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PORTUGAL: DOWN WITH MILITARY GOVERNMENT!



Building workers besieging Azevedo's residence

With two opposed class forces vying with increasing ferocity to control the destiny of Portugal, the crisis of revolutionary working class leadership places the revolution, despite its powerful developments, in great danger.

On the one hand is the crumbling, faction-ridden Armed Forces Movement with their Sixth Provisional Government of the bourgeois PPD and the traitorous Socialist Party leaders (Soares now threatening to fight on the streets with arms against revolution) trying to shore up the vestiges of Portuguese capitalism with the backing of the discredited right wing movements, the reactionary armies over the border and the dregs of the old fascist regime.

Standing against these reactionary groupings is the organised working class, the agricultural labourers, and the rank and file soldiers who are showing their strength, expressing their independence, and reaching for state power - which alone can guarantee the future of the revolution.

The crumbling authority of the Sixth government was finally shattered two weeks ago when thousands of building workers,

wearing safety helmets, surged around the house of Premier Azevedo forcing him to concede to the trade unions massive 44% wage demand.

After refusing for more than 24 hours to enter into an agreement under duress, Azevedo backed down just before dawn, when faced with the impossibility of mobilising any soldiers in his defence.

TRANSMITTER

Previously a group of parachutists had tried to settle the struggle for power by blowing up the transmitter of Radio Renascenca in order to prevent it remaining under the control of the left wing. Having performed this task, they voted never to do such a thing again.

By now virtually no section of the military could be relied upon to support the government or carry out its orders. As the unstable centrist Otelo de Car-

vahlo put it to a (*Le Monde*) reporter, "There is not, at the moment, in the entire Portuguese army, a single officer who is able to give an order and be sure that it will be carried out". Even the superior officers themselves have revolted over the efforts to replace Carvahlo as commander of the Lisbon military region.

WEAKNESS

The continuing weakness of the forces supporting the Sixth government was shown on the demonstration on November 9th in Lisbon sponsored by the right wing PPD and the Socialist Party in defence of the government.

About 40,000 turned out to greet premier Azevedo, but they broke up in confusion when gas grenades were thrown into the crowd. Since that time the Socialist Party has been compelled to show its distance from the bourgeois PPD, though a long televised debate between SP leader Soares and Stalinist leader Cunhal did not discuss the obvious question of unity between the two workers parties.

Within the next few days officers in the Oporto military region had to announce their agreement to the demands of rank and file soldiers. The pace of farm occupations in the central and southern areas of the country is said to have been stepped up.

Then on the 16th of November there took place in Lisbon the largest demonstration the city had seen since the famous mobilisation of 1st May 1974 shortly after the overthrow of fascism.

This demonstration was said by (*Le Monde*) reporter to have been over 100,000 strong. It was called by numerous workers' committees, the Communist Party and many centrist and left organisations. It included rows of building workers, shipbuilders, dockers, peasants, fishermen, and every section of the armed forces. It even included the parachutists, once considered irredeemably right-wing.

AZEVEDO

The political slogans of this demonstration were distinctly left of those which preceded the setting-up of the Sixth Government. Azevedo was a "clown", a "reactionary, who should "get out".

During the following days, the right-wing were in disarray. The PPD wanted to move the Constituent Assembly to the north on the grounds that mob rule had taken

over in Lisbon. The government decided that they too would go on strike. Demanding that its authority should be recognised. An enormous dispute broke out about the leadership of the armed forces, concentrating in particular on the position of Otelo de Carvalho.

MANOEUVRE

In a situation where the working class is moving rapidly to the left, it is inevitable that the Social Democrats and the Stalinists will manoeuvre. The moves of Soares to dissociate himself from his bourgeois allies of the PPD are an obvious example of this. So also is the participation of the Stalinists in all the recent strikes and demonstrations, actions which they certainly would have condemned before the summer. Another one of these actions is the one-day General Strike called in Lisbon by the CP-dominated trade union confederation, attempting to pressurise the revolutionary council of the AFM into accepting a CP majority.

This reflects not in any way a break from support for the AFM but a political manoeuvre to secure Stalinist political influence.

The question now for the Portuguese working class is the need to break from these treacherous and counter-revolutionary leaderships. The SP has been cooperating with

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LABOUR'S CUTS BOOST UNEMPLOYMENT

The Wilson government is hell-bent on creating a pool of unemployment which will make Heath's figure of 1 million on the dole seem like a charity picnic.

Every statement, every document, issued from the Labour Cabinet shows an arrogant contempt for the workers who elected them, and a determination to make workers pay for the profits crisis of British capitalism.

TUC

And yet every statement, and every document, is now openly backed by the TUC who ally themselves with Wilson and the employers against their members.

Workers are witnessing a historic period of betrayal by these reformist leaders. Not even in 1926, nor in 1931 did the TUC so

eagerly participate in such broad, brutal and blatant attacks on jobs and wages.

The Ryder plan to speed up and rationalise British Leyland, steam-rollered through against the wishes of the membership by trade union bureaucrats, now becomes the blueprint for the Chequers plan to attack the whole of industry, throwing up thousands and hundreds of thousands of redundancies.

And the TUC's only action on unemployment has been to attack the lobby of Parliament called by the North-West TUC.

Meanwhile, from the Health Service to the car industry, from British Steel to British Rail, from machine tools to the bus service, every field of work, and every job is coming under the twin hammers of speed-up and redundancy.

Latest to come in for treatment in the national drive for de-

manning is spending in local government - which, of course, is responsible for education, housing, community needs, and a whole range of services basic to workers' living standards.

AXE

The axe is to be brought in on jobs, and services reduced. Wilson last week spelled out that in allocating cash-spending limits, the Cabinet will start from the priority of preserving the profits of private industry. He said: "Financial constraints and the needs of manufacturing industry mean we cannot afford such continuing expansion."

This outline was followed next day by the announcement from Environment Secretary Crosland of figures showing that the government will cut its financial support of local authority spending next year.

So the New Year promises new waves of redundancies in town halls and schools - while the management offensive within the Health Service also really begins to get under way with all-out attacks on manning levels now combining in nearly every area with cuts in the service provided.

The disruption of the Health Service also shows sharply the other prong of the Labour Government's attack on workers - the £6 state pay laws. It is purely Castle's defence of this reactionary legislation which has forced junior doctors into the arms of the Tory-led associations who at present lead the strikes and threats of resignation.

CASTLE

But Castle, in defending the pay laws, is well aware that their edge is not felt simply by doctors but

by all trade unionists and their families who now see living standards slashed as a result of the TUC - Labour leadership deal.

Castle's position shows that the Wilson Cabinet is united on these questions. For them, if the Health Service, along with all the most basic living standards of workers must be demolished in the name of profit - so be it!

LEADERSHIP

And the encouragement given them by the TUC shows that the only challenge to this must come from building new leadership which will struggle for the independence and the interests of the working class.

In every school, hospital, factory, foundry and pit the demand must be raised that those leaders who will not lead a struggle to reject

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QUEEN SACKS AUSTRALIAN LABOUR GOVERNMENT

With all the arrogance of a squire evicting cottagers the Queen's representative in Australia has installed millionaire ultra-right Liberal Malcolm Fraser as Prime Minister in the run-up to a rigged general election on December 13th.

The Governor-General's action - sacking Labour Prime Minister Gough Whitlam after Labour was returned with a majority in the House of Representatives (the equivalent of the House of Commons) in two elections since 1972 - has sparked a wave of angry protest from the trade union movement.

The power that Governor-General Sir John Kerr has used to oust an elected Labour government is the same as the British monarchy holds over majorities in the House of Commons. The political coup in Australia is therefore a serious warning of the ability of the monarchy and the Tories in Britain to tear up the unwritten 'understandings' of the constitution and impose political 'solutions' in the teeth of an elected majority.

Kerr's action in appointing Fraser - an enthusiastic supporter of the US in Vietnam - as Prime Minister has all the hallmarks of a hastily-concocted political conspiracy. Kerr admitted that he

consulted Supreme Court Chief Justice Sir Garfield Barwick, a well-known Liberal sympathiser (Australian Liberals are the equivalent of British Tories) before his bombshell dismissal of Whitlam.

And shortly beforehand the Liberals discreetly booked more than \$1 million worth of television time, now to be used in the election campaign.

Kerr, appointed by the Queen on Whitlam's proposal in 1974, is a lawyer and former intelligence official of the secret 'Directorate of Research and Civil Affairs'. During the war he rose to the rank of Colonel, then held posts as a federal judge in industrial courts, and later became chief justice of the state of New South Wales.

Fraser's government, which Kerr put in theoretically to play a "caretaker" role, is already using its position to the hilt in the election campaign.

Senior civil servants have already complained that they were asked to provide financial and economic information which could only be used for electioneering. Fraser and his ministers are provided with free transport, massive clerical support and body guards that go with official positions.

All police leave in New South Wales - a traditional Labour stronghold - was cancelled in a drive

against "violence" during the campaign.

The organised working class have reacted with shock and anger to the dictatorial political conspiracy. As news of Whitlam's sacking came over the radio, thousands struck and demonstrated in Sydney and Brisbane. Liberal Party headquarters were besieged in Sydney and in Melbourne a call for a four-hour general strike by local trade union leaders brought out hundreds of thousands.

But the trade union bureaucrats have acted to squash even token mobilisation in defence of democratic rights. National trade union chief Bob Hawke has urged all trade unions "not to be provoked", arguing that industrial action will damage Labour's electoral chances.

Nonetheless local action continues, especially in shipping and the building industry, and is likely to spread during the campaign.

Meanwhile the ruling class and their political representatives are pulling no punches despite the fact that Fraser is in theory a "caretaker" - and was voted out of office in a vote of no confidence by the House of Representatives only hours after Kerr had appointed him - he is already using his position to shape the flow of government "news" to his advantage.

And Whitlam, together with three of his former colleagues in the Labour Cabinet, already face legal cases concerning the allegations - with which the Liberal press has been crammed for months - that they acted improperly

in raising huge loans overseas.

The lesson of the Australian crisis is the opposite of what Whitlam and the Labour leaders are preaching. It is false for them to claim that it is a purely Australian affair - or one that can be resolved by yet another Labour majority in the House of Representatives.

The powers that were used to remove Whitlam could be used in Britain. And Whitlam's proposals to tinker with the constitution offer no protection to the labour movement in Australia.

Only the severing of all colonial links with Britain combined with the mobilisation of the Australian working class in the struggle for socialism can beat the conspiracy of the Liberals and the British monarchy.

temporary de facto division of the country between the two claimant governments". (Times, Nov 19th)

We must be absolutely clear that the situation in Angola is not that of a conflict between rival national liberation movements. By last September virtually the whole of Angola was under MPLA control, the narrow tribally based FNLA and UNITA movements having been defeated.

These latter were resuscitated with massive injections of CIA arms and money together with mercenaries from South Africa and Portuguese ex-colonial troops who have stayed behind to "win the war in Africa".

PORTUGUESE

Thus the FNLA forces to the north of Luanda are directed by extreme right wing Portuguese colonel Santos e Castro until recently an anti-guerrilla strategist with the Portuguese army. At present he is leading a band of 130 Portuguese mercenaries based in Ambriz and supplemented by troops from Zaire.

The FNLA forces in the south are clearly dominated by South African mercenaries. The armoured car brigade is driven, according to reporters on the spot, by whites who refuse to disclose their nationalities but speak with strong South African accents.

CENSORSHIP

This clandestine South African military intervention in Angola is covered up by strict press censorship. A number of leading South African newspapers, including the *Rand Daily Mail* have been appearing with blank spaces in place of reports from Angola.

In this situation of outright invasion of Angola, the US decision on November 18th to cut off all military aid to Zaire is a calculated cover up. The CIA now judges that a victory of the mercenary armies is now reasonably certain.

It therefore in the interests of East-West detente now puts on a front of acting to defuse the situation hoping that the Soviet Union will do the same and cease military aid to the MPLA.

There must be no compromise. Aid to the MPLA must be increased. There must be a campaign in the labour movement for aid to the People's Republic of Angola and its immediate recognition by the Labour government. Drive the imperialist invaders out of Angola!



Australian Labour Party demonstration.

WILSON'S WAR IN THE GULF

In 1970 the British installed the Sandhurst trained Sultan Qaboos as ruler of Oman, which, standing on the south west corner of the Arabian peninsula, is at the entrance to the Gulf - the source of more than a third of all the world's oil supplies.

The British airbase on the offshore island of Masirah is also available for the use of US military aircraft, according to Oman's foreign minister. In return for this facility the US has provided anti-tank missiles for use against the struggles of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman.

BRITISH-LED

But the Sultan is not facing the FPLO single handed. His armed forces, quadrupled to 15,000 in the last five years, are led by more than 400 British officers - two of whom were killed in fighting earlier this year.

Major General Kenneth Perkins and Brigadier John Akehurst, of the British Army, are in command, with the full authorisation of Britain's Labour government. A report in the *Times* admitted that:

"Britain remains the dominant foreign presence in both military and civil matters. Several of the government ministries have British advisors."

As the Sultan himself put it: "relations couldn't be better. We couldn't be closer to each other. Here we are accustomed to British faces in our army, in our training, and so on."

FICTION

But to maintain the fiction of independence he insists that:

"There is a difference between colonisation and saying, I am still here if you need my advice."

It is not clear whether the

Sultan needed any advice on the selection of Arab and Pakistani horses for his well stocked stables, or on the building of a new palace in Muscat, the reconstruction of the old palace at Sulalah, and the building of a new residence for himself just outside that city.

INTERESTS

However, Wimpey and Taylor Woodrow both seem to have extensive interests in Oman. But as the world economic crisis has led to cutbacks in civil development, the Sultan has equipped himself not only with a 30 million dollar yacht and Hitler's old Bavarian residence, but also with the latest British Jaguar military aircraft and Rapier missiles.

The war against the FPLO has recently been stepped up, with the bombing last month of Hauf, inside the border of S. Yemen - which supports the liberation movement.

Most fighting is in Dhofar, at the west of Oman, but the Sultan is not able to secure the road from Sulalah to Muscat through the central region of the country, and fear of ambushes forces supplies to Dhofar to be airlifted.

Jordanian troops are also active in support of the Sultan's regime, but the US Phantoms used in the attacks on Hauf belong to the Iranian Air Force.

An FPLO spokesman estimated that there are 15,000 Iranians in Oman supporting the Sultan against what the Shah describes as "communism and atheism".

SECRET

While the FPLO promises to continue the war until all foreign intervention is eliminated, the British Labour government continues to ignore last year's request by 84 Labour MPs to withdraw from this imperialist war which it helps along as secretly as it can.



Mao greets CIA's Kissinger

ANGOLA MADISTS BACK CIA INVASION

The People's Republic of Angola, established on November 11th, is continuing its struggle for survival against the armed intervention of world imperialism.

With military aid only from the Soviet Union, the army of the republic, the MPLA, has been fighting over the last few days to halt the advance along its coast line of the forces of the FNLA/UNITA coalition, which declared a rival "Popular and democratic republic" in Huambo amid scenes of drunken rampages by UNITA "troops".

The arms for the FNLA/UNITA coalition are being supplied by the United States through military aid to the neighbouring right wing regime of Mobutu in Zaire. The US aim is to prevent Angola's strategically important coastline falling under a regime hostile to imperialism. The US are aided by, for reasons of their own, the Chinese Stalinist regime.

In addition, FNLA/UNITA are backed by Zambia, which cynically supports whichever regime controls the Benguela railway, vital outlet to the sea for Zambian exports,

and South Africa, whose rulers are determined to prevent a regime in Angola which would be sympathetic to the liberation struggle in Namibia (South West Africa) against South Africa's illegal occupation of this territory.

The mercenary-led FNLA forces in the south of Angola have pushed rapidly up the coast as far as Novo Redondo while in the north the capital of the People's Republic, Luanda has come under artillery fire.

Latest reports indicate that the columns moving up from the south has split into three in obvious preparation for an attack on the left flank of the MPLA's position.

SOUTH AFRICAN

These outflanking movements (which have been the tactic deployed by the FNLA in its rapid move up the coast) are only possible by means of the South African supplied and operated fleet of Panhard armoured cars.

The Western press continues to talk of a conflict between rival factions and to argue for international action among the imperialist powers to "work out a new solution even if this means a

SPANISH RIGHT REGROUPS

32 doctors have fortunately failed in their grotesque struggle to hold together the disintegrating body of Franco. Now, every sign is that his political heirs will find it just as difficult to keep his collapsing regime alive.

Franco has bequeathed them little in the way of an organised mass political base. In the interests of his own personal dictatorship he absorbed the Falange into the National Movement - less a political party than a ministry of the government - which orchestrates displays of public support for the regime.

Its political weakness helps to explain the recent growth of ultra-right groups which, encouraged by the urban police and the powerful Civil Guard (the armed rural and provincial police), have terrorised worker and separatist militants.

It is overwhelmingly the merciless armed strength of the Guardia Civil and the army on which the Franco dictatorship rested. But the recent Sahara crisis showed the deep divisions within the regime between the army and the 'political' leaders.

Aware that Spain could not hang on to its colonial possession, the regime agreed to hand over the Sahara to Morocco in exchange for a share of the profits on the territory's vast phosphate deposits. The architect of this agreement was Solis Ruiz, the Minister of the Movement; and its purpose was to kill the Algerian supported anti-Spanish Saharan independence movement.

Juan Carlos, on becoming acting head of state, successfully supported the army's resistance to withdrawal, and the Moroccans withdrew, though subsequently a settlement has divided the territory between Morocco and Mauretania.

This episode, though a partial victory for the army and its champion Juan Carlos, illustrates the political power of the army. Nothing would be more dangerous than to assume, as recent publications of the revisionists of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" do, that it will stand by passively and watch the disintegration of fascism.

On the contrary, the army will do everything in its power to preserve fascist rule, though its leaders are fearful of the effects of internal dissent.

This is shown by the arrest in the last few months of several officers belonging to the Democratic Military Union (a largely bourgeois liberal movement of perhaps 500 to 1000 officers and NCOs out of a total of 100,000).

In addition the Army has within the last month reversed its custom of stationing conscripts (the great majority of the Spanish army) in their home areas.

As in Chile in the weeks before the 1973 coup, conscripts have been moved to areas where they do not live, making it easier to break their political contacts and

reduce the danger of mutinies. This move must be seen in conjunction with an emergency plan (called Operation Morning star) to be implemented at the first signs of mass political action on the death of Franco.

The plan includes hundreds of arrests of known political activists (from revolutionaries to christian democrats) the confining of 'uncertain' sections of the army to barracks and the call-up of voluntary reservists who, with the more reliable Guardia Civil and police, would control the streets of the major cities.

As we go to press Operation Morningstar has not been activated in full though a massive security operation has been mounted in the cities, and during Franco's illness the already high level of political arrests (officially put at 500 since July) was stepped up still further.

All these are signs of a desperate fear of any movement of the masses. Its political weakness is also reflected in the major



Franco with Juan Carlos

tactical differences between its political leaders about what amount of "democratisation" is the minimum necessary to contain the mass movement and to preserve the effective power of the Spanish ruling class.

Some clue as to the initial tactic to be attempted will come from Juan Carlos' selection of his first prime minister.

Of the candidates most widely mentioned, Solis Ruiz and Rodriguez de Valcarcel are ultra hard-line Falangists, Arias Navarro, the present prime minister, is regarded as a cautious centre of the far right candidate; and J.M. de Areilza and Fraga Iribane are considered the most 'liberal'.

Fraga Iribane, currently ambassador to Britain, has had discussions with the leadership of the Spanish Communist Party.

He or Areilza might attempt to restore some degree of formal legality to political parties and bring other parties into a coalition.

But any degree of 'opening out' of the regime forces two massive contradictions. One is

the growing demand in the working class for the immediate and total overthrow of all aspects of the fascist regime.

As the recent upsurge of strikes shows, workers will use the slightest concession as an opportunity to demand more.

The second contradiction springs from the economic crisis. Though the slump has still hit Spain less sharply than other western European countries, the growth rate of production has been halved in the last year, unemployment has now begun and the rate of profit is estimated to have fallen by 25%.

DEFICIT

The slump has been temporarily held at bay by a huge government deficit which is reflected in a 30% rate of inflation and a huge balance of payments deficit which has caused a haemorrhage of Spain's previously large foreign exchange reserves.

The government has attempted to control wages and last week the wage control law was reinforced (the Minister of Finance justifying the measure by saying that even the British Labour government was doing the same!).

In this situation the political situation impels the regime to concede more rights to the working class; equally the economic crisis impels them to make sure that such rights are not used.

Few circumstances could be less favourable for any liberalisation course on which the Spanish bourgeoisie embarks.

It has, however, important allies: the reformist and Stalinist leaderships in the workers' movement.

After Franco's death, the first reaction of Socialist Party leader Rodolfo Llopis was to say that 'Above all we must avoid in Spain the same spectacle as Portugal.'

Santiago Carillo, General Secretary of the Spanish Communist Party was more explicit:

"The forces of opposition, left, centre and right inclusive, must come out into the light of day and propose a realistic provisional government able to achieve the greatest possible national unity".

FASCISTS

In other words, Carillo proposes not even a popular front alliance but a 'governmental' alliance of the Communist Party with fascists! Francoism is mortally sick; and Carillo wishes to play the doctor.

The working class is capable in Spain of completely overthrowing not only Francoism but capitalism itself - but only through the most determined and principled struggle for the political independence of the workers movement against leaders who threaten to destroy it in alliances with the bourgeoisie and with fascism.

WHAT IS THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE?

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

Since then our work in the mass movement has seen the League develop into an expanding organisation with important new areas of work (especially in the Midlands and the North West), and an enlarged trade union base.

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

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

In local disputes also, WSL comrades have tested and developed the demands of the Transitional Programme, putting forward in every case the only real opposition to the Stalinists and the right-wing. Our struggle for the "open the books" demand in the motor industry has won a mass response. The WSL alone among the groups on the left has fought the speed-up proposals of the Ryder Report since its very publication, and we have leafleted almost every major BLMC plant in the only national campaign against its implementation.

At the same time we have put forward a policy to fight unemployment, calling for unity of employed and unemployed through the fight to mobilise the trade union movement, and following this initiative, the first Trades Council sub-committee to fight for these policies has already been established in Banbury.

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

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

This has gone alongside the development in the International Pages of Socialist Press of programme and perspectives on a whole range of international struggles against imperialism, in which again the method and the principles of the Transitional Programme are an essential starting point, and on many of which no other movement puts forward any perspective.

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

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FRANCE: CP BACKS ARMY DISCIPLINE

Six trade union militants were arrested in Soissons, north-east of Paris, last week and charged with a series of criminal offences, including "inciting military personnel to disobedience" for distributing leaflets drawn up by a soldiers' committee of the 67th (infantry) regiment.

The six - four members of the reformist trade union federation (CFDT), and two from the Communist Party-dominated CGT, France's largest trade union federation - were released on bail but face possible jail sentences if convicted.

Their arrest came only a few days after police in Clermont-Ferrand (near Lyons) had pulled in a Portuguese left-wing soldier, Joachim Ferreira Fernandez. He was held for lengthy interrogation

on the situation in Portugal.

Fernandez is a militant of the 'Soldiers United Shall Win' (SUV) movement of rank-and-file soldiers in Portugal which has won the support of thousands in the Portuguese armed forces against the attempts of the government and officer caste to restore military 'discipline' and use the army to enforce state policy.

LEAFLETS

The crack-down by the French police followed a wave of demonstrations and leaflet campaigns among conscripts against their oppression. At the beginning of the month the military intelligence services launched a probe into the struggle of rank-and-file soldiers of the 19th regiment at Besancon - supported by local militants of the CFDT - to form a trade union branch.

One of the main immediate issues was the arbitrary and brutal

filicers in the barracks. Unofficial sources close to the military hierarchy claimed that clandestine committees of soldiers - influenced by the movement in Portugal - had been active in the region since June.

Probably in response to this, the government brought in a presidential decree in July of this year specifically forbidding soldiers to join trade unions or political organisations - and it is under this, as well as general legislation of 1972 restricting soldiers' political rights to virtually nothing - that soldiers at Besancon are likely to be prosecuted.

EXPOSED

The struggle at Besancon in particular, showed up the attitude of the reformist and Stalinist leaders to the capitalist army in the sharpest possible way.

Charles Hernu, leader of the Socialist Party's committee on

attempt to organise soldiers into the trade unions as an attack on "the freedom of our country to be independent within the framework of the existing alliances", and an attempt "to weaken the instrument of defence, and thus defence itself".

DENOUNCED

The Stalinists, for their part, denounced "the anti-militarism of leftist elements". Both of them thus put themselves shoulder to shoulder with General Bigeard, appointed as Defence Minister earlier this year in a political reshuffle aimed at rallying the 'confidence' of the right wing behind the government's determination to crush 'indiscipline' in the ranks.

Despite the unanimous hostility from the government and the labour bureaucrats, the struggle against the officer corps and the army regime is spreading. In many areas local trade union organisations have put their presses at the disposal of committees in the barracks.

Local rank-and-file soldiers

infantry regiment at Clermont-Ferrand and from units in Verdun, Limoges and Grenoble. There has even been a leaflet campaign among the ranks in the very heart of French militarism - the officer school at Saint-Cyr.

The political limits of the movement are set by the fact that it has been, so far largely influenced by the PSU (a 'left' social-democratic party, with several parliamentary deputies) and that it has not yet gone beyond the basic demands for democratic rights for soldiers.

But it is clear that it is a movement pushed forward by the revolution in Portugal, where the resistance of the rank-and-file soldiers is one of the strongest in the offensive of the working class.

Even while faced with the enmity of the labour leaders and the threat of harsh military discipline, the French soldiers involved have picked up a gauntlet to challenge the very existence of the capitalist standing army and the right of the ruling class to organise bodies of armed men against the working class at home

WORKERS' CONTROL IN THE FIGHT TO FORCE NATIONALISATION

by John Lister



One of the most abused and misapplied slogans current in the workers movement today is the call for "workers control". It is used to mean all things to all tendencies.

The Workers Socialist League was founded on the basis of a deep going struggle to return to the method and principles of Trotsky's Transitional Programme, and central to that programme is the fight at every level for forms of workers control. For this reason we have the task of restoring the revolutionary content of this slogan, and exposing the perversions of it by other groups which today drag the demand in the mud.

The Transitional Programme is a guide to action, a Marxist programme to develop and strengthen politically the working class in the process of its daily struggles, through the intervention and building of the revolutionary party. Its goal is to prepare the working class politically and organisationally for the struggle for state power.

ers to break from their present reformist and Stalinist leaders, and sees the need for these struggles to begin from the daily class battles fought by workers - over jobs, wages, conditions, the independence of the unions, the nationalisation of bankrupt firms - in order to advance their political understanding.

TODAY'S STRUGGLES

Transitional demands are therefore demands - such as the sliding scale of wages, work sharing on full pay, or the opening of the employers' books - which begin in material struggles faced today and which can be seen as necessary demands to solve problems confronted by workers, but which cannot be fully conceded within the framework of capitalism. Trotsky makes this clear in a discussion on the Programme with the American SWP in March 1938:

"Naturally we must make our first step in such a way as to accumulate experience for prac-

to be popularised, to enable them to become a material factor in developing the political awareness of workers. The objective in fighting for transitional demands is to reach the point where for large forces within the organised labour movement:

"The old 'minimal programme' is superseded by the transitional programme, the task of which lies in systematic mobilisation of the masses for the proletarian revolution". (TP p 16)

But of course demands do not on their own produce changes in workers' political thinking. It is not sufficient merely to print transitional demands in papers and leaflets, hoping some day workers will spontaneously take up the fight for them.

LEADERSHIP

The struggle to win support for the demands must begin with the revolutionary leadership and their fight in the mass movement. The lessons from this fight continuously enrich our understanding of the role and impact of transitional demands and strengthen the work that follows.

Thus only experience of the struggle in the workers movement taught WSL comrades that the demand in the Transitional Programme for the "sliding scale of hours" can best be grasped by workers if expressed in the popular form of "work sharing on full pay". The content of the slogan is the same, but the impact much greater on the workers movement.

In a similar way the call for the "abolition of business secrets" in the Transitional Programme has won a mass response in the British Leyland Cowley factories in the form of the demand to "open the Books - to elected trade union committees".

Here a basic slogan from the Trotskyist programme has been both popularised and brought right to the centre of workers daily struggles against speed up and redundancy. It has been overwhelmingly adopted both by the shop stewards committee and by a mass meeting at the Assembly Plant, and played a key role in challenging the extreme right wing leadership in the plant.

All this would of course have been lost if the WSL had regarded the transitional demands as abstractions, propaganda statements or simply an ultimatum to be thrown down to the working class.

ESSENCE

In their essence, the transitional demands embody the fight for workers control. The initial demand and struggle for the sliding scale of wages to be on figures assessed by trade union committees; for the books to be opened to elected trade union representatives and sympathetic experts chosen by them; for work sharing on full pay to be administered by trade union committees on manning - at each step poses setting up the independent bodies of the working class in counter position to the employers and the state itself.

Each of these demands is therefore completely in opposition to any joint involvement of trade unionists with management on committees, which is used by reformists and Stalinists to masquerade as "workers' control".

oration within British Leyland, where at each level within the combine there will be "participation" committees, the sole terms of reference of which is to "improve efficiency", and acceptance that "executive responsibility rests with management". The committees are a complete fraud, with the straight forward job of imposing speed up with the stolen authority of the trade union movement.

To see the complete contrast between "participation" and genuine workers' control it is only necessary to contrast the latest Common Market plan to legislate widescale 'participation' and the right wing enthusiasm for Ryder with the storm of Tory press hostility to the workers councils and factory committees in Portugal, which really are coercing the employers and controlling their actions within the factories.

Yet it is not just the Communist Party and the right wing who are involved up to their necks in the Ryder plan - leading members of the International Socialists, the Militant group, and the Workers Revolutionary Party have been involved in the collaboration leading up to the formation of the "joint" committees, or subsequently stood for election to them.

WRONG SLOGAN

It is no accident that these three groups also share a completely wrong slogan on nationalisation which again diverts away from the fight for workers' control. Each of them (with only minor variations) carries the demand for "Nationalisation of major industry without compensation under workers' control".

What they leave completely in the air is any struggle to bring about such nationalisation. Indeed the demand for workers' control, tacked on the end of the slogan, suggest that it is only to be fought for after nationalisation - which presumably must be legislated through parliament while workers look on passively from the sidelines.

SUPERVISION

Lenin and Trotsky never used the demand for nationalisation or for workers control in this way. For them the fight for workers control was the fight for the control or supervision of an elected committee of workers over the decisions of an employer, who still owned the factory.

Workers control of production is a transitional demand which leads workers from their present trade union, reformist, level of consciousness, to the point where they compel nationalisations and will struggle for state power. Trotsky summed this up, writing:

"Control lies in the hands of the workers. This means that the right of disposal remains in the hands of the capitalist".

DUAL POWER

Such a state of affairs is unstable, is precarious, comprising a situation of dual power at factory level. There are two opposed authorities on the plant - the bourgeois management on the one hand, and the factory committee on the other.

It can lead either to the re-

power of the employer, or to the revolutionary expropriation of the employers as a class.

To achieve this expropriation the assertion of workers' control must take on a national rather than a local character - and lead on to the consolidation and broadening of factory committees into soviets - challenging the power of the capitalist state. Trotsky again makes this clear.

"Workers' control is thus not a prolonged 'normal' condition, like wage-scale agreements or social insurance. Control is a transitional measure under conditions of the highest tension of the class war, and conceivable only as a bridge to the revolutionary nationalisation of industry."

So what does it mean to call, as do the revisionists, for "nationalisation ... under workers' control"? Only that this bridge is to be left out, that the struggle to force nationalisation is set aside, while the abstract slogan of 'socialism' (the expropriation of basic industry, or '250 monopolies' in the case of the Militant phrasemongers) is wheeled in to fill its place.

At the same time we find these revisionists have no conception of the fight to open the books of the employers. The International Socialists oppose the demand wherever it is raised; Militant as usual vary their verbal position from place to place, but carry out no fight; while the WRP, in words committed to fight for the demand, has done nothing to carry it forward in the unions, and least of all in Cowley where despite their position, the first 'Open the Books' Committee is actually functioning.

LINKED

Yet for Trotsky the two demands are completely linked - indeed a whole section of the Transitional Programme is entitled "Business Secrets' and Workers' Control of Industry", where he writes:

"...The abolition of 'business secrets' is the first step toward actual control of industry. Workers no less than capitalists have the right to know the 'secrets' of the factory, of the trust, of the whole branch of industry, of the national economy as a whole first and foremost, banks, heavy industry and centralised transport should be placed under an observation glass." (Emphasis added)

The whole section (which precedes any call for nationalisation in the Transitional Programme) ends by stressing:

"The task is one of reorganising the whole system of production and distribution on a more dignified and workable basis. If the abolition of business secrets be a necessary condition to workers' control, then control is the first step along the road to the socialist guidance of economy."

The two demands are thus completely linked, and both transitional to the demand for revolutionary nationalisation and the taking of state power. They provide a road of approach which wins support and understanding of the masses for revolution. As Trotsky says in discussion on the 'open the books' demand:

"This transitional demand



Trade union officials and businessmen, member of the Anglo-American Council on Productivity, in the post 1945 reformist drive for productivity

This, like today's Chequers plan, was class collaboration not workers control

Unlike the programme of social democracy, which completely separates talk of "socialism" (as a prospect for the indefinite future) from its actual programme of minimal reforms, the Transitional Programme grasps the necessity to:

"...help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist programme of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of transitional demands, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat" (pp 14-15)

In other words, under conditions where capitalism in crisis can no longer improve or even maintain workers' living standards and the existing productive forces, the transitional demands begin with the essential contradiction between the potential strength in struggle of the working class, and its political weakness as reflected in "the oppressed character of proletarian leadership"

tical work, not to engage in abstract formulas, but to develop a concrete programme of action and demands in the sense that this transitional programme issues from the conditions of capitalist society today, but immediately leads over the limits of capitalism. It is not the reformist minimum programme, [ie reforms within capitalism, JL] which never included workers' militia, workers' control of production. These demands are transitory because they lead from the capitalist society to the proletarian revolution, a consequence insofar as they become the demands of the masses as the proletarian government. We can't stop only with the day-to-day demands of the proletariat. We must give to the most backward workers some concrete slogan that corresponds to their needs and that leads dialectically to the conquest of power." (Discussions on the Transitional Programme, 1938)

The demands of the Transitional Programme are not ideal or utopian demands for the indefinite future therefore, but to be made

control of production as the preparatory plan for the direction of industry. Everything must be controlled by the workers who will be the masters of society tomorrow. But to call for conquest of power [ie. nationalisation of basic industry without compensation (JL)] - that seems to the American workers illegal, fantastic. But if you say: The capitalists refuse to pay for the unemployed and hide their real profits from the state and from the workers by dishonest book-keeping, the workers will understand that formula." (March 21, 1938)

APPROACH

And by that road of approach the demand for nationalisation can emerge integrated within workers' struggles as the logical answer to material problems, and not simply as an ultimatum to the mass movement tacked on to the end of a series of demands.

Of course an important question arises, if we accept along with Trotsky that workers' control is control by workers over a capitalist. That is, what form of management would take its place after nationalisation.

crucial step as well as turning the whole demand into an abstraction.

This does not mean to say that workers control cannot play a role in preparing workers to assume management of their industries even after the taking of state power. Indeed in Russia precisely this development did take place. The first nationalisations other than the banks and the land under Soviet rule dated from June 1918, and we find Lenin states clearly five months after the revolution, in April 1918:

"We have to expropriate them [the trusts]. That is not where the hitch lies . . . I told every workers' delegation with which I had to deal when they came to me and complained that their factory was at a standstill: You would like your factory to be confiscated? Very well, we have blank forms for a decree ready. They can be signed in a minute. But tell us, have you learned how to take over production and have you calculated what you will produce? Do you know the connection between what you are producing and the international market? Whereupon it turns out that they have not learnt this yet . . ."

The period of control of prod-

force nationalisation.

At the same time it challenges the employers monopoly of information opening the avenues of struggle. In such struggles key political lessons will be learned by the workers involved.

Only in this way can nationalisation be anything other than a weak-kneed reformist, parliamentary demand. This is what Trotsky means when he stresses that in calling for nationalisation "we call upon the masses to rely only upon their own revolutionary strength".

ULTIMATUM

We approach the nationalisation demand in this way because any other approach either 'forgets' nationalisation altogether (as do the reformists and Stalinists, and in their daily practice the International Socialists), or presents it in undigested form as an ultimatum to workers - many of whom are yet to be convinced of the desirability of nationalisation

As Trotsky clearly states:

"Only a general revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat can place the complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie on the order of the day. The task of transitional demands is to prepare the proletariat to solve this problem". (TP, p24)

The defence of this approach by the Workers Socialist League is not an academic question. The Marxist party must play the leading role in the struggles of the class, and can do so only on the most throughgoing struggle for the method which led the Bolsheviks to the successful revolution in Russia in October 1917.

HISTORY

Trotsky is at pains to emphasise that the Transitional Programme is not in this sense a new departure but rather a summation of the history of struggle of communists up to 1938:

"The programme is not the invention of one man. It is derived from the long experience of the Bolsheviks. I want to emphasise that it is not one man's invention, that it comes from long collective experience of revolutionaries. It is the application of old principles to this situation. It should not be considered as fixed like iron but flexible to the situation . . . They are not sterile slogans; they are the means of pressure on the bourgeoisie and will give the greatest possible material results immediately".

(Discussion on the TP, May 19, 38; emphasis added)

Or again, in an earlier discussion:

"What is the sense of the transitional programme? We can call it a programme for action but for us, for our strategic conception, it is a transitional programme - it is a help to the masses in overcoming the inherited ideas, methods, and forms and of adapting themselves to the exigencies of the objective situation . . . That is why I cannot overestimate the importance of the transitional programme".

(Discussion on March 23rd 1938, emphasis added)

AVOID

It is in seeking to avoid these implications that the propagandists, centrists and left-talkers throw mud at the slogan and concept of "workers' control". They are backed up also by the hopelessly reformist so-called "Institute of Workers' Control", given credibility by the International Marxist Group who applaud it as a 'rank and file' organisation, ignoring its role as a talking shop of 'left' union bureaucrats and platform of Wedgwood Benn, architect and political figurehead of the Ryder speed-up plan.

Only the most rigorous defence of the independence of the workers' movement, of the principles of Trotskyism, can enable the demands of the transitional programme to be fought for in the working class, and the real basis of workers control established in opposition to the class collaborating "participation" backed by the union bureaucrats, which is now central to the attacks of the employers.

This fight falls on the shoulders of the Workers Socialist League and its supporters.

DEFEND YOUTH FROM POLICE ATTACK

A series of arrests and trials particularly involving black youths throughout the country suggests that police harassment of young people is on the increase.

Such harassment is, of course, nothing new. In most working class areas of Britain, and particularly on the larger council estates, every youth has a story to tell about the harassment of young people, driven to hang around on the streets because of a lack of youth facilities.

These youths are constantly 'moved on' by the police, sometimes they are arrested and even beaten up.

In the latest series of incidents it has been black youth who have been the victims of police activity. First of all there was the raid on the Carib Club in Cricklewood. Dozens of police poured into the club in search of a 'suspect' (who was never found or produced at the subsequent trial) and turned the place over.

PROVOCATION

This massive provocation led to a fight between the youth and the police as a result of which twelve youth were arrested on a variety of serious charges. At the end of a trial lasting 81 days and costing over £1 million, not a single youth was found guilty.

Since then, there has been a police raid on a multi-racial disco in Stockwell, South London, in which 50 police took part and which resulted in seven arrests. The trial of the Stockwell Seven is still in progress while in Leeds, four black youth arrested in Chapelton on Bonfire Night are now awaiting trial.

Leeds claim that a large gang of black youths was roaming the streets 'obviously looking for trouble' and that they attacked and overturned a police 'panda' car which 'had entered the area engaged on an inquiry of an entirely different nature'.

A second police car was stoned, the windscreen shattered, and the two occupants injured when the driver lost control of the vehicle which crashed into a tree.

The local community newspaper, *Chapelton News*, suggests that what sparked off the trouble was the presence of a convoy of police vehicles, two of which contained police dogs, in an area where about a hundred youth were spending the evening around one of the many street bonfires to be seen in Leeds on November 5th.

Although the police claim to have been under instructions to keep a low profile on any incidents which might occur because of trouble in previous years, it is quite obvious that the presence of large numbers of police is seen by the youth in the area as a deliberate provocation.

BLACK

The United Caribbean Association points out that the incidents of November 5th must be put into the wider context of continual police harassment of the black community.

What lies behind this increased police activity against youth, and in particular, black youth? Certainly it is no accident that these raids and trials take place at a time when unemployment stands at its highest level since the 1930s. The policies of the Labour government have led to a massive increase in unemployment as the Labour leaders try to solve the economic crisis at the expense of the working class.

Youth unemployment has increased alongside this and each year school-leavers sign on to the dole in increasing numbers. Amongst black youth, unemployment is increasing at an even faster rate than amongst white youth.

The trade union leaders refuse

to fight for the defence of jobs. Not only have they kept silent as the number of jobless passed the million mark and headed towards one and a quarter million, but they have officially attacked the lobby of Parliament called by the North West TUC which took place on 26th November.

TUC

This is because they are actively supporting the Labour government's so-called fight against inflation, which involves wage-cutting, redundancies, speed-up for those left with a job and drastic cuts in public spending.

The refusal of the trade union leaders to oppose the anti-working class policies of the Labour government strengthens the hand of the employers because the working class is deprived of an organised fight in defence of jobs and wages.

The police who are the direct means of expression of the capitalist state, are therefore able to harass young unemployed workers who are both unorganised and denied any lead by union leaders to enable them properly to defend themselves.

These police attacks can only increase. As the economic crisis worsens, more and more young people will realise that they have no future under capitalism. The ruling class are frightened of what these youths will do and are prepared to strengthen the police force in order to deal with any social unrest resulting from their attacks on the working class.

UNIONISE

In order to defend themselves, young people must become part of the organised working class. Trade unions must open their doors to all youth, employed and unemployed alike in order to bring them into the labour movement. Young people must be brought on to Trades Councils and trade council sub-committees on unemployment where these exist.

Local trade union bodies should organise the defence of young people from police harassment and from the racist and anti-working class attacks of the fascist National Front.

At the same time, the National Front, who are fighting on a racist programme have also physically attacked trade unionists. Yet the NF is readily afforded police protection from the justified hostility of the labour movement.

POLICE RAID

The police raid on the WRP education centre and the arrest of trade unionists in Southampton shows that the problem of police harassment faces the whole of the working class, both black and white.

Young workers cannot defend themselves from such attacks as individuals. Where assaults become a real problem, workers' defence squads must organise to protect working class youth.

The main question which arises out of the Carib Club trial is whether police evidence was fixed. This would certainly be the conclusion of the jury who refused to convict a single defendant in the case. Local trade union bodies must set up committees of enquiry into cases of suspected police harassment, to establish the facts of the case.

These basic questions on the defence of the working class from physical attack must go hand in hand with the fight around a programme to unite the broadest layers of the working class in the defence of jobs and wages.

by Ian Swindale



Lenin addressing a crowd in Red Square May Day 1919

Again the Transitional Programme states clearly that a further role of workers' control is to prepare the working class to replace altogether the old managers and specialists who could otherwise sabotage a socialist plan:

"Committees representing individual business enterprises [this is still before detailed discussion of nationalisation (JL)] should meet at conference to choose corresponding committees of trusts, whole branches of industry, economic regions, and finally of national industry as a whole. Thus, workers' control becomes a school for planned economy. On the basis of the experience of control, the proletariat will prepare itself for direct management of nationalised industry when the hour for that eventuality strikes." (Transitional Programme p.23, last emphasis added)

Once nationalisation has taken place, then the need to 'control' an employer is replaced by the need to establish workers' management, which must of course in the final analysis rest on the backing of working class state power. But simply to call for 'nationalisation ... under workers' control' (or, still more confusingly 'under workers' control and management' [!] as advocated by the Militant group) leaves out this

uction is thus seen as a training, a preparatory stage before management. It may be longer or shorter or eliminated in some cases according to material conditions - but the struggle for workers control and, centrally, the opening of the books, is a fight to be begun in today's conditions to prepare the basis of socialist planned production. And in such a fight the complete political independence of the working class is crucial.

METHOD

How then should we approach the demand for nationalisation? Clearly, if we follow Trotsky's method in the programme, by putting forward at each point in the struggle transitional demands which lead to that conclusion, going beyond the bounds of capitalism - sliding scale of wages, work sharing on full pay, the opening of the books of employers who refuse to guarantee jobs and living standards.

The slogan for the opening of the books is always posed by the WSL in such a way as to lead towards nationalisation. It aims to provide the documented case to back up our demands for occupation in defence of jobs and establish a nation wide struggle within the labour movement to

DAYS OF HOPE

Days of Hope by Jim Allen (Futura Publications, 1975, 75p); based on his script for the BBC drama series produced by Tony Garnett and directed by Ken Loach.

by Harry Weston

The very act of posing the revolutionary tasks of the British working class before a mass audience is guaranteed to cause consternation in many quarters. This is why the recent 'Days of Hope' series of TV plays, and the novel by Jim Allen which has followed it, has aroused a chorus of indignation and controversy in the Tory press.

The series of stories of working class life, political and industrial movements between 1916 and 1926 is linked by a small group of well-drawn fictional characters - most importantly 'Ben' a young worker, who is first a soldier and then a militant in the newborn British Communist Party - and a galaxy of real but now historical figures.

With skill and warmth the Loach-Garnett-Allen team put together a gripping series of plays, with numerous well-observed incidents - from the struggle against imperialist war in 1916, the Irish war of independence of the following year, the miners' lock-out of 1921, the 1924 Labour Government and culminating in the last part in the General Strike.

Allen's book, equally vivid in its dialogue, covers the same span of history and captures much of the same spirit.

HOWL

The left wing 'partisanship' of the TV plays and the book have produced a predictable howl of rage from sections of reactionary opinion such as the *Daily Telegraph* and Mary Whitehouse, anti-communist watchdog of the small screen. The editor of *The Times* reacted with a liberal, lukewarm defence of the BBC's 'right' to put on occasional programmes expressing an anticapitalist standpoint.

Both the indignation and the 'tolerance' stemmed from the programmes' exceptional strengths. The team caught the feel and the smell of classes in action, of struggle and betrayal. Not spinning the words of documentary 'realism' but putting their shoulders to the wheel of history, they again and again linked arms with their characters. Especially was this so in dealing with the Durham miners' lock-out of 1921.

Naturally, the journalistic defenders of capitalism were hostile to programmes which brought vividly into millions of workers' homes the bitter treachery of the trade union leaders - 'left' and right - who destroyed the General Strike, and the impotent policies of the Communist Party, already hamstrung by the influence of Stalinism in the Third International.

CENTRISTS

Equally predictably, various papers of the centrist left lauded the programmes to the sky. The International Marxist Group's *Red Weekly*, (25th September) praised the portrayal of "the richness, the unity and the courage of the

organised workers' movement", while the International Socialists' *Socialist Worker* awarded them the highest palm of claiming - laughably - that they were close to that paper's own political standpoint.

Even the Stalinist *Morning Star* paid the series the compliment of distorting their opposition to the bureaucratic, right wing leadership in the union, saying it included a 'leftist dismissal of the union'. These lies were necessary for the Stalinists because "the series clearly ran counter to the current policy and objectives of the Communist Party". (*Morning Star*, 20th September and 4th October).

ALONE

Almost alone among the papers of the left, the Workers Revolutionary Party's *Workers Press* maintained a complete silence on the series. This is surprising since it has warmly received earlier productions by the same team, and because it is well known that Jim Allen was active in the Trotskyist movement over a decade ago.

Also Loach and Garnett, more recently, have been closely associated with the WRP and its forerunner, the Socialist Labour League, speaking from their platforms and supporting many of its campaigns. Moreover, particularly in the section covering the General Strike, *Days of Hope* deals with many of the key questions of the origin and political basis of the Trotskyist movement.

It is especially here that the programmes and the novel are subtly but clearly marked by their makers' own political development in relation to the WRP.

It is not the aim of this review to pass judgement on the artistic success of *Days of Hope*. The slight unevenness of the TV series reflects its struggle to find forms adequate to a content it is still groping to understand.

ABOVE ROUTINE

At all points it stands head and shoulders above the routine slickness of most television productions. And in Jim Allen's novel the robust dialogue is sometimes not matched by incongruous metaphors in the descriptive passages. But these are flaws only by contrast with the overall movement, the authors always happiest in action, always striving to frame the solidity of a moment that is gone as soon as it exists.

It is necessary to comment, though, on the reports that members of the actors' union Equity were not employed for some of the main parts. This cannot represent the principled action of socialists. And it is impossible also, to agree with Allen's subsequent method of defence of the series, on TV and radio, using the straight liberal argument of "every man to his own opinion".

Days of Hope is an attempt by Allen and his collaborators to work through certain key political questions in a 'fictional' form; it is certainly right, therefore, to assess the conclusions to which

this leads them. And if the *Morning Star* can characterise their work as reflecting an "undeniably Trotskyist line", we must consider how far this is really so.

The decade 1916-1926 covers the period in which the international working class achieved the October revolution, launched challenges for power in many other countries, protected the young Soviet Republic, and tasted the first bitter fruits of Stalinist policy.

The later parts of *Days of Hope* attempts to deal not only with the betrayals of the first Labour government, and that of the TUC leadership in the General Strike (in which it succeeds) but also with problems and differences within the Communist Party and the Third International - in which it fails.

Perhaps one reason for this is that it sometimes seems also to be trying to grasp - by analogy or allegory - the contemporary problems of the British Trotskyist movement, and the experience of the degeneration of the WRP.

The treachery of today's TUC bureaucrats and Labour ministers is sharply pre-figured in the portraits of their political ancestors. But viewers or readers could not find nearly so intelligible the account of developments inside the Communist Party, or of their relevance to today. No wonder, since these events were not intelligible to the authors themselves.

OBVIOUS

This stands out most obviously in the character of Walter Goldman, a refugee from the Berlin Spartacists uprising of 1919, who is portrayed as a supporter of Trotsky as early as 1924. He is made to speak of how people were joining the Soviet Communist Party "in order to obtain positions of power and influence". (p 176)

In the same scene there is an argument between the 'left' Alf Purcell, portrayed as a supporter of Stalin, and Goldman as an incipient supporter of Trotsky.

Such a conversation is anachronistic in a number of ways. Not only was no-one at that time really aware of the social structure of the Soviet Party, but very few, even in Russia itself, knew anything of the primary rôle of Stalin.

In 1924 - the year that Lenin died - there could not have been any such clear awareness of Stalinism as a political force, because it was not yet formed as such.

At this point the forces that later came together to form the Bolshevik Left Opposition were still fighting dangerous tendencies and trends, not a fully-formed bureaucratic caste running an apparatus of repression.

Goldman comes to the fore again in the hours after the TUC - rights and 'lefts' - have called off the General Strike. The CP militants are desperately trying to understand how the Party leadership tied itself to the slogan 'All power to the TUC' and to support

by several IS members from the floor with only one, from Rover-Triumph, Coventry, saying that it might be "a bit too soon to go in".

Fay wound up, and then the vote was taken and worker participation accepted with only one against.

The report of the meeting in *Socialist Worker* didn't even mention "worker participation" - referring only to the resolution calling for the nationalisation of the motor industry - thus leaving IS free to continue their official verbal "opposition" to "participation" up to the point where the employers and the trade union bureaucracy force it through. At that point they are equally ready and able to provide opportunistically an argument why militants should "participate".

The record of the IS in the fight against Measured Day Work was the same. Initial verbal opposition was followed when the



Lenin met British Shop Stewards as part of the fight for the Communist International

for the 'left', pro-Soviet bureaucrats. Goldman - tired, almost cynical - explains it as the outcome of Stalin's 'peaceful coexistence' with capitalist states.

(In the parallel scene in the TV series he goes further and explains the role of Stalinism in a way that is not only historically incorrect, but implicitly gives credibility to Stalinist policy of the late 20's and early 30's - that gains for the fascists would work to the advantage of the Communists.)

Goldman articulates in a theoretical form what is implicit and unformed in the shock and resistance of Ben, the CP worker-militant.

Yet Goldman is an artificial character, not only dramatically but historically. Of course, Jim Allen can answer that in their chosen 'semi-fictional' form it is not compulsory to be completely accurate in terms of chronology, or of what people at a given time could have known, even those who actually existed.

FOUGHT FOR

This is true. But more is involved here than matters of detail. For the opposition to Stalinism was never something ready-made, existing in the heads of theoreticians before the event. It was fought for through a series of enormous battles and many defeats, of which the British General Strike was a crucial but individual instance. In 1926 the International Left Opposition's defence of internationalist principles and of class intransigence was only just beginning in an organised form.

The principles etched out in *Days of Hope*, and particularly in the conclusion that Ben draws from his crushing frustration with the CP's support for the left union leaders - that a new organisation was needed, could only take real shape much later.

There is thus an artificial and idealised strand running through *Days of Hope* which tends to see revolutionary leadership as something ready-made, formed beforehand in a glass case by the insights of giants such as Trotsky. From this point of view there is nothing new under the sun, the word

exists before the deed.

This strand clearly has much in common with the bureaucratized 'orthodoxy' of the WRP leadership, their refusal to study living development, or their own weaknesses and limits.

But this weakness is sharply contradicted in *Days of Hope* by the objective movement of the narrative as a whole. Overshadowing it is the author's real portrait of a class on the move, flexing its muscles for practical tasks, peeling the skin from the onion of British compromise, 'fair play' and hypocrisy, which sends the bureaucrats scurrying to lick the boots of the employers.

DIFFICULTIES

In the alternation of scenes one can sense the team's difficulties in bringing together the two elements they correctly feel are essential - the practical struggle of the working class against its enemies, and the forging of a leadership to give conscious direction and victory to the class.

And there is no mistaking the conviction in *Days of Hope* that this is not only the task of 1916-1926, but also of the 1970's.

To this task people with the talents and training of Allen, Loach and Garnett have an important contribution to make. And it would be impossible to be fighters in the Trotskyist movement and to create something as powerful as *Days of Hope* without being aware of this.

CONFUSION

But the plays and the novel also contain an element of confusion and - almost - of contemporary cynicism. The intellectual Goldman, leaving the Communist Party before the General Strike declares:

"For twenty-eight years I've been trying to think dialectically, but from now on I'm just going to think."

But as the events which the team brought to life on the screen so clearly show, thought can move forward and take effect only within the struggles of the present day working class. The task is not simply to think about the world but to participate in the fight to change it.

"GET IN THERE!"

IS CAR WORKERS ACCEPT "PARTICIPATION"

To read 'Socialist Worker', paper of the International Socialists, you would think that organisation was opposed to "workers' participation".

But as we showed in our last issue of *Socialist Press*, in *Leyland Worker*, a 'rank and file' paper which they control, they have declared they are in favour of standing for positions in the BLMC participation set up.

On the 15th November their front organisation, the National Rank and File Movement, held a conference on "The Crisis in the Motor Industry". This would have been more accurately entitled "The Crisis in the IS", considering

the attendance was only 40 people - not delegates - from the whole of the motor and components industry.

The meeting was dominated by the question of "worker participation". The main speaker on this subject, Willy Fay, a steward at Albion Motors in Scotland, spent the time rationalising why although he himself was against the scheme he had voted for it, 'with reservations'. He went on to make the usual statements that:

"You can't stick your head in the sand . . . It's there and we can't run away from it . . . It's the duty of every militant to get in there!"



Platform at the 'Rank and File' Carworkers Conference

company fought to impose MDW, by acceptance under the cover of the call to control manning.

In this way, the opportunist "rank and file" policies of the IS continue to provide the Stalinists

and the right wing with a "left", "revolutionary" cover, at a time when the working class are showing at Rover-Triumph and at Cowley their hostility to the employers proposals.

WRP MUST QUIT SCAB 'PARTICIPATION' COMMITTEE

Lord Ryder's first act in taking up his new post as chairman of the National Enterprise Board last Thursday - which gives him effective control over cash injections into British Leyland - was to launch a bitter ultimatum to B.L. workers.

The ultimatum, aimed at workers in a series of plants who are taking action to defend their jobs against speed-up, threatened to withhold finance and force the closure of factories.

Responding to this in Cowley, management issued the following blunt statement which was handed to workers in the North Works of the Assembly Plant on Friday afternoon (19.11.75):

"Effective immediately, failure to achieve the required average programme objective of 28.5 cars per hour to sales will result in the closure of the North Works".

It is under these conditions that Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party has joined the revisionists of the 'state capitalist' International Socialists and the Stalinists of the Communist Party, and decided to "work within" the reactionary, class collaborationist Joint Management Councils set up under the Ryder Report.

TAKEN SEAT

Indeed, the WRP has already taken its seat in this management body. Last week, Tom White - a leading member of the WRP for a number of years, the WRP's only member in the Cowley factories and a deputy convenor of the T&GWU - stood for election to the plant's Ryder "participation" committee.

Although the right-wing took the seat, he was elected as a stand-in delegate, and now, in that capacity, takes his place alongside the representatives of foremen, superintendants, work-study men and works policemen who decorate the "trade union side" of the committee.

The full depth of the treachery of the WRP's opportunist decision to enter the so-called "participation" scheme was hammered home by last Thursday's *Oxford Mail*. In a report headed "Leyland Talks on Keeping up with the Japanese", the *Mail* states that:

"A report which says that employees of Leyland Cars must work harder to reach the productivity levels of the Company's Japanese rivals is to be one of the first topics for the newly-formed Employee Participation Committees".

The *Mail* explains that the first meeting of the Committees in December will consider how to make BL workers equal the effort of their Japanese counter-parts. Questioned on the report, Leyland were reluctant to commit themselves:

"We do not want to preempt the discussions with the participation committees," said their spokesman.

JOB

That in a nutshell, is the job of the committees. And the WRP is giving credibility to the whole set-up. This is the clearest demonstration yet of the deep degeneration of the WRP, and its departure from principle.

The involvement of Healy and what was then the Socialist Labour League, in Cowley began in the mid 1960's. From then until the expulsion of virtually the whole WRP factory cadre last December, the SLL-WRP had been the only political tendency upholding the principles of Trotskyism and the independence of the working class in the plants. Those who stepped out of line in this fight were excluded. Yet now we see the tragic negation

of that proud history into squalid opportunism.

We would like to hear the WRP's case for entering Ryder. Healy must know that these committees have nothing at all to do with trade unionism, and that entering them is quite different in principle from working within even the most right-wing and corrupt trade union body.

SPEARHEAD

We have characterised Ryder right from the beginning as the spearhead of management and government offensive against Leyland workers and the whole working class. We said that this would be done by sucking in key layers of shop stewards and making them part of the management attack.

This is no longer an academic argument. Speed-up is being forced in to Leyland plants at this moment under the authority of Ryder.

In plants such as Castle Bromwich, where workers are resisting speed-up with strike action, they are being bludgeoned back to work by threats from Ryder acting with the authority and credibility given him by the acceptance of the Report by the trade union leaders.

The WSL has said from the start that these committees are scab committees, and those who sit on them will be on the wrong side of the fence in the coming battles.

Because of the importance of the principles at stake, Healy must come clean and tell the movement the truth. Last Saturday's *Workers Press* (21.11.75), two weeks after the WRP entered the committees, viciously attacks "participation", saying the following:

Leyland has spent much time and expense negotiating the formation of the corporatist 'worker-participation' scheme finally signed last month with the collaboration of some leading stewards.

Its purpose is now absolutely clear: to enforce conditions in which workers are denied the right to strike and management can step up exploitation on the shop floor to whatever level they require to make profits."

We disagree with the use of the term "corporatist" - but since when have WRP members stood for election to bodies defined as such by their own press? Since when has the WRP involved itself in denying workers the right to strike?

SILENCE

Indeed the final decision of the WRP (or Gerry Healy) to enter the committees, though taken shortly before Tom White's election, has never appeared in *Workers Press*.

Significantly, *Workers Press* has carried no reports on the battle on the stewards committee in

CONSTITUENCY	Elected	VOICES	PERCENTAGE	VOICES	PERCENTAGE
CONSTITUENCY 1 - OT Assembly and South Works Trim	M. DUGGAN	441	84%	J. Underwood	84%
CONSTITUENCY 2 - North Works Assembly and North Works Trim	D. CROCKFORD	249	87%	I. White	167
CONSTITUENCY 3 - Sheet Body and Paint Plus Tuning, Body Reconditioning and Paint Reconditioning	M. TAYLOR	194	84%	P. Simms	143
CONSTITUENCY 4 - Electrical and Mechanical Maintenance, Building Maintenance Workshop, Cleaning and Sanitation	E. MOSS	337	84%	G. Griggs	36
CONSTITUENCY 5 - Stores, Transport and Material Handling and Stores	P. BLAKE	291	84%	G. Blake	134

Cowley, or the elections, or the battles since then. Why the silence?

The complete opportunism of the WRP's somersault in entering Ryder can be seen again from these quotations from *Workers Press* at the time of the negotiations at the plush Annesley Hotel in Coventry where deals were done over seven-course meals.

On September 10th, *Workers Press* reported that: "Final agreement on a corporatist scheme had been expected during the afternoon".

Next day, *Workers Press* headlined "REJECT B. LEYLAND STEWARDS' COLLABORATION", with a sub-headline - "Basic rights abandoned in six weeks of corporatist talks".

CLEAR

The same article spelled out clearly the job of those who sit on the committees:

"One of the first tasks the union representatives will have is to 'participate' in the mass redundancies required by the company".

We suggest a copy of this is sent to the WRP's representative in the Cowley speed-up, Tom White!

On September 18th *Workers Press* dealt in a similar way with 'participation' on the docks:

"Felixstowe dockers have struck a powerful blow against corporatist worker 'participation' by removing their convenor who became a director.

The convenor, Larry O'Donnell, lasted just five days as both union convenor and director of the Felixstowe Dock and Railway Company...

The stewards see correctly that 'participation' is a trap designed to weaken trade unionism and open the door to attacks on jobs and hard-won conditions". (our emphasis)

To enter these committees after such statements, and not tell your readers is not only thoroughly unprincipled (similar to IS), but shows that Healy is conscious of this betrayal.

When the Ryder Report was published in April *Workers Press* carried a lead article which was later distributed as a mass leaflet which said the Ryder Report means:

"massive investment of capital by government under a capitalist appointed board who will take a few tame senior stewards as hostages and declare that the era of industrial democracy has begun"

The same article correctly goes on to conclude: "Not a single job or basic right in this giant combine can be saved without a bitter struggle against Ryder".

This was a statement from the *Workers Press* Editorial Board. They have issued no new statements. Their paper continues to oppose Ryder. Do they know that Healy has switched horses and opted for "participation"? How many WRP members know their party is involved in a 'corporatist' committee?

We challenge Healy - drop the pretence and tell your members the truth. Explain to them your opportunist reasons for entering Ryder. Justify openly - using (as you will have to) the same arguments as the Stalinists and the state capitalists - your reasons for sitting on committees designed to break the strength of the shop stewards movement.

"Working from within" these committees, apart from being unprincipled, is impossible. Shop floor representatives are in the minority, and the management

have an absolute right of final decision. The committees do not even have the right to vote!

Meanwhile, in moving to a right wing opportunist position, the WRP confronts the majority of Leyland workers who are clearly against 'participation'.

In the Cowley Assembly Plant Ryder was never put to the membership. It was forced through after a two-day shop stewards meeting, hostile to Ryder, which was swung to acceptance at the end by the manipulation by the chairman, Cy Blake, and the intervention of the Stalinists, who argued that Ryder was the "first steps towards workers' control". The vote was 128 to 72.

In the shop floor elections that followed workers registered their hostility to Ryder by a mass abstention from the vote. This became national news - but was still not reported in *Workers Press*.

PRINCIPLED

A number of principled shop stewards - including WSL members - refused nomination. These included also the previous convenor Bob Fryer, removed by the T&GWU bureaucracy 18 months ago.

Fryer will be standing for convenor in the election next week, but the WRP will not be supporting him. Instead they will be supporting Cy Blake - who followed his manoeuvres to force Ryder through the stewards by standing (along with White) for the "participation" committee, and also winning a stand-in position.

Resistance to Ryder goes further than Cowley. In the nearby Radiators factory, workers have voted Ryder out at a mass meeting.

In the Rover-Triumph factory in Coventry, (the base of right-winger Eddy McGarry, who with the Stalinists on the Combine Committee steered the scheme through), workers have voted Ryder out in a secret ballot - dealing a heavy blow to the continuation of the scheme throughout the Combine.

This is the reality of the mass movement. But Healy, starting from surface impressions - the votes of 31 trade union bureaucrats at the Ad Hoc Committee, and 128 stewards at one manipulated stewards meeting - finds himself in opposition to that mass movement.

His disastrous empirical manoeuvres are the outcome of the sectarian positions of the Healy leadership fought against by those who were expelled from the WRP nearly a year ago, and forced to form the Workers Socialist League.

We challenged the threadbare maximum demand of "nationalisation without compensation under workers' control of all basic industry" which the WRP claimed was a 'programme', and showed how Healy's departure from Trotsky's Transitional Programme separated the WRP from the working class.

WORDS

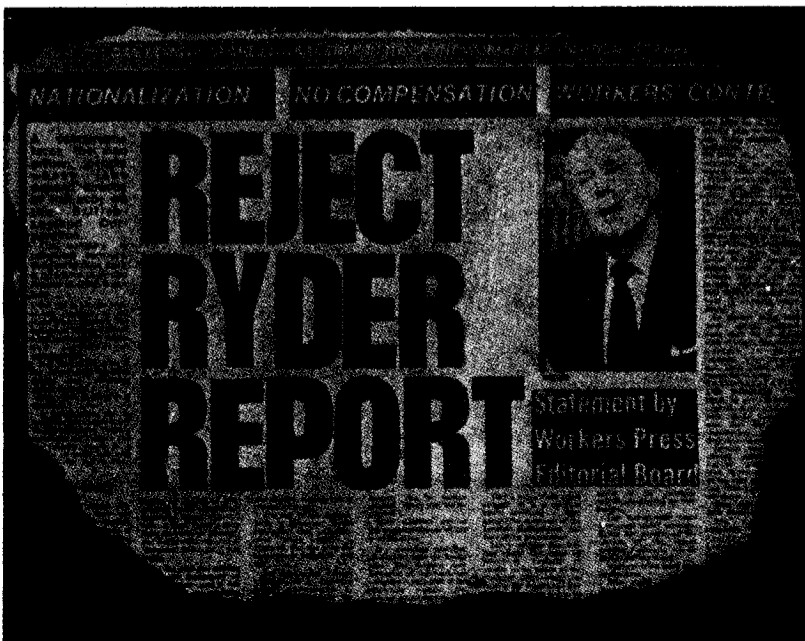
During that struggle Healy demonstrated his opportunism by adapting in words to the programme of those he was to expel a few weeks later.

At last year's 5th Anniversary of *Workers Press*, Alan Thornett, as one of the main speakers, made the first speech for years in the SLL-WRP based on the demands of the Transitional Programme. The previous day *Workers Press* had carried a front page full of transitional demands after years of hardly referring to Trotsky's programme.

When the expulsions came - over 200 in the Western Area alone - Healy told the WRP that we had "moved to the right" and "would join the trade union bureaucracy" - a charge carried continuously in *Workers Press*.

We ask WRP members now to examine our record, that of the WRP. Have we moved to the right? Have we joined the bureaucracy? Have we capitulated to social democracy?

We urge WRP members to check this against the actions of your leadership, culminating in the acceptance of Ryder. Now is the time to fight the opportunist degeneration in your leadership before it is too late.



WILSON AND MAO MOURN FRANCO

The only thing to regret in the death of Francisco Franco is that it did not happen long before.

It is matter for sober rejoicing that biology has finally done what, but for its treacherous leadership, the workers' movement would have been able to do decades ago.

CELEBRATED

Yet, while class conscious workers throughout the world celebrated the death of the old butcher, James Callaghan, British Labour Foreign Secretary, clearly longs for Franco and his regime to remain alive. Once he had brushed away his tears he sent the life-long fascists in the Spanish government a message of condolence.

The Labour cabinet wasted no time in sending Lord Shepherd, a cabinet minister to represent them at the fascist dictator's funeral, where he was able to sit beside Colonel Banzer of Bolivia, General Pinochet of Chile, Prince Rainier and a galaxy of the most vicious and reactionary politicians in the world.

CONTEMPT

This complete contempt for the Spanish working class and gross betrayal of the most elementary principles of the labour movement has shocked and disgusted workers and socialists throughout Britain.

Numerous trade union leaders, and Labour Party workers at Transport House registered their objections; and back-bench Labour MPs along with one minister (Joan Lester) boycotted a parliamentary debate in protest.



Callaghan

We welcome these protests - but they are totally insufficient. Labour Party members must demand the immediate removal of Wilson, Callaghan and all ministers who support this co-operation with fascism. At the same time they must fight for a black on Spanish goods and holidays to be imposed by the British and international labour movement to defeat Franco's fascist successors.

The protests of Labour MPs and trade union leaders would carry more conviction if they were not themselves at the same time cooperating with the Labour government's attacks on all British workers through its reactionary economic and social

policies, its attacks on political militants through police raids and the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and its daily betrayal of the world interests of the working class by imperialist foreign policy in Ireland, the Middle East, and countless other parts of the world.

Joining in the reactionary wailing over Franco's death is not out of character for the Labour government, as the protesting MPs and union leaders would like to make out. It is one instance of its consistently reactionary policies.

It is especially disgusting because of Franco's 60 year record of butchery and oppression of workers fighting for the objectives which Labour leaders still claim to support.

This began in 1917 when as a young officer he brutally suppressed a miners' strike in Asturias; it continued up to his murder of 5 militants only 2 weeks before his final illness.

Between these two dates he was responsible for the murder of a million workers. Labour cabinet ministers sent no condolences, attended none of their funerals.

Some of the five militants murdered in September were Maoists of the FRAP. Their martyrdom has been responded to by the Stalinist government of Mao-tse-Tung not with a protest but with a message of condolence to the Spanish government on Franco's death, as well as, for good measure, the sending of a memorial wreath by Chinese Prime Minister Chou en Lai to the Spanish embassy in Peking.

The conclusion to be drawn from these actions is clear: that the working class throughout the world must totally reject leaders who every day practice cynical betrayals by currying favour with the bitterest enemies of the class they claim to represent.

AUEW - BROAD LEFT CRISIS

A delighted Tory press last week reported the results of the AUEW ballots for National Organiser and Executive. They revelled in the 2-1 defeat of Bob Wright by the right wing, and the similar defeat of Stalinist Jimmy Reid, contesting for the Scottish EC position.

WITCH HUNT

During these elections an unprecedented campaign had been carried out by the Tory press. Each of the 'left' candidates were listed and declared to be communist-backed and their opponents to be "moderates" who supported the official TUC line of endorsing the government's £6 state control of wages.

The failure of the 'broad left' was not just a result of their policy within the AUEW, but also of that of the Communist Party nationally, which has refused to lead a fight against the £6, which

fighters for "participation" in industry and which decapitates any fight against unemployment with the nationalist slogans of import controls.

The victory for the right was not created simply by the press listing names, but rested on the lack of any mass leadership in the working class willing to lead it into conflict with the Labour government.

The 'left' leadership of the AUEW had also strengthened the right-wing by their meek acceptance of a series of court decisions on the running of the union.

The press campaign, combined with the postal ballot strategy, drawing in votes from members who know little of union business and who do not attend meetings, initiates a new stage in union elections. Under these conditions, for a third of the membership, in a 40% poll, to vote for the 'left' candidates shows a developing consciousness and that a considerable sec-

tion of the working class is ready to fight the attacks of capitalism.

As Marxists we have to assess the movements that are building up, that is the force which will transform the situation in the unions. The central question is the development of a new leadership based on a clear programme in the AUEW as in all other unions.

* In the election for national organiser the right-wing candidate, J. Bradley got 86,857 votes. The 'broad left' candidate, CP member Phil Higgs got 29,699 votes, Willie Lee the IS member standing on a 35-hour week, higher wages, syndicalist platform, very little different from Higgs, got 10,709 votes and Ken Tyrell standing on a programme written by WSL members (printed in *Socialist Press*) got 5,686 votes.

Tyrell was described in *Workers Press*, paper of the WRP, as one of those candidates who stood on a revolutionary platform. Maybe the editor of the *Workers Press* can explain how he can continue his attack on our programme.

LABOUR'S CUTS continued

the class collaboration of the Chequers plan, the £6 pay laws and the social service cuts together with the policy of mass unemployment must be thrown aside and a new leadership committed to such a fight put in their place.

Demand the 'lefts' who claim to oppose Wilson organise to kick him out, and form a government to carry out policies to defend the working class.

employers - open the books and nationalise!

*In place of spending cuts - public works programmes to create new jobs.

*In place of cowering to the bankers - open the books and nationalise the banks!

*In place of redundancies - work-sharing on full pay!

*No £6 limit - fight for a sliding

Workers Socialist League PUBLIC MEETING

LONDON

Wednesday, 26th November, The 'Abby Arms', E 13 (junction of Barking Road and Balaam St).

"Our Policy to Fight the Cuts" Speaker Alan Thornett.

WRP DEFENDED

1,400 youth, trade unionists and students marched through pouring rain on Sunday November 16th in support of the Workers Revolutionary Party's call for a trade union enquiry into the September police raid on their Derbyshire headquarters.

The demonstration was part of a continuing campaign by the WRP to expose the attacks on democratic rights carried through by the Labour government's authorisation of this raid, and the outcome of two months campaign by WRP branches.

The march included banners from ten trades councils and 25 branches and stewards committees as well as several students unions and the Clay Cross Councilors. The Cine technicians

union, ACTT, gave official support to the demonstration and its call for an inquiry.

Contingents from North London IMG, the International Socialists and Workers Fight also took part.

The Workers Socialist League, which until this demonstration had been excluded from campaign meetings by WRP members, was represented on the march by delegates from the London, Oxford and Midlands areas.

The next step from this demonstration is clearly to pursue the struggle for a full trade union inquiry into Jenkin's authorisation of the police raid. In this fight the sharpest attack must be on the Labour 'lefts' refusal to fight to remove the Wilson-Jenkins leadership, covered by 'left' phrases of "opposition" to their reactionary policies.

NUT LEADERSHIP DRAGGED INTO STRUGGLE

In response to a unanimous resolution from the Outer London Committee the NUT Executive on Saturday took the decision to consider backing teachers who refuse to cover the classes of colleagues absent for more than three days.

The Outer London decision, taken in early October, called upon the Executive to reintroduce these sanctions, which were used during the campaign for bigger London allowances last year, because they "don't see why teachers should accept increased work loads while other teachers are unemployed".

The decision of the Executive however is saddled with many conditions in order to prevent any sort of unofficial action by individuals schools against the vicious cuts beginning to be implemented by the Local Authorities. The "refusal to cover" action can only be instigated by a special 'action' committee of the NUT and they must be satisfied that:

(a) There are unemployed teachers in that area. This is difficult to prove since unemployed teachers take other jobs or are persuaded to 'sign on' for clerical jobs etc at the employment exchange.

(b) The LEA is underemploying, and cutting back on staffing standards as budgetary policy - ie actually implementing the cuts already in the form of teachers jobs and not just savings on heating, equipment, auxiliary staff etc. Any fight against these by the NUT leadership is here

ruled out.

(c) All attempts have been made locally to negotiate greater employment.

(d) Two thirds of the NUT members in the school must vote for action - not just a simple majority.

Fred Jarvis, NUT general secretary, says "Nobody's looking for a fight" - burying his head in the sand while, daily, reports come in of Local Authorities' proposals to axe jobs, increase teacher-pupil ratios and end the chances of thousands of young children for a place in school before they are five.

Meanwhile preparations are getting under way in the areas to fight the spending cuts. In Tyneside and Liverpool NUT sub-committees have been set up to organise unemployed teachers and in Birmingham a special NUT meeting set up an action committee which is organising a rally on December 13th against the cuts.

PORTUGAL cont from p 1.

the forces of reaction. The CP maintains a member in a government which has lost the support of virtually every worker, including most of their own members.

The only way that Azevedo and the AFM can try to hold on to power now is to attempt to deal with these leaders - disguised as a 're-shuffle' of the administration.

Workers in the SP and CP must force an end to this compromise and capitulation. The military government must be brought down. They must demand that the CP and SP leaders establish their own government, independent of the AFM and the pro-capitalist parties. Such a government should launch immediately a programme of socialist reconstruction aimed at putting an end to the economic crisis and unemployment.

The leaders of the CP and SP, however, show little sign of fighting for such policies. Since the November 16th demonstration more and more workers have been reported as asserting the need to go beyond them.

There must now be further joint action by the workers, soldiers, and tenants' committees that called the massive Lisbon demonstration.

The urgent need is the setting-up of a soviet, based on these committees, representing the whole working class in the Lisbon area. The basis exists for such a soviet.

A Lisbon soviet would be the basis, through its affiliated soldiers' committees, for establishing workers' defence squads for protection against the threats of Soares and the thugs of the right wing. It could begin to discuss a socialist plan for production, and discuss the extension of soviets throughout Portugal and develop a perspective for workers' govern-

£500 monthly development fund

Regular readers of *Socialist Press* will have seen the new development, in our last two editions, of a theoretical supplement, *Trotskyism Today*.

The first three editions of this supplement are given over to the publication of our International Perspectives document to begin a discussion on key political questions. But we intend to develop *Trotskyism Today* as a more regular theoretical journal.

This in turn will provide an important step towards expanding the paper, and weekly publication. To proceed further we need your support for our Monthly Development Fund.

Send us a donation to help expand the paper that most determinedly fights for principle in the workers movement.

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