

Nigeria-Biafra oil-war ends

Pawns of imperialism

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By
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The war was the direct result of the British imperialist policy of divide and rule which cut the colony up into regions in 1946.

These regions were organized on artificial 'tribal' lines by Whitehall and Westminster.

Regional-tribal political parties, formed out of missionary-sponsored 'tribal' self-help societies, were built up under the patronage of the British Governor.

Among these was the National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), which was a 'Northern' (Hausa) party, the Action Group of the 'West' (Yoruba, etc.) and the Ibo Federal Union.

The tribal-regional subdivision of Nigeria in 1946 by Britain and the sponsoring of regional-tribal 'parties' were aspects of a much broader British colonial policy, developed by Lord Lugard and called the policy of 'indirect rule' through 'native authorities', i.e. through artificial tribalism.

'Tribal' schools

This wider British policy included the formation of separate 'tribal' schools in the north which were for 'Ibos only' and which excluded Hausa children.

It included the training of Ibo intellectuals for the policy of indirect rule, with the conscious help of the British and other missionaries.

In the 19th century these missionaries made deeper inroads into the Ibo 'tribe' than into any other 'group'.

They, more than any other single factor, stimulated artificial tribalism among the Ibo intellectuals, while at the same time Christianizing the Ibo (the most converted Nigerian 'tribe').

While treating the Ibo 'élite' in this privileged way, the British regime at the same time built up anti-Ibo tribalism among the Hausa of the North, using the 'influx' of Ibo peasants and workers into the North as a pretext.

This influx was caused by land-hunger in the Eastern Region and by the colonialist policy of industrial starvation which generally expands mass

The result of this double British imperialist policy in relation to the Ibo was a series of inter-tribal pogroms, which were exacerbated by the fraudulent regional-tribal 'elections' run by the British in 1951.

In 1953 there was a massacre of Hausa people by Ibos and this was hushed up in the British press.

This 'genocide' was the direct product of the British divide-and-rule policy; Nigeria was a British colony at the time; in consequence it is not surprising that in 1953 there was no public outcry in Britain of the rest of the 'West' about 'genocide', nor any 'massive relief operations' mounted by Whitehall, the Pentagon or any other imperialist government-centre.

Empty husk

The 1953 pogroms were part of the artificial retribalization of Nigeria by British imperialism, which, when conquering and occupying the country, systematically destroyed the material and social foundations of tribalism, leaving only the empty husk for use by the Colonial Office within the framework of the policy of British 'indirect rule'.

This was carried out through appointed chiefs and other agencies of 'native authorities' which Britain set up in Nigeria, modelled on the 'native authorities' of apartheid South Africa, developed by Shepstone and other British administrators in the 19th century.

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This was used by Ojukwu, a bourgeois middle-class tribal-nationalist product of the missionaries and British social democracy, as a pretext to launch a secessionist war by the newly-formed 'state' of Biafra.

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But the question of Hausa-Ibo 'tribalism' was not the cause of the war. The Eastern Region (in which the Ibo were more numerous than in the rest of Nigeria) is also the area of the 'oil-rivers', where American, British, Dutch, Italian and French oil companies had long been prospecting and where the imperialist monopoly oil companies had re-

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The meeting pledged itself to carry the campaign into every section of the labour and trade union movement, mobilize the maximum expression of working-class opinion against the imperialist war in Vietnam and discuss immediately—in every factory and trade union organization—actions to oppose Wilson's visit.

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THE following letter, signed by Young Socialists' National Secretary Sheila Torrance, was handed out at 10 Downing Street by a delegation from the demonstration:

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Woodworkers

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'Because of Wilson's treacherous attacks on the labour movement in this country and his support for the actions of the American government in Vietnam', their resolution continues, 'we urge the whole labour movement to demand that Wilson's visit to Washington should not take place.'

A PETITION in similar terms, circulated by the Workers' International League of Greece, has won the support of 435 Greek and Greek-Cypriot emigré workers. The majority—including

many members of the Communist Party—are members of the Tailor and Garment Workers' Union.

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Briefly

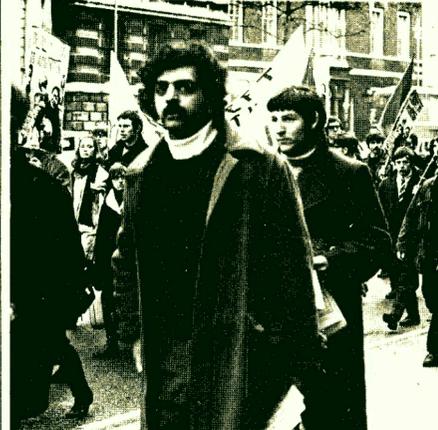
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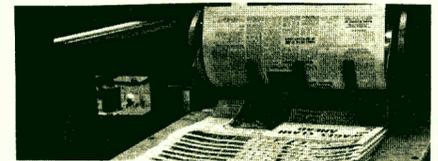
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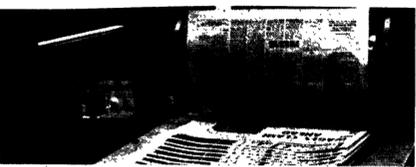
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After the closure of whole industries following the Xmas and New Year holidays, the employers beat their breast about the need for factory discipline.

This is the first organized challenge to the tight control which has been exercised at Linwood since the introduction of Measured-Day Work. One of the last sections to be bulldozed into the scheme, the patternmakers could be the first to open a fight against it.

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TEACHERS TO MARCH: A rally of 600 London teachers, who are on strike, yesterday voted for a march through London on January 21, a lobby of MPs on the next day

and vigils in Downing Street and in Curzon Street outside the Department of Education.

NUT executive member Mr Harry George told the meeting that if the present tactics did not win the £135 interim wage claim, 'the pace will be hotted up and hotted up very considerably indeed'.

The London teachers are among 5,000 NUT members who yesterday began fortnight-long strikes which have closed 345 schools in England and Wales. Tomorrow 500 teachers in the National Association of Schoolmasters begin a week-long strike at 150 schools in Wales.

JUMBO-JET IN LONDON: The first Boeing 747 jumbo-jet to come to Britain landed at London's Heathrow airport yesterday morning from New York.

It took a quarter of an hour to get the 361 passengers off the aircraft and another hour to clear them through customs and immigration.

NOW THAT the campaign in Britain for working-class solidarity with the Vietnamese people has reached a crucial stage, it is only right that a political balance sheet should be drawn up on the activities of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, launched in the Summer of 1966.

Deep principled issues are at stake on the question of solidarity with Vietnam.

Firstly, there is the importance of the war itself and the contribution that the Vietnamese people have been and are making in the world struggle against imperialism.

Solidarity for the Marxist is not an individual question of morality, of 'dissociation' and of protest.

The Vietnamese workers and peasants are fighting a class battle against imperialism and its Saigon puppets.

In line with the class basis of that fight, Marxists have the duty to mobilize support for the Vietnamese Revolution within the working class of the advanced capitalist and imperialist nations.

Faced with the same class enemy that oppresses the Vietnamese people, the working class alone has the power to inflict decisive defeats on imperialism.

Then there is the history of



Malenkov: Gave rise to revisionist illusions by his post-Stalin 'liberalization'.

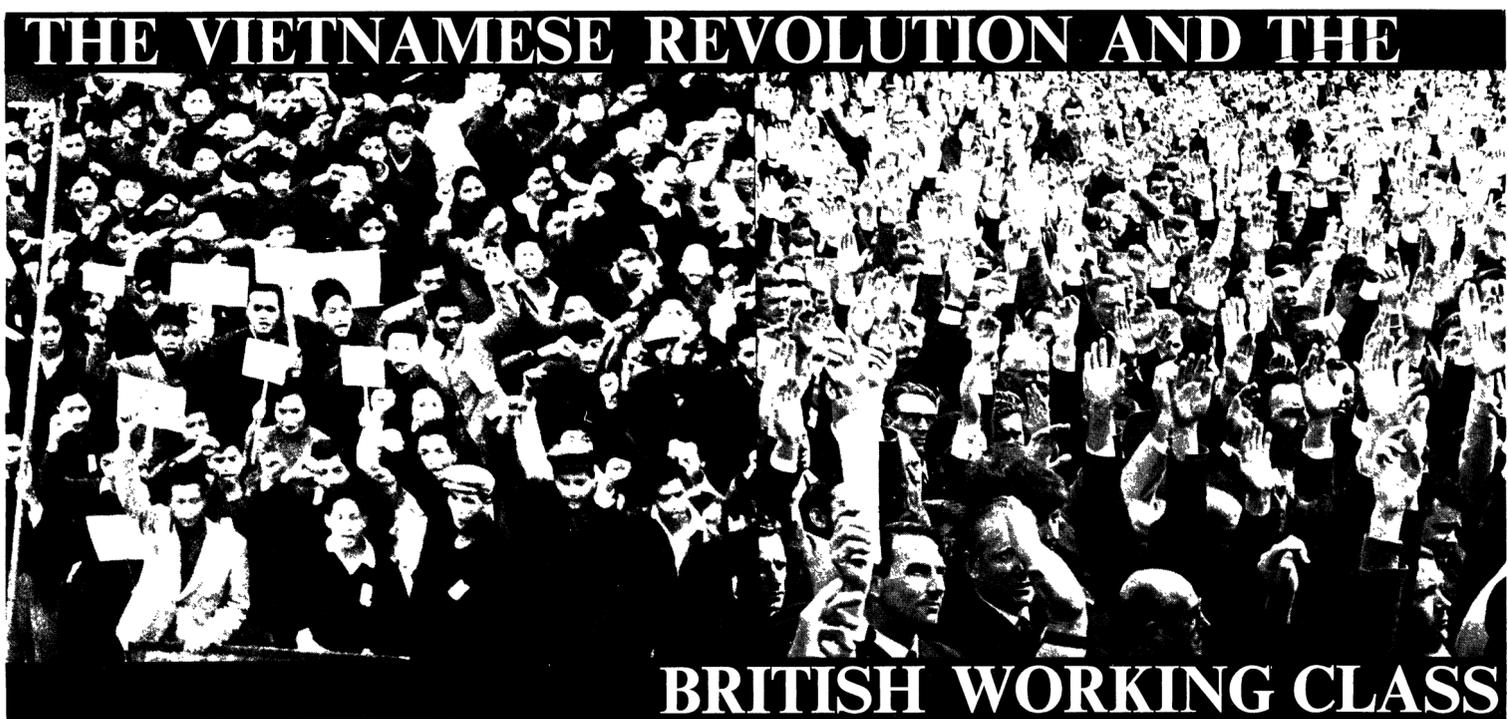
the British working class itself to consider.

Without a deep understanding of this force, with all its weaknesses and strengths combined, it is impossible to even begin a campaign inside the British labour movement for solidarity with the Vietnamese people.

British imperialism and the reformist-Stalinist domination of the working class are closely interrelated.

Out of the super-profits of the empire, the British ruling class was able to create a privileged layer within the working class, which, when deeply influenced and corrupted by the political theories of social democracy and Fabianism, became a solid foundation for the building of a reformist labour and trade union bureaucracy.

After its early years of struggle against this tradition, the British Communist Party, under the leadership of the



ideological outpost of imperialism within the working class. It is not the ideology of the working class, but of the bureaucracy, which, in turn, is the creature of imperialism.

Action in solidarity with those fighting imperialism can therefore only be effective if it wages war politically on the reformist agencies of imperialism within the working class itself: social democracy and Stalinism.

We shall see how decisive this is when we come to examine the record of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign.

Once this point is understood, it becomes obvious that all protest movements and demonstrations based purely on the middle class are doomed to failure.

Stalinism and reformism

Stalinism and reformism can only be fought by mobilizing the working class on basic class questions which bring it into conflict with the counter-revolutionary policies and aspirations of the Stalinists and the social democrats.

Middle-class protest, because it is based on an unstable class force that can play no role independent of the two main classes, makes no lasting impact on the bureaucracies in the workers' movement.

That is not to say there is no place for the middle class in the struggle against imperialism.

They have an important contribution to make, but the lesson of VSC is that this contribution cannot be made without a serious turn towards the working class and its problems.

The Vietnam Solidarity Campaign rejected this orientation and led its many

Some important lessons

A SERIES OF THREE ARTICLES BY ROBERT BLACK

Everything is therefore bound up with the political development of this working class, with its education in the treachery of the Labour leaders and the Stalinists and the eventual realization that its problems of wages and union rights demand political solutions.

We have always insisted against the impatient protes-

capitalism and then its relationship with the special features of British imperialism and the British labour movement.

So we part company with the 'protesters' firstly on philosophical questions, which at their roots are determined by class forces.

The protester, beginning (as he imagines), as an individual, attempts to substitute himself for the working class.

Illusion of a powerful movement

When many such protesters are brought together—and the VSC was for a time able to do this on a large scale—the illusion is easily created that a big and powerful movement is being built; that the working class and its movement has been successfully by-passed.

As we shall see, this was the essence of the political thinking behind the VSC.

The question which next has to be asked is: Which political group was mainly responsible for the political line and development of the VSC?

To answer that question, it is necessary to go back to 1953, the year of the great split within the ranks of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

A group headed by Pablo, the then secretary of the Fourth International, argued that the sharpening of the cold war was driving imperialism towards a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union.

In the course of such an attack, they claimed, the

ation', first under Malenkov, then under Khrushchev, brought further attacks on Trotskyism by Pablo and his faction.

'Self reform' and 'mass pressure'

The crisis of Stalinism as it came under attack from the working class, first in East Germany, then Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union itself, was interpreted as part of a long drawn-out process of 'self-reform' in which, again under mass pressure from the working class, the ruling Stalinist bureaucracies would yield power to the masses step by step.

The political pioneers of this anti-Trotskyist, pro-Stalinist theory and programme in Britain were the members of the group which broke from our movement in 1953.

They were led by John Lawrence, who took Pablo's theory to the logical conclusion of joining the British Communist Party, serving it as a full-time functionary of the then Stalinist-dominated shop stewards' committee at Fords.

The ideas and work of Lawrence, who has now moved even further away from Marxism by becoming an anarchist, are continued by the 'International Marxist Group', which publishes the monthly journal 'International'.

It is therefore no accident that the British Pabloites ended up with the Young Communist League as the mainstays of the VSC.

We always insisted that Pablo's first attacks on Trotsky's perspective of building independent Marxist parties of the Fourth International in all the major countries would lead to capitulation to either social democracy or Stalinism—or, as in the case of the IMG, to both.

The fate of the VSC only confirms this.

Shortly after the launching of 'International' (the successor to the Pabloite weekly 'The Week') another journal was founded: 'The Black Dwarf', which, in June 1968, came under the full-time editorship of Tariq Ali, a leading IMG member.

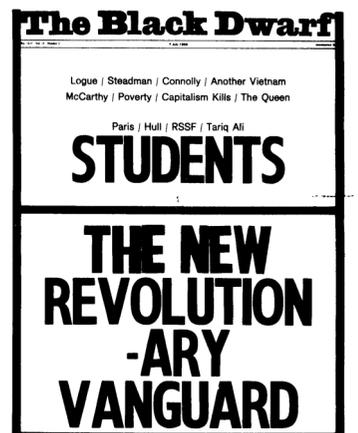
Tariq Ali was also a leading

sponsor of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign when it was formed in 1966, and 'Black Dwarf' rapidly became a platform for the views and activities of the VSC.

Though obviously not coming under either the control or discipline of the IMG (several members of the editorial board are members or supporters of other organizations), 'Black Dwarf' was certainly influenced by the politics of Pabloism.

With Tariq Ali as its editor, it could hardly be otherwise. Now we must see how the

'Black Dwarf' edited by Tariq Ali (IMG member) rejects the revolutionary role of the working class and turns to 'student power'.



political theories of Pabloism, which in their essence boil down to a rejection of the revolutionary role of the working class and its substitution by some other agency (black power, student power, bureaucracies 'under pressure' etc., etc.), worked out in the case of the VSC.

The capitulation to Stalinism began at its inaugural meeting in August 1966.

A speaker from the Socialist Labour League (which supported and was represented on the campaign committee) was barred from speaking on the grounds that his opening remarks had been critical of Stalinism.

We withdrew from the campaign at once, knowing full well that our accepting political gags would involve us in a betrayal of the Vietnamese people.

This ban on criticism of the international Stalinist movement was all the more striking in that it was being applied by a committee that had only just thrown the YCL out of the campaign because of its refusal to support a victory for the Vietnamese people over imperialism.

A 'left' gesture one day, only to be cancelled out by a grovelling apology (for that is what the ban was) to Stalinism the next.

I.M.G. provides main political justification

So on this unprincipled basis, politically prepared by more than a decade of revisionist betrayal of Trotskyism, the work of the VSC began.

The main theoretical justification for these unprincipled alliances was worked out by the IMG through its journal 'International'.

In the first issue of May 1968, we read:

'We have, however, always stood for the united front. "The Week" [forerunner of "International"] always sought to collaborate with any tendency on the left with which it had agreement on particular issues. This method is best expressed in the creation of non-exclusive organs of struggle on important and principled issues. The Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and the Workers' Control Campaign are cases in point.'

And in case anyone missed the point, it was made again later in the same article:

'It is vitally necessary to fight factionalism in the interests of building the united front.'

So the VSC is, according to 'International', one of the best

expressions of the united front.

Hence the IMG revise Leninism just as they revise Trotskyism.

For the united front cannot, under any circumstances, be applied to the type of alliance that has evolved around the VSC.

For communists, the united front has certain historical origins and traditions, and arises only under very precise tactical and strategic situations.

As we shall prove, the Pabloites not only distort all the lessons of the Leninist period of the Communist International in developing the tactic of the united front, they use its outward forms to protect the political tendencies that the united front was intended to destroy.

Part two will appear in tomorrow's Workers Press.



Gerry Healy, national secretary of the Socialist Labour League, speaking at the inaugural meeting of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign in August 1966. The SLL was condemned by the revisionists for attacking Stalinism. Seated (left to right) are Lawrence Daly (now NUM secretary), M. Banda (now Workers Press editor), Ralph Schoenman (late of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation), Tariq Ali (IMG), John Palmer (International Socialist).

Stalinized Soviet Communist Party, rapidly capitulated to this powerful bureaucracy and proceeded to dress up in Marxist phrases all the old reformist ideas of the Fabians and the labour leaders.

This was set out systematically in the 'British Road to Socialism' of 1951.

Reformism is therefore the

thousands of supporters away from the working class, towards political isolation and certain defeat.

So despite its imperialist history and tradition of reformist leadership, the working class remains the only force able to challenge the Wilson government and its support for Nixon's war.

ters and adventurists that this stage of working-class development cannot be skipped over or artificially accelerated by deeds of heroism in futile conflicts with police.

The development of consciousness in the working class is above all an objective process determined first of all by the international crisis of

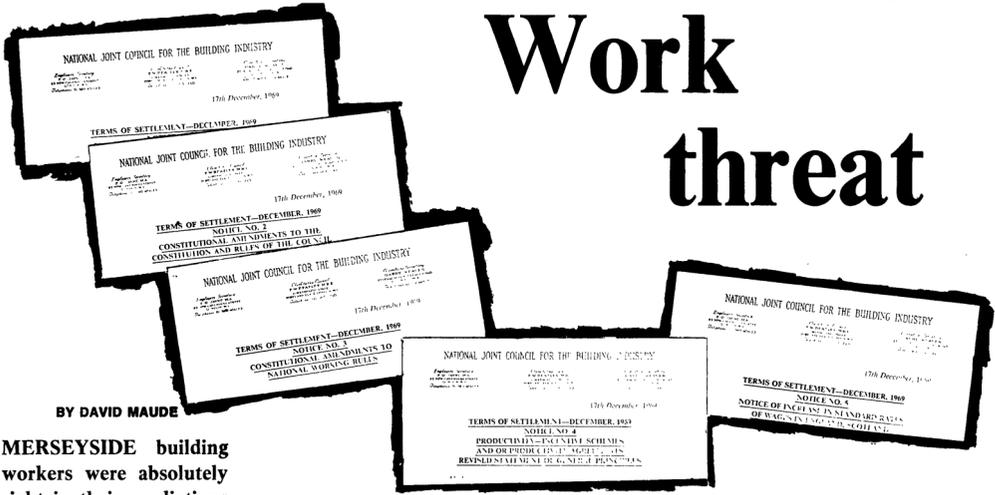
Police charge marchers at the Grosvenor Square demonstration organized by the VSC. Adventurist conflicts with the police do not in any way substitute for the building of a revolutionary party for the working class.



'A scaffolder with a shovel, a steelie with a saw, a brickie with a brush.'—

Merseyside building workers' leaflet, October 1969

Site Measured-Day Work threat



BY DAVID MAUDE

MERSEYSIDE building workers were absolutely right in their predictions about the pay-and-productivity agreement signed by their union leaders in the middle of December.

The interchangeability and flexibility clauses of the deal—which most workers in the industry saw in full for the first time last week—certainly allow for a sweeping attack by the employers on existing job-demarcations.

But this is only one aspect.

Others are cuts in manning, elimination of craftsmen's mates, work study, job targets, legalized scabbing, penal clauses and compulsory arbitration—all under complete and written-in management control.

As Saturday's Workers Press commented, Mrs Barbara Castle will have little to complain about when she meets building employers and trade union leaders at St James' Square today to discuss the deal.

What is most likely to happen is that she will demand, to use what appears to be her own favourite phrase, 'copper-bottomed guarantees' that the agreement is ruthlessly implemented.

Framework

In return for wage increases which in any case fall far short of their members' demands, the union leaders have already provided the employers with a framework for doing this.

Craftsmen, at present earning a standard rate of £15 16s 8d for 40 hours, will receive increases bringing this figure up to £20 phased until June 1971. Labourers' standard rate will rise from £13 10s to £17 over the same period.

This is a far cry from the '£20 Now!' demanded by building workers all over the country in demonstrations and even union delegate conferences.

It is even further when you turn to the five photo-copied notices explaining what the union leaders sold in return.

On page one, under the new rates, is the following paragraph:

'It is the intention of the parties to the National Joint Council for the Building Industry that unofficial payments in excess of the existing standard rates shall be overtaken and absorbed in the new and higher standard rates.'

Militant sites, which have won higher pay by dint of the strength of their organization, are in other words immediately to be put in their place.

Site discipline

The conditions under which these rates are 'guaranteed' are followed up with tighter site discipline under a revised National Working Rule, including the following:

'Decisions as to when, during the normal working hours, work is to be carried out, interrupted on account of weather conditions or otherwise and resumed, and as to whether some or all of the operatives shall work at any particular time shall be made

by the employer and his representative and shall be strictly observed.'

Then begins the attack on working practices:

'If in the shop or on the job or site, work is not available for an operative in his own occupation, he shall hold himself ready and willing to perform work in any other suitable building industry occupation or at any other job, site or shop where work is available.'

The purpose of such an agreement was no doubt accepted by the union leaders on the usual opportunist grounds that it is 'too vague to be implemented'. This is to miss the point.

In that form, mobility and flexibility cannot of course be put into operation—at least on organized sites—without a struggle.

Preparation

The employers are well aware of this and are carefully preparing the ground in these sections of the agreement to cut militants off from any official backing when they do—as they undoubtedly will—act in defence of previously-established gains.

Both the employers and the union leaders must know that building workers will not accept the provisions they go on to lay down—on flexibility and mates—without a struggle:

'The agreements, arrangements and understandings which exist in any localities and are often of long standing, by virtue of which it is recognised that particular operations are the sole prerogative of a particular trade or craft, can constitute impediments to the effective use of them.'

'It is accordingly agreed that if for any operation covered by such agreement, arrangement or understanding, operatives of the trade or craft specified are not available, the employer shall not be in breach of that agreement, arrangement or understanding if he arranges to engage on the operation operatives of another trade or craft who are skilled and qualified to carry it out.'

'It shall be further accepted that in those districts where there have been understandings about the employment of craftsmen's mates, employers shall not in future be regarded as being in breach of such understandings if mates are not employed on operations which do not require them.'

of those least responsible—the building workers.

The objectives of such schemes, it is stated, are:

'To increase efficiency, thereby keeping the costs of building at an economic level.'

'To encourage greater productivity thereby providing the opportunity for increased earnings by increased effort, while maintaining a high standard of workmanship and avoiding a waste of labour and materials.'

The real responsibility for the building industry crisis—which resulted in an estimated 40,000 fewer houses being built last year than in 1968—lies not with building workers, but with the system that the Labour and trade union leaders are desperately attempting to prop up... capitalism.

Increased costs

The 1969 increase in cement prices alone raised the estimated cost of building the average house by some £7.

Taken together with the increased cost of bricks and plasterboard, housebuilding



1,000 building workers from Manchester, Merseyside and London march through London to demand '£20 now!'

So then comes a clause which virtually 'legalizes' scabbing:

'Where on a job or in a shop collective action is taken by any operatives employed under this agreement, the employer shall at all times use his best endeavours to provide continuity of work for those operatives who are not involved in the dispute and who remain available for work.'

These principles, reproduced in full on Saturday, clearly indicate that the building employers' real aim is a full Measured-Day Work system.

One further point must be made. In the preamble to these principles, as in the flexibility agreement printed above, the union leaders agree to place the full burden of the building industry's crisis on the backs

of those least responsible—the building workers. The objectives of such schemes, it is stated, are: 'To increase efficiency, thereby keeping the costs of building at an economic level.' 'To encourage greater productivity thereby providing the opportunity for increased earnings by increased effort, while maintaining a high standard of workmanship and avoiding a waste of labour and materials.'

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This didn't take them too far because they got worried about how that means the TV set will become an 'all-purpose vending machine'.

The question of who will own the vending machine or control what it will dispense hardly arose in a direct way; it did come out less directly through John Morgan's sales-talk about how the commercial companies are being 'ruined' by the exchequer levy.

Morgan, of course, is a shareholder and director of one of the companies and was just adding his mite to the collection of tycoons and profiteers who, 'concerned' with programme budgets, have been sounding off in all the media recently over the same question of declining profit.

The crisis in the industry, both sides of it, could be resolved, thought Mackenzie, if yet another body of trustees was set up 'to stand between the government and broadcasting authorities', ITA and BBC.

Financial

Hoggart correctly saw that the crisis was financial, but was quite unable to connect it with a more general analysis. He therefore saw the solution as being a new licensing system fixed as a proportion of the average wage.

This would certainly produce a greater revenue for broadcasting; it would also come in bulk from the same pockets which are always raided to solve the deepening contradictions of the system, those of the working class.

Some have not seen their families for several years; all have taken the step into becoming militarily trained with care and consideration. Preparations for an armed struggle were begun in 1964, when it became clear that there were no hopes left of even minimal democratic concessions from the Rhodesian white ruling class.

The guerrillas insisted that they were militants and not soldiers and much political work is undertaken by them, and with them.

But some other crucial factors also emerged. The commissar of the reconnaissance camp where the 'World In Action' team filmed was trained in the Soviet Union.

He is responsible for the political work and training of the 'combat infiltrators'.

They try to give air-time to all that's fascinating, fun or droll and by doing so reduce every issue to the same bland, even tones in which most of the people who take part speak. One night they will invite the producer of a 'concerned' documentary or play to discuss with 'the other side'. Another evening will see a puzzled chat amongst 'experts' with the most assured expressions about locking people up in prison. In the latter discussion there would be a Baroness, a psychiatric social worker and a probation officer. In the former the subject would be the 'dilemma' of apartheid or perhaps the latest 'revelations' that all is not well with our National Health Service.

TV Column

BEHAVING like fussed battery hens on their way to market, half aware that something's going on but not at all sure what it is, the television pundits, liberals and tame talkers have come clucking, chattering, struggling, but still firmly caged, into the new decade.

One of the first appearances was on a recent 'Late Night Line-Up', that BBC-2 club for the half-awake.

The interviewees themselves represent precisely the trendy but sober, informed but ignorant, naive but interested middle class that they like to think of as their peers.

It is a show where visiting actresses, old dancers now preaching health food and exercise, and professors with 'a point of view' can mingle with mildly satiric folk singers, or nostalgically watch a better past for the middle class in old movies.

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TV's future?

A week ago (January 5) we had the spectacle of Robert Mackenzie (instant LSE academic), John Morgan (Welsh boy who's got on so well, but still keeps the improved accent which betrays his origins), Richard Hoggart (radical), sitting around with Michael Dean (tactful interlocutor). They were assembled to discuss the future of television in the 1970s.

Mackenzie began with a pitch about the technological advances which are going to make television the method of transmitting information.

This didn't take them too far because they got worried about how that means the TV set will become an 'all-purpose vending machine'.

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But some other crucial factors also emerged. The commissar of the reconnaissance camp where the 'World In Action' team filmed was trained in the Soviet Union.

He is responsible for the political work and training of the 'combat infiltrators'.

Sergei Eisenstein, the great Soviet film-maker, takes a rest on the Tsar's throne during the filming of 'October'. Eisenstein is the subject of a forthcoming BBC documentary.

Silver tongues on the silver screen

The radical Hoggart—soon to become an assistant director at that pawn shop for capitalism, UNESCO—also pointed out that television has 'trivialized' itself since the middle 1960s. Again he's right, but also in a very limited sense.

The trivialization has clear social, political and economic causes.

It reflects the response of the owners and controllers of broadcasting to the mounting threats to the survival of the system which requires their existence and gives them their power.

Over the past three or four years the radicals have been slowly winkled out. There is now only a handful left in television, and the ground is breaking up beneath them.

Radical home

'World In Action' (Granada) has always been a home for television radicals.

Social and political issues are dealt with in ways that often seem very sharp.

At times the programme has brought out information and contradictions that don't often appear elsewhere in bourgeois papers or programmes.

Granada is run by Sidney Bernstein, a millionaire with a reputation for reformist socialist convictions. Its most famous programme is 'Coronation Street', that sentimental travesty of the working class that brings great profits to its makers.

Genuine virtues of the class are remorsefully traded upon and the popularity of the programme is a reflection of the deep desire amongst the audience to see anything of their own lives and qualities on the screen—however distorted.

So the fact that this company also allows a few 'lefts' to do the occasional radical-seeming show on political-social issues is no surprise.

And, of course, the people to do the shows are not about to tip the apple cart, even if they think they are!

Guerrillas

A recent edition brought a report by Gus Macdonald on the African guerrillas in Zambia.

Macdonald is the same producer who took Tariq Ali to Pakistan on a despicable jaunt last year; he's also part of the 'Free Communications Group'.

In many ways it was very informative. The leading African nationalist organization, ZAPU, controls the fighters; exiles from Rhodesia, they now live in mobile camps along the Zambezi river which separates them by 100 yards from their homeland, Zimbabwe.

They infiltrate and engage in illegal propaganda and organizational work amongst African Rhodesian workers and their strength is estimated at between 500 and 2,000.

They are armed, mostly with Chinese weapons, and live in the bush under conditions requiring great self-sacrifice, loyalty and commitment.

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Three other men were trained in Cuba and it is here that the programme utterly refused to clarify or bring out the implications of such information. In fact it went along completely with the merely nationalistic ambitions of ZAPU and its spokesman and carefully extracted from him the statement that they were not communists, having merely 'socialist leanings'. Of course, it is precisely here that a revolutionary programme maker would have concentrated some attention. But a radical producer wouldn't and didn't. No attempt to clarify why the fighters are tragically underarmed and supplied only with what seemed to amount to free toothpaste and cigarettes from the Russian government. No effort to explain why these few brave men, fighting helicopters, Buccaneer jet-

planes and vicious South African and Rhodesian soldiers are still politically unprepared for the real tasks and threats facing them and their people.

No Marxist philosophy anywhere.

Contact is made with guerrillas; a film unit gets to them under often dangerous and difficult conditions.

And out of it all comes mere radicalism.

The same producer is said to be attempting to prepare a programme on Lenin for later this year. A radical view of Lenin is doubt.

But then he won't be alone. The BBC is preparing another such documentary, with access to the Soviet archives.

It's scheduled for May Day. This one is to be made by a film-maker whose study of Eisenstein (in two parts) will be out soon.

We shall know what to expect for Lenin when we see what is made of Eisenstein.

TUESDAY TV

BBC 1	ITV
9.15 a.m.-12.23 p.m. Schools. 1.00 Bob Yn Dri. 1.30 Watch With Mother. 1.45-1.53 News and Weather. 2.05-2.25 Schools. 3.45 Religion In The Sixties. 4.20 Play School. 4.40 Jackanory. 4.55 Animal Magic. 5.20 Wacky Races and Space Kidettes. 5.44 Hector's House. 5.50 National News.	11.00 a.m.-2.55 p.m. Schools. 3.55 Face of the Earth. 4.17 Paulus. 4.30 Crossroads. 4.55 Junior Showtime. 5.20 Magpie.
6.00 London-Nationwide. 6.45 Z Cars. 7.05 Tomorrow's World. 7.30 Harry Wain. 8.00 Good Old Days: A Scandinavian edition. 8.50 Main News and Weather. 9.10 Duke and Duchess of Windsor: Tuesday documentary. 10.00 He and She. 10.25 Points of View: Criticism and comment. 10.30 24 Hours. 11.05 Weather. 11.07 Postscript. 11.12 Sex Education In Primary Schools: New series for teachers.	5.50 News. 6.03 Today. 6.40 Branded. 7.10 Tuesday Film: 'Torpedo Run' With Glenn Ford, Ernest Borgnine and Diane Brewster. Second World War submarine drama. 9.00 This Is... Tom Jones. With Johnny Cash, June Carter, Minnie Pearl, Jeannie C. Riley, Carl Perkins and The Tennessee Three. 10.00 News. 10.30 The Violent Earth. Haroun Tazieff, a volcanologist, spends his life trying to predict eruptions. 11.30 Ballet For All. 12 midnight The Best Days Of Your Life.
REGIONAL BBC	
All regions as BBC-1 except at the following times: Midlands and East Anglia: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Midlands Today, Look East, Nationwide. 10.00-10.25 Student Vac. 69. 11.42 News, Weather. North of England: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Look North, Weather, Nationwide. 10.00-10.25 Bowling. 11.42 News, Weather. Scotland: 3.45-4.20 p.m. Sunday Set. 6.00-6.45 Reporting Scotland. 10.00-10.25 Helen McArthur. 11.07-11.27 Scottish viewpoint. 11.27 Sex Education followed by News Headlines, Weather.	
Northern Ireland: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Scene Around Six. Weather, Nationwide. 10.00-10.30 Speak Your Mind. 11.42 News, Weather. Wales: 5.20-5.44 p.m. Teleweli. 6.00-6.45 Wales Today. 6.45-7.05 Heddlu. 8.00-8.05 Newydd. 8.05-8.25 Z Cars. 8.25-8.50 Ryan A Ronnie. 10.00-10.30 The Sporting Sixties. Schools and West: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Points West, South Today, Spotlight South-West, Weather, Nationwide. 10.00-10.30 Open House, Free For All. 10.00-10.25 Peninsula. 10.25-10.30 Points Of View. 11.42 News, Weather.	
REGIONAL ITV	
CHANNEL: 11.00 a.m.-12 noon London. 1.45-2.53 p.m. London. 4.04 Puffin's Birthday Greeting. 4.14 Paulus. 4.25 Castle Haven. 4.55 London. 6.00 Channel News and Weather. 6.10 Channel Lookaround. 6.25 Crossroads. 7.00 Star Movie: '99 River Street' with John Payne and Evelyn Keyes. 8.30 A Present For Dickie. 11.30 Living and Growing. 12 midnight Channel Gazette. 12.05 a.m. News and Weather in French.	
SOUTHERN: 11.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m. London. 4.00 Junkin'. 4.15 News. 4.30 London. 6.00 Day By Day. 6.45 The Tuesday Film: 'The Sea Devils' with Yvonne De Carlo, Rock Hudson and Bryan Forbes. A Channel Island smuggler escorts a French countess back to France during the Napoleonic wars. 8.30 A Present For Dickie. 9.00 London. 11.40 The Privileged? 12.05 a.m. The Weather followed by Heroine of the Congo.	
WESTWARD. As Channel except: 11.00 a.m.-2.55 p.m. London. 4.02 News. 4.04 The Gus Honeyburn Show. 4.14 Paulus. 6.00 Westward Diary. 12 midnight Faith For Life. 12.06 a.m. Weather.	
HARLECH: 11.00 a.m.-2.50 p.m. London. 4.18 In The Time For Me. 4.25 High Living. 4.55 London. 6.01 Report. 6.20 Batman. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Sonar. 8.00 Mr and Mrs. 8.30 A Present For Dickie. 9.00 London. 12 midnight Weather.	
Harlech (Wales) as above except: 4.25 p.m. Interlude. 4.29-4.55 Crossroads. 6.01 Y Dydd. 6.25 Castle Haven. 6.51-7.00 Report. 10.30-11.30 Dan Sylw.	
ANGLIA: 11.00 a.m.-2.53 p.m. London. 4.10 Castle Haven. 4.35 Newsroom. 4.40 The Wind In The Willows. 4.55 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Star Western. 7.05 Fort Dobbs with Clint Walker and Virginia Mayo. 8.30 A Present For Dickie. 9.00 Kate. 11.30 0 Our Yesterdays. 12 midnight Reflection.	
ATV MIDLANDS: 11.00 a.m.-12 noon Schools. 1.45-2.30 p.m. Schools. 4.00 News. 4.02 Women Today. 4.15 Peyton Place. 4.40 Diane's Magic Theatre. 4.55 London. 6.00 ATV Today. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Star Western. 7.05 Come In. 7.35 Crooked Trail' with Audie Murphy, Gia Scala, Walter Mathau. 8.30 A Present For Dickie. 9.00 London. 11.30 Reflection.	
YORKSHIRE: 11.00 a.m.-2.55 p.m. London. 4.104 The Tingha and Tucker Club. 4.25 You and Your Child. 4.55 London. 6.00 Calendar. Weather. 6.30 Castle Haven. 6.55 'Moonfleet' with Stewart Granger, George Sanders and Joan Greenwood. Smuggling on the Dorsetshire coast. 8.30 A Present For Dickie. 9.00 Kate. 10.00 London. 11.30 The Man Who Never Was. 12 midnight Living and Growing. 12.25 a.m. Weather.	
GRANADA: 11.00 a.m.-12 noon Schools. 1.45-2.30 p.m. Schools. 4.15 News. 4.17 London. 4.25 The Short Story. 4.55 London. 6.00 The Beverly Hillsbillies. 6.25 Newswest. 6.40 The British Comedy: 'On The Fiddle' with Alfred Lynch, Sean Connery and Stanley Holloway. 8.25 A Present For Dickie. 9.00 London. 11.30 Parkin's Patch.	
TYNE TEES: 11.00 a.m.-12 noon Schools. 1.45-2.55 p.m. Schools. 4.15 Newsroom. 4.13 Paulus. 4.25 Mad Movies. 4.53 Newsroom. 4.55 London. 6.00 Today At Six. 6.25 Where The Jobs Are. 6.30 Castle Haven. 6.55 The Tuesday Film: 'No Kidding' with Leslie Phillips and Julia Lockwood. 8.30 A Present For Dickie. 9.00 London. 11.30 News. 11.47 A Christian and His Work.	
SCOTTISH: 11.00 a.m.-12 noon Schools. 1.45-3.18 p.m. Schools. 4.20 Scotland Early. 4.30 London. 6.00 Scotland Now. 6.35 High Living. 7.05 The Name Of The Game. 8.30 A Present For Dickie. 9.00 London. 11.30 Parkin's Patch. 12 midnight Living and Growing. 12.25 Late Call.	
GRAMPIAN: 10.58 a.m.-12 noon Schools. 1.45-2.55 p.m. Schools. 4.25 High Living. 4.55 London. 6.00 Grampian News and Farming News. 6.15 Bunsy Bunsy. 6.20 Come On, Come In. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 The Tuesday Movie: 'The Adventurers' 8.30 A Present For Dickie. 9.00-11.30 London.	
BBC 2	
11.00-11.20 a.m. Play School. 7.05 p.m. The Public Purse: New series about government spending. 7.30 News and Weather. 8.00 The Borderers. 8.50 While We're On The Subject. 9.10 Hollywood In The Sixties: 'Spencer's Mountain'	With Henry Fonda and Maureen O'Hara. A couple struggling to bring up children in a remote Wyoming mountain valley. 11.05 News Summary and Weather. 11.10 Line-Up.

'Keep Left' Annual General Meeting

Forward to the revolutionary Seventies—say Young Socialists

1969, editor Aileen Jennings told the 'Keep Left' Annual General Meeting on Saturday, had been a remarkable year for the paper.

Its circulation, which had averaged 20,668 copies a month, had seen an average monthly rise of 1,668 and this enabled the Young Socialists to look forward to the 1970s, 'the revolutionary 1970s', with confidence.

'Behind this increase', Comrade Jennings emphasized, 'lies a tremendous effort and a great deal of political enthusiasm unrivalled in the labour movement today.'

On the basis of their principled fight for Marxism in the working class, the 40 Young Socialists who had attended the 'Keep Left' Annual General Meeting ten years ago (January 1960) had won decisive majorities for their policies inside the Labour Party and—following their expulsion by Wilson and the right wing on the eve of the 1964 general election—had taken the Young Socialists and their paper from strength to strength.

This strength was demonstrated by the Annual General Meeting itself—a weekend event this year—at which several hundred Young Socialists voted, after a lively discussion, unanimously to increase the size of the paper to 16 pages every month for 6d and, with a film festival devoted to films made by federations and branches in the local areas, prepared to broaden their propaganda work still further.

Plans were also announced for a mass youth rally at Alexandra Palace, London, on July 5.

Unions

'Since 1964', Comrade Jennings explained, 'we've turned in our work to the trade unions to fight against the Labour government's trade union legislation proposals; to fight to develop within the trade union movement a struggle against the policies of the Labour leadership.'

'The seriousness and determination with which the Young Socialists fought has enabled us to mobilize important and growing support from the adult workers.'

Comrade Jennings also stressed the leading role played by the Young Socialists in launching the Workers Press.

Work in the British labour movement—whose political relations with the capitalist class were on the surface slow-moving—required the most painstaking and patient effort from the Young Socialists, she explained.

The fight for Marxist principles was decisive here.

In the campaign to stop Wilson's visit to Nixon, this problem had been sharply posed.

Connections

'Socialist internationalism consists of fighting to raise the political understanding of the working class in a way in which the working class of this country will see the connections between their own problems and the fight against US imperialism in Vietnam.'

It was in this internationalist spirit that the meeting received fraternal greetings from the Northern Ireland Young Socialists, the Workers' Internationalist League of Greece, the Alliance des Jeunes pour le Socialisme (France) as well as from the Socialist Labour League.

'We are now entering an entirely new period', Socialist Labour League national secretary Gerry Healy told the meeting.

'The working class has had to contend, over the last period, with enormous increases in the cost of living. There has never been a period of history since the 1920s, in our knowledge, when the cost of living has risen so sharply as at the present time. Does anyone here imagine that the working class are going to tolerate the enormous increases now under way? 1969 had seen a growing wages movement. But it would be dangerous and wrong to worship militancy for militancy's sake.'

Newsreels

What was above all necessary was the building of the revolutionary party and that was the purpose of all the printing machines, newspapers and film propaganda put out by the movement.

Big expansion of this work was necessary.

Film-making, the development of revolutionary film clubs with a perspective of producing national newsreels which would tell the truth about the struggles of the working class and education through films all had to be seriously undertaken.

If the writers are forthcoming, if the comrades build up the areas and sell the paper, Comrade Healy also stressed, 'the technical production of a weekly "Keep Left" is a relatively small operation.'

This would have to be seriously considered along with plans for expanding and improving the Workers Press, both technically and in terms of coverage.

'You are not just pioneering a youth paper,' he emphasized.

'You are now, together with us, well in the struggle to build this revolutionary party in the next decade to take advantage of the struggles now developing.'

John McGee, from Belfast, spoke of the great upsurges that had taken place in 1969 in Ulster as a result of the first tightenings of the belt of British imperialism.

'British troops had to be taken over,' he said, 'because for the first time in 50 years Catholic and Protestant workers began to stand together in defence committees at their homes and at their jobs.'

IMPERIALIST PAWNS

FROM PAGE ONE

ceived long-term 'concessions' after independence.

It was known that this region, which supplied no less than a tenth of the oil requirements of the West, was extremely rich in oil.

The oil lobbies of the western capitals considered that a small, separate 'state', like 'Biafra' would be easier to manipulate and to use as a lever to 'balance the power' in all Nigeria, than a Federal Nigeria.

Interests

From the outset it was clear that French capital and the de Gaulle government itself were 100 per cent behind 'Biafra'.

Indeed there is ample evidence to show that French oil and banking interests, including the Zionist-orientated Rothschild Bank, it has been reported, were behind Ojukwu throughout the war.

French ruling circles, as reflected in official pro-Biafran statements by de Gaulle, poured funds and arms into Biafra through the medium of some of their African semi-colonies.

For some time Ojukwu toyed with the idea of joining the French Union, the equivalent of the British Commonwealth.

Not only the French ruling class, but wide layers of French social democracy, including its 'left' wing, the anarchists and circles of the Pabloties and Maoists inside the CP supported the de Gaulle line on Biafra.

West Germany, Holland and the Vatican stood with France on the question.

'Biafra with arms and mercenaries, and the apartheid South African government, its press and Broadcasting House, plus its mercenaries from the Congo stood openly and clearly on the side of Biafra.'



'Keep Left' editor Aileen Jennings giving the main report to last Saturday's annual general meeting at the East India Hall, East London. Also on the platform (left to right) are Dany Sylwre, chairman, Ray Eford, a member of the outgoing editorial board and John Simmance, Young Socialists' National Committee member.

These troops, he stressed, were now preparing to take on the Ulster working class not piecemeal, but as one class.

The Northern Ireland Young Socialists were now struggling to build their own paper in a situation where the workers urgently required a Marxist leadership.

Sketching the history of the Greek Trotskyist movement, a representative from the League of Greece stressed that militancy alone was not enough to defeat the capitalist class and the treacherous role of Stalinism and social-democracy in his country.

The Greek comrades had already established their own paper and outlined plans for its expansion in 1970.

'Great struggles are ahead of us,' stressed a representative of the national bureau of the Alliance des Jeunes pour le Socialisme.

'But for them to be victorious we have to build a political force capable of leadership and of preventing the betrayals of the Stalinists and the reformists.'

The Annual General Meeting greeted the great leaps forward made by the French comrades in 1969 and carried a resolution pledging wholehearted support for the mass rally they are planning at Le Bourget on February 1.

Speakers from both the Young Socialists and the AJS stressed that in 1970—the year of Lenin and Trotsky—as both organizations have commonly decided to call it—they would go forward together in preparing an international conference of revolutionary youth towards the end of the year.

The resolution, which was carried unanimously, ended:

- Forward to the AJS rally in France on February 1!
- Forward to the building of a mass Young Socialists in Britain and to the rally on July 5 at Alexandra Palace!
- Forward to the international conference of revolutionary youth!

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C.P. leaders silent as

Kremlin creeps closer to Franco

By a foreign correspondent

THE leading Madrid Catholic evening paper 'Ya' featured a report on Sunday of the latest moves by the Franco regime to open up diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

Franco's end-of-the-year speech emphasized his government's desire to improve relations with eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Already diplomatic links have been established between the fascist regime and the governments of Poland, Hungary and Rumania.

Now comes news that the Spanish Foreign Minister, Lopez Bravo, and the vice-

president of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, Mr Kovaliev, met in Moscow on January 2.

Interrupted flight

The three-hour meeting took place after Bravo interrupted his flight from Spain to the Philippines by landing at Tashkent in Soviet Central Asia, where another plane had been made ready to fly him off to Moscow.

His talks with the Soviet official took place at Moscow airport.

He was then flown back to Tashkent, where he resumed his journey to the Philippines for the inauguration ceremony of the anti-communist President Marcos.

Franco's regime, now under immense pressure from a re-awakened working class, is desperately casting about for allies.

tends a hand to the fascist regime of Franco just as the Spanish workers, led by the miners, strike their heaviest blows against it.

Cynical record

And it is also in line with the equally cynical record of British Stalinism that its daily paper, the 'Morning Star', reports the news of the Franco-Kremlin tie-up without any comment.

And how can Gollan and Matthews criticize the deal? Surely this is the essence of 'peaceful co-existence'.

This latest manoeuvre of the Soviet bureaucracy, which writes anti-Franco articles in 'Pravda' with one hand only to clasp the blood-stained hands of his henchmen with the other, is a model example of Stalinist counter-revolution in action.

British, as well as Spanish workers, should take careful note and be prepared.

Allies revealed

The current strike of Asturias miners has helped to reveal who some of them are.

In an attempt to break the strike, the fascist regime intends to utilise its friendly relations with the Stalinist bureaucracy by importing coal from East Europe.

It is completely in keeping with the treacherous record of international Stalinism that the Soviet bureaucracy ex-

WEATHER

London area, South-East England, central Southern England, East and West Midlands, East England, North-West England and Central Northern England: Mist and fog, clearing, some bright intervals. Outbreaks of rain later. Maximum temperature 8C (46F).

Channel Islands and South-West England: Mainly cloudy, rain at times. Maximum temperature 10C (50F).

Glasgow area and N Ireland: Mist and fog, clearing. Then bright periods perhaps rain in evening. Maximum temperature 6C (43F).

Outlook for Wednesday and Thursday: Rain at times in all areas and near normal temperatures.

Italian crisis

Reformists plan new coalition

THE ITALIAN press reports that a meeting last Friday of the leading body of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) voted, with only three against, to give Party secretary De Martino a free hand to negotiate with the Christian Democrats, Social Democrats and Republicans for the formation of a new centre-left coalition government.

This puts the Italian capitalist class within sight of a temporary end to the period of minority Christian-Democratic government and allows Italian social democracy to celebrate in a uniquely craven manner over half a century of class collaboration.

The form of the announcement itself, avoiding any direct reference to the forthcoming horse-trading of ministerial posts and other benefits, and 'authorizing the secretariat to pursue the discussion with the parties of the centro-sinistra to deepen the themes under debate', reflects the bitter opposition of the Italian working masses to any revival of such a government.

FREE HAND

As a further sop to workers it is linked with a (purely platonic) appeal for an amnesty for the hundreds of workers faced with criminal charges arising from the political and trade union struggles which convulsed the country during the later half of last year. No official conditions have been laid down for PSI par-

icipation in government and the right wing will therefore be left with a free hand in the negotiations.

However, unofficial reports indicate that De Martino has read with approval a programmatic document prepared by the Christian Democrat Forlani which, proposing reform of the tax system, the state administration, building, education and health, offers workers even less than was promised in the programme of the first centre-left government—if that is possible.

The move represents a temporary setback to Stalinist hopes of participation in government.

This remains the most important parliamentary gambit in reserve for the Italian ruling class.

NO SPLIT

There seems little likelihood of a split such as divided the PSI on the eve of entry into the first centre-left government.

Lombardi, the leader of the three who voted against the resolution, denied any such possibility with the quip: 'What? I am the longest-serving member of the leadership!'

Another 'left-winger' Giolitti claimed that he voted in favour precisely because he considered that 'there are no signs of the climate and conditions necessary for a return of the PSI to government.'

As in the British Labour Party, it is made clear that the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party is when the greatest betrayals are in prospect.

UNDIMINISHED

The strength and fighting spirit of the Italian working class remains undiminished by these squalid manoeuvres. The unity forged in the recent struggles over wages, conditions and housing is now expressed in many factory, tenants' and agricultural workers' committees responsible directly to those who elect them for the conduct of their struggles.

The central and urgent task in the Italian labour movement is now the building of a revolutionary, Marxist leadership to wrest the political direction of the class from Stalinism and social democracy.

1,500 march in 'Stop Wilson' rally

FROM PAGE ONE

Vietnamese were forced to pull back their forces, accept the parallel imposed in their country and an imperialist government in South Vietnam we must be prepared for it.

'The only solution to the Vietnam war is a military victory for the National Liberation Front and the withdrawal of every single American soldier from Vietnamese soil.'

American soldiers themselves and sections of the American working class, he stressed, were beginning to move on this question.

'We have to oppose this war, but not in the tradition of the Stalinists who want to put pressure—the policy of pressure groups is not the policy of revolutionists.'

'We want to oppose this war by declaring our solidarity with the National Liberation Front and by opposing any attempts by the leaders of British social-democracy—in their fight or "left" variants—to go and talk to the war-criminals in Washington.'

'I HAVE never been so moved, so emotionally disturbed as by the revelations of the US atrocities in Vietnam, deputy senior motor industry steward ALAN THORNETT told the meeting.

'The only way to end wars is to end capitalism and that is not an emotional, but a scientific, job.'

'But Vietnam is not an emotional question. Only to the extent that we take Marxism into the trade unions, take internationalism

Stop Visit

FROM PAGE ONE

BILL WARMAN, president of the Sheet Metalworkers', Heating and Domestic Engineers' Union and a prominent member of the Communist Party, has signed the Workers Press petition demanding that the visit be stopped along with 15 other Coventry trade unionists.

These included Coventry Communist Party secretary S. Wilkes; Communist Party members F. Thacker and H. Brown; DATA executive committee member R. Jones; Coventry Trades Council treasurer D. J. Rolinson and T&GWU 5/121 branch chairman S. Roberts.

IN LONDON, Dagenham's senior Ford convenor Jack McRae has signed along with body group deputy convenor C. Gill river plant deputy convenor and national committee delegate B. Basingham and T&GWU 1/667 treasurer G. Hall.

London School of Economics lecturer Ralph Miliband has signed, as have 30 students, technicians and staff at Imperial College.

THE WELL-KNOWN pop and blues singer John Baldry, who made a special appearance at Saturday night's Young Socialists dance following the 'Keep Left' annual general meeting, also signed the Workers Press petition together with his manager George Lebb and harmonica player Paul Rowan.

CORRECTION

IN LAST Thursday's Workers Press (January 8), our report on the 'Stop Wilson' visit to Washington campaign may—owing to a compositing error—have given the impression that Labour Party members of the Swindon AEF District Committee voted against the campaign.

This is not in fact the case. Paragraphs four and five of our report were transposed and should have read: 'The committee also agreed to send a letter to 10 Downing Street opposing the Washington visit.'

It was approved with the support of the Communist Party members of the Committee. Labour Party members voted against.'

We apologize for any confusion that may have been caused.

ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE PUBLIC MEETING Lessons of the 1969 Ford strike and the fight for parity

DAGENHAM

Wednesday, January 14 8 p.m. Marsh Green School New Road Dagenham

Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. Published by Workers Press, 186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. Printed by Plough Press Ltd. (TU), 180b Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Rents warning for Yorks. tenants

FROM JACK GALE

LORD ROBENS, National Coal Board chairman, intends to visit Yorkshire later this month to discuss with tenants' leaders increases in rents for Coal Board houses.

Some indication of what miners can expect is revealed in the recent decision of the Yorkshire Rent Assessment Committee (i.e. the appeal Tribunal) concerning rents for ancient colliery houses at Nostell, Wakefield.

Built around 1900, these houses are in deplorable condition. The assessment committee was forced to declare:

Dismal

'These houses are situated in a drab, colourless and depressing estate. They are of dismal external appearance, without gardens, poor quality private roads and irregular brick pavements. In evidence it was stated "They have a barrack-type appearance and are commonly called THE LUMP".'

The committee's official comment goes on to describe 'rising damp through floors, penetrating damp through walls and damp through roofs and guttering defects.

Numbered other repairs are required. Repainting is long overdue and many tenants need electrical installations re-newing.'

Needless to say, the Rent Assessment Committee was extremely sympathetic to the landlords' problems.

'The present landlords, the National Coal Board, inherited these conditions from their predecessors and have not the necessary funds to keep these houses in a good state of repair.'

Interest

'We are informed that the NCB are to spend an average of £30 per house per annum on repairs, but have also to meet additional charges of £30 per house for interest and depreciation.'

The NCB is claiming that while existing rent income meets the costs of repair and maintenance and produces a surplus of £20 a year per house, these additional interest and depreciation charges—now transferred to area accounts—result in a net loss of £10 per house. In other words, tenants are

being asked to pay more rent in order to put more money in the pockets of speculators and profiteers.

Needless to say, the Appeal Tribunal agreed.

It fixed a rent of 35s 6d a week for these hovels and left the door open for further increases.

Its decision was: 'The Committee have determined that a fair rent should be £2 10s but because of the general state of the property and lack of essential repairs, etc., we have reduced this by a total of 14s 6d to 35s 6d.'

However should the NCB carry out these repairs they can apply for a new 'fair rent' before the three-year period expires. (Our emphasis.)

In plain English, the tenants pay 35s 6d if the houses stay damp and unhealthy.

If anything is done about this, the rent jumps to £2 10s. Nothing could show more clearly that Coal Board tenants must rely on their organized strength and place no faith in these 'fair rent' tribunals.