which Crossman continually bemoans with the desperation of abject helplessness.

"oughtn't I to make one real effort to get some sanity and central strategy into our conduct of affairs? Here we are, with our momentum halted and the Civil Service taking over more every day."

Crossman describes with great and very instructive detail how "Whitehall ensures that the Cabinet system is relatively harmless. The whole job is pre-cooked by officials... dominated by the Treasury". When once this system works for him, Crossman declares: "The Cabinet was effectively rigged".

The question is, of course, how has it come about that the leadership of the working class, the only revolutionary class in society, has passed to such spineless, opportunist and treacherous politicians?

The bourgeois parties, liberal and Tory, held undisputed sway through out the nineteenth century when Britain was the most powerful industrial country in the world, with enormous wealth. Part of this wealth could be sacrificed for forced concessions to the growing strength of the working class, and to create in the process a privileged layer in the working class which was tied to capitalism by such concessions. But foreign competition displaced Britain from the position of world domination at the end of the century, and in Trotsky's words "Towards the beginning of the present century it produced a state of internal want of confidence, and ferment among the upper classes, and a profound molecular process of an essentially revolutionary character among the working class. Chief place in these processes was occupied by mighty conflicts between labour and capital." (Where is Britain Going? p. 2.)

It was under this decline of the power of British capital on the one hand, and the mighty revolutionary movement on the other that there developed the political awakening of the working class, applied to found and build the Labour Party.

DEFEND UNIONS

Spurred by the need to defend the unions from the Taff Vale judgement which made them financially liable for striking, workers achieved a large Labour Party fraction for the first time in the General Election of 1906, with 42 MPs.

Restrained by the treacherous position of its leadership during the war, strikes continued afterwards on a grand scale till the triple alliance of miners, railwaymen's and transport leaders betrayed the general strike of 1920, and, paralysed in the economic struggle, workers directed their energy to the political plane.

The Labour Party, composed of the political reflection of this reformist, compromising, privileged aristocracy in the workers movement grew out of all expectation and finally achieved a Government in 1924.

So the Labour Party is a party of contradiction. On the one hand built during a revolutionary upheaval by the working class for its own voice in Parliament, and on the other taking leaders drawn from a privileged reformist layer which has nothing but dread of the revolution which these reforms were intended to forestall.

This petty bourgeois privilege can be seen when Crossman revealingly

says, "The radical measures which excite me are not anti-property measures in the sense that they would require us to accept the confiscation of Prescote". Prescote Manor was "a lovely manor house in the country" with a farm of 500 acres which Crossman owned.

In consequence of this Trotsky defined their role: "In struggling against proletarian class-consciousness the reformists are in the last resort the instrument of the ruling class". (Where is Britain Going? p. 48)

The Labour Party rules by virtue of the comparative historical weakness of the ruling class in the face of the developed strength of the working class. But the conservatism of its upper circles means that a socialist programme for the working class is put off to the indefinite future while in the present it manages capitalism for the capitalists.

Thus Crossman repeats the usual bleat of the reformist, impotent to challenge the rule of capital: "We are now, as a Cabinet, faced with the most difficult problem we have ever had. What sanctions should provide against employers who refuse to freeze their prices... or who insist on forcing up their wages in the period of the wage freeze? Once we have sanctions of this kind it means that conceivably a trade union or trade union leader could be punished for industrial action."

WAGE FREEZE

"I get the impression that this is one of the assurances Callaghan must have given to Fowler from the American Treasury when he was in Washington". [Nov 4th 1965]

This is one of Crossman's few references to the Prices and Incomes Board set up in April 1965 to effect the desired increased exploitation of the working class through freezing wages and through productivity dealing.

In the name of this Anglo-American "special relationship" Wilson had to fit in with American imperialist plans, to support their anti-working class slaughter in Vietnam and to increase defence expenditure. But whatever happened to the 'left' in the Labour Party - all those MPs who make speeches about socialism and the class struggle but who almost invariably turn out into the lobbies to vote for Wilson? There is a real requirement in the Labour party now for all those members who see it as a socialist party to get up and fight for the removal of the right wing - the Wilsons, Jenkins and Prentices. Yet always the 'left' has proved unable to fight the right wing in the Labour party. The Tribunes today refuse to fight for the release of the Shrewsbury Two and the removal of Jenkins as Home Secretary.

Nowhere does the nature of the 'left' come out more clearly in Crossman's diaries than over immigration.

Crossman's position is clear. On February 5th, 1965 he writes:

"Frank Soskice is a disaster as Home Secretary... he has been gradually dragged out of his purely liberalistic attitude to a recognition that we have to have tight immigration controls... Immigration can be the greatest potential vote loser for the Labour party if we are seen to be permitting a flood of immigrants to come in and blight the central areas in all our cities" [emphasis added]

IMMIGRATION

The Immigration white paper of August 1965 proposed to restrict commonwealth immigrants from 208,000 to 7,500, for professional and skilled workers only.

From the Labour party Conference, Crossman reports:

"We felt we had to out-trump the Tories by doing what they would have done. [emph added]

"I think so because I am an old-fashioned Zionist who believes that anti-semitism and racialism



Wilson

are endemic, that one has to deal with them by controlling immigration when it gets beyond a certain level" [Sept 29th, 1965]

Thus, like all reformists, Crossman blames the working class for his own weakness, stating that racialism can't be fought while refusing to fight. He describes the left response, knowing they pose no serious threat:

"The talk was now about the immigration debate, and all the corridors were humming about the great sell-out of socialist principles in the White Paper, and how the T&GWU were going to side with the anti-government people. There was Vicky [the cartoonist]

looking white with anger, sitting with Michael Foot. All the left were up in arms against the betrayal." [September 28th 1965]

"Then came the left attack. Once again I realised that in the Labour party the real discussion is between practical policy and emotional protest. Very rarely have we discussed alternative policies or even alternative attitudes. The left don't say they have a different policy from support for the Americans in Vietnam. The left say, 'That is the official line and we object to it.'" [Sept 29th, 1965, emphasis added]

TROTSKY

To quote Trotsky once more: "The left wing of the Labour party represents an attempt at the resurrection of centrism within the social-imperialist party of MacDonald. It thus reflects the agitation of a part of the Labour bureaucracy for a connection with the leftward moving masses. It would be a monstrous illusion to think that those left elements of the old school are capable of heading the revolutionary movement of the British proletariat." (Where is Britain Going? pp 129-30)

LEFTS

As centrists, the 'lefts' are incapable of an independent policy, and cannot lead the working class. They have no overall system of policy and so allow the right, who have such a system, to control the Labour party. If they were forced into power on the backs of the working class, they would immediately surrender it to the right-wing if the working class under a revolutionary leadership was not powerfully enough organised to take it over from them.

So we demand of the 'left': Throw out Roy Jenkins, Reg Prentice and the right-wing in the Labour party who will not carry out the wishes of the working class, and replace them with those who will fight. Workers who have illusions in the 'lefts' will rapidly see their true role exposed under conditions where the 'lefts' are called upon to act rather than just talk.

We maintain therefore, that above all, the need is to build a principled revolutionary leadership in the working class, able to analyse and fight the betrayals of both the "right" and "left" wings of the Labour leadership. This is the main lesson we must draw from the Crossman diaries.

Workers Diary

LEATHERY JUMPER

Aeronautics enthusiasts will have noted with interest the new discovery in Texas of the skeleton of a huge pterodactyl-like flying reptile with a wing span of over 51 feet (wider than many jet fighters).

In its heyday (some 60 million years ago) this creature would zoom around on leathery (featherless) wings, like a prehistoric Concorde. But the debate among devotees is now a fierce one.

For with the enormous amount of energy (and fuel!) required by such a creature to take off conventionally it is now being asked whether it did not rather clamber up to some handy hill-top or cliff and leap off, gliding gently to the ground.

This might seem rather a pointless pastime but if you are born with 51 foot wings there is not really a lot of choice. Yet there could be a brighter side to the problems of the unnamed reptile.

Concorde design staff are believed to be considering this method of take-off as a fuel economy measure. Tractors (or even horses) could tow the plane to a suitable cliff where a trained crew would give it a good push, thus pleasing both the environmentalists and the Energy Minister!

"NO FACTIONS!" - POPE

The 237 delegates to the 32nd general congregation of the Order of Jesus (the Jesuit priesthood) dispersed in Rome on March 8th, after over 100 days of sessions, to the mingled sounds of satisfaction and bewilderment.

At any event (reports our Ecclesiastical Correspondent) the conference managed to resolve a tricky logical and theological dilemma. The central problem arose from a rank and file 'democratising' faction, led by delegates from Latin America and Africa.

Their proposals included changing the Order's hierarchy, in which only the highest level at present takes a special vow of obedience to the Pope, by proposing this vow be open to all ranks. Only objector to this scheme was Pope Paul himself. This posed a problem: obedience to the Pope would thus have required... disobedience to the Pope!

Eventually delegates were persuaded to drop the idea, forcing one of them to depart with the consolatory formula that: "Obedience is not synonymous with submission to authority".

Jesuits are long accustomed to the paradoxes of obedience. The founder of the Order, St. Ignatius Loyola, took (in the sixteenth century) what would today be regarded as an extreme position "If the Church shall have defined anything to be black which to our eyes appears to be white, we ought in like manner to pronounce it to be black." (*Rules for Thinking within the Church*, Latin edition, 1534).

MINER IRRITATION

NUM leader Joe Gormley had a narrow escape the other week. Students kidnapped him and demanded a ransom from the NUM of 1p per union member as a contribution to their "rag".

Although the NUM rapidly intervened and agreed to pay £2,500 they only just forestalled a move by Yorkshire miners to offer even more - as long as the students kept Gormley!

A Yorkshire miner, who declined to be named, told *Socialist Press* "I would of thought the students should pay us to have the bugger back!"

Hospital workers have taken a further step forward in their fight to drive private practice out of the National Health Service.

Incensed by the refusal of the Labour Government to fulfill even its modest election pledge of a 'phased withdrawal' of private practice, ancillary workers throughout the country are now refusing to service private patients in an attempt to force the government to take action.

Already hospitals in Wales, the North-West and London have been forced to close private wards whilst at others, such as the Christie Hospital in Manchester, ancillary worker members of NUPE are preventing non-essential cosmetic operations on private patients from going ahead.

LINK

The link between opposition to private practice and defence of the NHS is clearly seen at the Westminster Hospital in London. There the management wishes to close down NHS beds because they cannot afford to pay substitute staff whilst regular staff are on holiday.

The local NUPE branch has insisted that the private beds must be the first to go in these circumstances, and is refusing to provide service for fee-paying patients. And in answer to management plans to transfer private patients to neighbouring hospitals, they have called for extension of their action to these hospitals.

At other hospitals, the fight to abolish private practice has had to face up to a new threat from the consultants. At Moorfields Eye Hospital in London, 16 part-time consultants have banded together to finance a new unit at the exclusive Wellington private hospital where rooms for the rich cost upwards of £56 a day.

NEW PAY BEDS OFFENSIVE



Barbara Castle

organisation, the British Medical Association, demands that the Government should act to stop unions "unilaterally and illegally" closing down pay beds.

Secretary of the BMA, Dr. Derek Stevenson threatened that the closure of private beds could only mean that part-time consultants would not be so readily available to NHS patients.

LEADERSHIP

But whilst the consultants use their wealth against the health service, the leadership of health workers offers no way forward in its defence. The demand for Government action against private practice is coming from the union membership in the branches and until the recent upsurge of unofficial actions, NUPE's executive had taken no lead in demanding that Labour should carry out its pledge to remove private patients from the NHS (a process that was scheduled to start three months ago).

And the leadership of COHSE, the other large NHS union, has still not called for any action, even though opposition to private practice is union policy.

These leaders are quite willing to collaborate with the Labour Government in dismantling the

health service. The fight against pay beds must take place in opposition to these reformists since these issues raise the question of the ownership and control of the whole health service.

A resolution adopted unanimously by Oxford and District Trades Council on 14th March points the way forward now for all workers to defend the free health service and the wages and conditions of all NHS workers:

"This Trades Council deplores the Statements of Regional Consultants in the Health Service and the 'Battle Plan' of the BMA in calling for mass withdrawals and resignations from the Health Service in defence of private practice. Council calls on delegates to take back to their branches support for the blacking of all private work within the NHS, in line with ASTMS national policy recommendations, and in defence of the NHS, demands the restoration of all cuts in health spending and the abolition of private practice inside the Health Service: to implement these demands, Council calls for an elected committee of trades unionists representing both Health Service workers and consumers of health services, to examine the day to day running of the Regional and Area Health Authorities, to supervise and control the deployment of resources according to the health requirements of all."

Decline of the Dollar

At the beginning of last month the director of the US Federal Reserve Bank, Dr Arthur Burns, announced that the dollar "remains basically a very strong currency".

As if to deliberately prove him wrong, the dollar has since followed an almost continuous path of decline on the international markets.

This decline is of course a response to the developing crisis of the US economy reflected in growing unemployment and inflation.

As previously reported in *Socialist Press*, it will be increasingly difficult to reduce inflationary pressures in the US without a major confrontation and defeat of the working class. At present the American ruling class is not prepared for such a confrontation preferring to attempt a reduction of unemployment by boosting purchasing power with a tax cut of \$ 28 billion. This will only serve to increase inflationary pressures as capitalists react to increased consumer spending by raising prices further in an attempt to protect profit rates.

INTEREST

US domestic inflation has, and will further, reduce the desire of foreign banks to hold large sums of dollars which can be exchanged against fewer and fewer US commodities. At the same time, the reduction in interest rates by major US banks like the Morgan Guaranty last week further reinforced the trend against the dollar on the international money markets.

As the recession develops and profits fall, the bank interest rate on loans has plummeted downwards in a desperate attempt to encourage investment despite low profit expectations. But at the same time, precisely

because of the falling interest rates foreign depositors have less reason to invest in US banks, in effect, less reason to buy dollars.

The decline of the dollar on the international money market has already caused worry among the oil producers about receiving their revenues in a rapidly deteriorating currency. At the beginning of February Iran decided to value its own currency no longer in terms of the dollar but in terms of the IMF's "Special Drawing Rights" i.e. a mixture of US and European currencies.

MAJOR

But this is no solution. The SDR's contain a substantial dollar element. The dollar is still the major world reserve currency. Despite its growing weakness, it cannot be replaced with another currency or mixture of currencies. This is for the simple reason that the problems which beset the US economy and the dollar, also plague every other major capitalist country and its currency.

As national capitals compete more and more ruthlessly for the diminishing world surplus value and profit, there is no steady demand for the commodities of any one country by others. Thus the demand for the various currencies is constantly fluctuating with the result that their exchange rates are more and more unstable in relation to one another.

This is accentuated as capitalist states price themselves out of one another's export markets through inflationary credit expansion aimed at holding off as long as possible from mass unemployment and the destruction of capital accumulation.

The fact is that the currency of no capitalist economy can any longer serve as a stable means of international payment. Only gold can serve this function but then only through the mechanism of

a major recession and destruction of capital.

At the same time the growing US recession has reduced the demand for oil, resulting in the cessation of pumping by a major Saudi-Arabian pipeline and competitive price cutting by some producers. However the oil producers cartel OPEC is currently planning co-ordinated production cutbacks to prevent falling demand leading to price competition. Such a cutback scheme is currently being sponsored by Iran, Kuwait, and Algeria.

The necessity, from the strategic view point of the American ruling class to carry through Kissinger's attempt to smash OPEC once and for all, remains, therefore, as ever. But at the same time, the econo-

mic means to achieve it are slipping away. An essential part of Kissinger's strategy was President Ford's plan to reduce oil imports through protective tariffs. Congress has just rejected this as likely to be too inflationary in the context of the already inflationary 28 billion dollar tax cut.

The increasing inability to deal with OPEC by economic means only serves to increase the attractiveness of military methods to the US ruling class. Yet as Cambodia and Vietnam show, the world working class is not about to sit back while military intervention takes place. Thus the weakness of the dollar reflects the growing class contradictions of capitalism and imperialism on a world scale

OPEN THE BOOKS!

Education is one of the major casualties of Wakefield's Labour controlled District Council's planned cuts. More than £1,000,000 is to be cut from the education budget plus probably another £2,000,000 from the capital works in the education field.

This means that even the planned increases in the number of teachers of less than 2% cannot be met. Also the budget for the maintenance of schools, the furniture and equipment grant, and the amount available for students' grants has been decimated.

We say that the working class and its children will not be made to pay for the crisis. There must be an emergency NUT meeting to discuss a campaign to fight the cuts. They must get the support of the rest of the working class

in the area, including the miners, to prepare for strikes throughout the area. The Council Shop Stewards meeting must make clear their opposition to these attacks. Their policy must be:

- *No education cuts.
- *No redundancies. For the amount of work available to be shared among the whole council workforce with no loss of pay.
- *For all details of the finances of the council to be made available to the Shpp Stewards committee.
- *For an end to private contracts. For a massive programme of public works.
- *To prepare for District-wide strikes to support these demands.

We also call on the Labour Council to refuse to carry out attacks on the working class. The 'lefts' on the council should fight for these demands and should campaign to kick out all the careerists who work only for themselves.

Not on any terms!

The "discussion" now opening up, on the television and in the capitalist press, over the Common Market referendum is a fraud, to give some credibility to the Labour leadership's smokescreen of "renegotiated terms". What all the media and the reformists are anxious to obscure is the class question of the Common Market - what is it, and in whose interest does it operate?

The European Economic Community, as it is otherwise called, is a strategic aim of European capitalism to find some common ground on which they can rally their joint economic and political strength in order to confront the competition of Japan and the USA under conditions of slump, and in order to combat the rising militancy of the working class.

TARIFFS

The dropping of internal tariffs, alongside the erection of barriers to imports from non-EEC countries is an attempt to give European capitalism an advantage, though at the same time it opens the door to the start of trade war and economic nationalism within the USA and Japan.

Equally as important to the employers is that as recession and unemployment begin to grow throughout Europe, the Common Market opens up the scope for

Europe-wide "rationalisation". In this way production would be moved to the most weakly organised and impoverished areas in Europe in order to break strikes and drive down working conditions. Such moves are already beginning - as can be seen in the threats of Fords and Chryslers to close down British plants in order to operate from Europe, if speed-up and redundancies are not accepted.

POLITICAL STRATEGY

Yet the Common Market is also a political strategy for the bourgeoisie, which goes hand in hand with a strengthening of military alliances and cooperation. The concept of "European Parliament" and of centralised economic decision-making is of course to provide instant sanctions against governments which show weakness in the face of the working class. Thus any planned policy of nationalisation would be open to control from Brussels. At the same time any eruption of the class struggle in local areas could be dealt with, under EEC strategy, by "neutral" troops from other EEC countries. In every way the Common Market shows itself as the bourgeois preparation for recession.

These class issues show why any opposition to the Market must be along class and not nationalist lines. We reject the fake idea of 'British sovereignty' peddled by reformists, Stalinists, and anti-Market Tories alike (often from the same platform). This means merely the sovereignty of British capitalists over the working class. We reject any attempt to turn as

an "alternative" once more to the super-exploitation of the workers and peasants in the ex-colonial and Commonwealth countries.

Our call to vote "NO" to the Common Market is based then on opposition in principle to what the Market stands for. The Labour leaders consciously divert away from such a stand with talk about "terms". We say "NO - on any terms". The interests of the working class cannot be defended by reforming capitalism, but only by attacking it, weakening it, and destroying it. An important step in this is therefore to attack the employers' strategic line of defence - and pull Britain out of the Common Market. This can then open up the way for the fight for socialism in Britain and every European capitalist country. To the EEC we therefore counterpose the struggle for the United Socialist States of Europe.

CLASS LINES

Only if the Common Market is fought on these class lines can the role of the 69 traitors within the Labour party who preserved the Tories in office and sold out their own members by voting for the EEC entry be exposed, and these men driven out of the Labour movement.

For these reasons we reject the reactionary nationalist platform of the "Get Britain Out" campaign (patronised jointly by Tories and trade union leaders like Clive Jenkins) and call on Trades Councils, and trade union bodies to join with Labour Party constituency organisations in leading a campaign for a massive rejection of the Common Market by the working class.

WORKERS REACH

FOR POWER

(continued from front page)

Trotsky described in 1936 the main traits of Bonapartism as: "the independence of power from parties and programmes, the liquidation of the parliamentary legislation by means of emergency powers, the rising of the Government in the guise of the "arbiter" above the struggling camps, i.e., factually above the nation." [France at the Turning Point]

Only from this class standpoint, seeing through the left demagogy is it possible for the working class to understand the Portuguese regime. Thus although leading figures, such as COPCON commander General Carvalho, make vociferous attacks on the US Ambassador in Lisbon, Fran. Carlucci (who is denounced in Paris and Berlin as a CIA official), these speeches remain shadow-boxing, to cover the regime's decision to remain in the reactionary NATO alliance, and to allow Carlucci to remain in Lisbon.

PARLIAMENT

The bogus nature of the regime and its lack of programme makes its leaders seek to set up the cover of a 'parliament'. But the parliament of April 12th will be the servant and not the master, of the Armed Forces Movement, and behind them, of the capitalist class. The AFM will keep a power of veto over all legislation, and the power to propose and carry through measures of its own. The day-to-day ruling of the country will be through the AFM's direct nominees on the "Revolutionary Council" - a cabinet imposed on a parliament before it even exists. The parliament can be nothing but a fraud, omnipotent to act, under the control of the officer corps.

The Socialist Party, led by Soares, has been greatly discredited by its attitude to the March 11th coup. The main political support given to the regime now comes directly from the Stalinist Communist P Party, whose Secretary, Cunhal is a diehard advocate of the Moscow line. Under his leadership, and through the influence of the CP in the mass movement, the political energies and initiative of the working class are being directed into the campaign for the parliamentary elections.

The Stalinist leaders join in condemnation of the break-up of conferences of the right wing parties, and willingly acquiesce in the officers' latest actions banning parties of the "ultra-left" - the Maoist MRPP and AOC, with threats against Pabloite "Trotskyist" groupings such as the LCI. Itself an important element in the Armed Forces Movement's "Revolutionary Council", and the proposed civilian parliament, the Communist Party now forms the most obstinate brake on all attempts to strengthen and unify the independent organs of the workers' power.

It is no accident that the Stalinists move in this way. The outbreak of revolutionary struggle in Portugal, in conditions entirely different from those which enabled the fascists and the military to prepare the base for a coup in Chile, is already having an international impact.

In Spain, students at Madrid Un-

iversity hoisted Portuguese flags to celebrate the defeat of Spinoza's coup, reflecting the impact of these events, which will redouble and surge throughout the millions of workers already posed with class battles in defence of jobs and wages throughout Europe. This situation makes concrete the call for the United Socialist States of Europe to be fought for in opposition to the capitalist Common Market.

Just as in 1968, when the May-June General Strike in France was followed by revolutionary struggles in Czechoslovakia, this development, beginning in the fascist and the capitalist countries, can rapidly spread to the deformed workers' states of Eastern Europe, and to Russia itself, threatening the very existence of the Stalinist bureaucracy with the prospect of political revolution.

Thus the Kremlin dreads the prospect of revolution and seeks to head it off, operating directly through Cunhal and the Portuguese CP. In this counter-revolutionary stance they end up in the same camp as the US capitalist class who also fear Portugal as the class who also fear the events in Portugal as the seeds of the overthrow of capitalism in countries throughout Europe. This coincides with the enormous gains of the liberation forces in South-East Asia, which are striking further hammer blows at imperialism.

LEADERSHIP

It is precisely for such conditions as these and the need within them for revolutionary leadership that the founders of the Workers Socialist League first took up the struggle for Trotsky's Transitional Programme within the sectarian Workers Revolutionary Party, and precisely why it became necessary to maintain the continuity of the fight for Trotskyism in the building of the WSL.

The most critical question in Portugal is the crisis of leadership in the workers movement. As any Glasgow dustman can tell Portuguese workers, the standing army is neither 'above' classes nor controlled by the working class. Yet the existing mass workers parties in Portugal are dedicated to preserving a 'unity' with the armed forces and the capitalist parties, holding back the power of the working class.

To fight now means to demand that the CP and SP break from all bourgeois parties and the AFM and form a workers government with a programme to unite workers and peasants, and based on the existing organs of workers' power centralised in a national body.

Above all however stands the need for a leadership able to understand and to defeat reformism and Stalinism - a Trotskyist party.

WSL PUBLIC MEETING
"For a Workers' Government in Portugal."
15th April, 7.30 p.m.
at "THE ROEBUCK"
(corner T'tenham Ct Rd and Maple St. nr Warren St Tube)

£500 monthly development fund

The enormous movements in the working class internationally pose sharply the question of programme and of leadership. It is to resolve these that the WSL and its paper *Socialist Press* have been founded. The response which our paper and the policies it fights for have been able to win in the workers movement shows that we must expand the paper from an 8-page fortnightly.

We are therefore appealing to our readers for a £500 monthly development fund. Donations should be sent to: *Socialist Press*, 11 Lower Basildon, Near Reading, Berks.

SHREWSBURY '2'



The Leicester Trades Council Shrewsbury Two demonstration

The decision of the T&GWU National Executive to call on the TUC for a one-day general strike to force the release of the Shrewsbury Two is a step which must not be overlooked.

It reflects the pressure on the bureaucracy from militant trade unionists throughout the country on this issue, and is a conscious attempt to side-step the growing call for all-out general strike action.

It is most important that resolutions continue to flow in to District and Regional committees and National Executives of all unions, as well as to Labour party GMCs calling for indefinite general strike action to free these pickets. Any attempt to limit the action to a one-day stoppage means that the way is opened for further bureaucratic evasion.

Alongside the call for general strike action must go the demand that the Labour party 'left' MPs fight to remove Jenkins as Home Secretary.

The Workers Socialist League fought for these policies when it took part in a demonstration of 1,000 trade unionists who

marched to Leicester jail on Saturday 8th March.

The following motion has been passed unanimously by T&GWU 10/76A Branch (covering Hollis Bros, Hull):

"This branch meeting recognises that the January 14th lobby of Parliament demanding the release of the Shrewsbury Two has not achieved its aim. In fact since that date brothers Warren and Tomlinson have been removed from an open prison and sent to separate closed jails, thus making their term of imprisonment more harsh.

This branch calls on the Hull and District Trades Council to demand of the TUC that an official General Strike should be called and maintained until their release is secured.

It was quite clear that their imprisonment by the last Tory government was an attack on the right to picket, and their continued imprisonment is a condemnation of the Labour government's Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, who should be removed from office and replaced by a Home Secretary prepared to use the power at his disposal."

YORKSHIRE JOBS FIGHT

At Imperial Typewriters in Hull the occupation continues despite the weakness of its leadership and the refusal of the T&GWU to pay strike benefit.

It is being supported by blacking action from Hull dockers and the National Port Shop Stewards Committee. The Yorkshire Divisional Council of ASTMS has also donated £500.

Other major firms have also announced closures and redundancies - Thorn Consumer Electronics in Hull is to close throwing up 225 jobs, and in Bradford, alongside the continuing slump in textiles 900 are to be made redundant at Bairds colour television factory, the biggest plant in the town.

In both Bradford and Hull the WSL is actively campaigning on the call for mass meetings and factory occupations to fight all redundancies and short time and to establish the sliding scale of working hours with no loss of earnings.

In the course of the occupation the books of the employer must be forced open to the view of trade unionists, to prove the case for the firm's nationalisation by the Labour government, without compensation. A programme of public works, to integrate nationalised plants into the beginnings of a planned economy is vital to protect all jobs and expand production of necessary commodities.

A resolution passed by Leeds No.1 UCATT Branch for the UCATT Regional Conference in May, puts forward means of fighting layoffs and wage-cuts:

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