

SOCIALIST PRESS



FORTNIGHTLY PAPER OF THE
WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

No 17 * 17th September 1975 * 10p

AS DOLE QUEUES GROW

'LEFTS' MUST OUST

The Labour Party Conference is taking place under conditions of a Labour Government attacking the working class on all fronts. Having introduced harsh statutory wage controls, the collaboration they are receiving from the TUC allows them to argue that they have simply implemented the "freely adopted" wage policy of the Trade Union movement.

Alongside this they have created mass unemployment as a deliberate act of class war against the working class. Again they rest on the TUC who argue that unemployment has been caused by "excessive" wage increases last year and on the basis of this advance the "solution" of wage cuts to solve unemployment.

It is to stop any intervention or development at the conference which disrupts this relationship with the trade union leaders on which this government entirely rests that the employers, the Tory press, the Wilson cabinet and the TUC bureaucracy line up to ensure that no real opposition emerges.

They know that if they can confine the conference to the level of a debate, the savage offensive of the Wilson government against the working class will remain intact.

As unemployment rises to 1,400,000 this week, inflation rages unabated, and as health, education, housing and welfare programmes are mutilated by Wilson's spending cuts, the city millionaires and their servants in the Labour cabinet regard it as "extremism" to kick out a reactionary Labour MP, and "moderation" to throw a million and a half on the dole.

The 'moderate' Prentice, who defended the action of Jenkins and the courts in leaving Des Warren to rot in jail, and who supported the Tories in jailing the Pentonville Five in 1972, has the impudence to slander Warren by associating him with "thugs".

At the same time Wilson and the rest of the right wing lined up with anti-trade union forces assembled by the pro-common

market platform in the recent referendum.

While Wilson presses the attack other political forces emerge in the tensions and confusion created by mass unemployment. The violent intervention of the National Front at the pro-Prentice rally last week spelled out the dangers ahead if the reactionary policies of this government are not fought.

CAPITALIST POLICIES

Under these conditions the refusal of the 'lefts' in the Labour Party to take up any struggle to remove Wilson, Healey, Jenkins Prentice and the rest can open the door to a right wing Tory administration, who are biding their time while Wilson carries out policies which defend capitalism and alienate Labour supporters.

The ground work is being laid by the capitalist press for a vicious witch hunt, victimisations and purges against any effective opposition to Wilson in the Labour Party.

This would have precedents only in the expulsions of the Keep Left Young Socialists in 1964 in preparation for the return of the first Wilson government and the consolidation of the bans on the Communist Party in 1925 which resulted in the jailing of the CP in preparation for the General Strike.

A successful witch hunt would allow the right wing to continue to ignore all conference decisions as they did last year on the Shrewsbury 2 and in 1973 over Clay Cross and over the Common Market policy. It would

WILSON



Harold Wilson—Labour election meeting

create the best conditions for the Labour and TUC leaders to continue to act jointly against the working class.

A purge within the Labour Party is likely to be carried out by the trade unions where the new level of betrayal and collaboration between the trade union leaders and the employers requires that any opposition is forcibly stamped out.

This stresses that the sharpest possible fight must be carried out at the conference for the removal of Wilson and the right wing. But such a fight must go alongside a fight for alternative programme.

At the conference Wilson will be protected by the 'lefts' behind a smokescreen of militant rhetoric. Benn, architect of the Ryder plan, to restore British Leyland's profits at the expense of jobs, wages and conditions by means of 'workers

participation', has quietly accepted the energy minister post in order to remain in Wilson's job-slashing, wage-cutting cabinet.

Michael Foot defends high unemployment using the most brazen arguments of employers. Both Foot and Benn have opted actively to support Wilson's betrayals. With Eric Heffer and Judith Hart removed whilst declaring themselves against Wilson's removal, none of the 'lefts' are prepared to support this demand.

The crisis of leadership in the Labour Party is not simply a question of reactionary, corrupt and spineless individuals, although many such individuals will decorate the floor and platform of the conference.

It stems from the fact that the leadership both 'left' and right, is tied lock stock and barrel to the

preservation and defence of capitalism. The Labour Party was built by the working class 70 years ago to defend the unions within the framework of peaceful reform. Now no reforms can be won, as the world economic crisis bears down with full force on British capitalism with its obsolete and uncompetitive equipment and its position in the world market shrinking month by month. The present Labour leaders, rejecting the overthrow of capitalism, are now the organisers instead of an attack on the working class.

This crisis of working class political leadership is the starting point of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme. While the 'lefts' bleat they are at every point able only to protest but never to carry out a consistent fight.

They can never get beyond the point of protest precisely because they do not start from the preparation of a revolutionary leadership in order to lead the working class in the overthrow of capitalism.

The struggle for nationalisation and socialism must be prepared by a fight in every part of the labour movement for workers control, to defeat sackings, wage cuts and public service cuts.

The question of leadership is sharply posed as the working class begins to struggle against the Labour government, lead at this stage by the action of the blast-furnacemen.

The Workers Socialist League calls on every Labour Party member to demand the immediate removal of Wilson and the right wing. For the 'lefts' of the Parliamentary Labour Party to do anything less than fight for motions to this effect is to prepare the road for the Tories and expose their talk of "socialism" as a hollow sham.

At the same time we stress that the struggle against the right wing and the capitalist crisis cannot be carried through without the building of a revolutionary Trotskyist leadership to unite and mobilise the working class on the basis of the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International.

SPAIN BASQUE MILITANTS MUST NOT DIE



The Fascist Franco regime in Spain last Friday announced its intention to murder deliberately by the most feudal barbaric method of slow strangulation (garrotting) five Basque militants of the FRAP (Anti-Fascist Patriotic Front). The five: Rueda, Blanco, Baena, Fernandez and Marco, join two others, Garmendia and Otaegui already under death sentence for the alleged killing of a policeman in Madrid last July.

The 'trial' of these militants was conducted with complete arrogant contempt for elementary rights. The "judges" rejected out of hand not only all defence allegations of legal

irregularities - the denial of access to lawyers by the defendants and the refusal to hear defence witnesses, but felt it completely unnecessary for any evidence to be brought forward concerning fingerprints or the actual existence of the murder weapon. Thus, the convictions were based solely on statements which all the defendants stated were extracted under torture.

DEATH SENTENCES

The sentences have provoked demonstrations of sympathy throughout Europe including Spain itself in which several demonstrators have

been shot by police.

The Franco regime, now faced with a massive build up of working class resistance, aided by the Portuguese revolution, has made it quite clear through its treatment of the Basque militants that there can be no peaceful return to democratic liberties in Spain without the enforced overthrow of the Franco regime. As Franco's removal as head of state becomes more and more imminent and struggles by Spanish workers for elementary trade union and democratic rights, alongside the Basque struggle for national liberation, come out into the open, the working class movement internationally must take up without reservation the condemnation of the trials, and demand the immediate rescinding of the sentences and the release of the five.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS



Portugal's military dictators

PORTUGAL AFM MOVES RIGHT

The continuing strength and confidence of the working class, especially of the rank and file soldiers and sailors, remains the most powerful motor of the Portuguese Revolution. This is still the case despite the efforts of the military dictators of the Armed Forces Movement to balance between the competing social classes.

They lurch uncertainly from the short-lived fifth provisional government since the overthrow of fascism to the unstable political combinations necessary from them to set

up a sixth. In their efforts to shore up the capitalist state that still remains, the military will find willing allies in the leaders of the Communist and Socialist parties.

As these efforts continue, the forces of counter-revolution continue to gather. There can be no doubt fascist militias are preparing themselves in Spain, and possibly France. They have clearly been involved in some of the anti-communist and anti-trade union rioting that has taken place.

Encouraged by these developments, the discredited leader of the last counter-coup attempt, ex-General Spínola, is currently touring Europe to win support of his own

version of the 'domino theory' according to which all sections of European capitalism are threatened by the advances of the Portuguese working class.

Since the overthrow of pro-Stalinist Prime Minister Vasco Gonçalves, efforts have been made to consolidate the hold of the more openly pro-capitalist sections of the Armed Forces Movement. The right wing leaders of the 'Group of Nine', Antunes and Alves, have been re-admitted into the ruling body of the movement.

Efforts are being made to bring the bourgeois PPD and other right-wing parties, into the new administration. In a clear effort to influence the situation, EEC foreign ministers meeting at Venice, inspired apparently by British foreign secretary Callaghan, have offered to loan £80 million to a 'suitable administration'.

Meanwhile, the American monopolists of the multi-national

ITT corporation, who played such a leading role in the overthrow of Chile's Allende regime two years ago, announced on 5th. September that they were withdrawing their entire investments of ten million dollars from the country. It is not surprising that Kissinger told a press conference two days later that he thought recent political developments in Portugal were 'satisfactory'.

DICTATORS

The dictators of the Armed Forces Movement are trying to deal with this situation by re-imposing military discipline and other curbs on democracy such as press censorship. On 9th. September it was announced that the ruling council of the Armed Forces Movement had decided to ban all reports of varying political opinion in the army.

The purpose of this decree was not simply to try to tone down disagreements within the officer corps and the Armed Forces Movement itself. There has been increasing indication in recent weeks of the growth of dissection within the army rank and file. There have been more and more cases of troops refusing to go out to Angola, and even revolts among sections of military police who have been ordered to compel them to do so.

On 1st. September several hundred military police marched through Lisbon shouting such slogans as 'Soldiers are not cannon fodder!', and 'We will turn our guns against the bourgeoisie'. A further demonstration on 12th. September included other sections of the armed forces and indicated that this resistance is continuing.

CENSORSHIP

Efforts to impose press censorship also met of course with opposition from the press itself, including the well-known daily paper *Diário de Lisboa* which is close to the Communist Party, and the *República* which now reflects the views of political movements to the left of the Stalinists.

The largest and most open defiance of the various AFM bans

was seen on a demonstration in Oporto on 10th. September, when more than 1500 members of various sections of the armed forces shouted 'Down with Fabrica', right-wing commander in chief, and calls went up for the spread of such action in order to avoid 'another Chile'. Not only did the demonstration itself defy the AFM decree, but so also did the widespread reports of it which followed in the press.

Though the AFM council on 13th. September could announce the replacement of pro-Stalinist Carvacio as military commander of the Northern region, they were unable even to refer to the widespread defiance of the new decree. All this emphasised that however much the BBC and the British press report every reactionary trend in Portugal, the power of the working class remains strong. The AFM meeting found it necessary to fulminate against Spínola's machinations, but they are not strong enough to do anything to enforce their measures of press censorship.

UNSTABLE

It is into this unstable situation that the sixth provisional government will attempt once again through the methods of bourgeois dictatorship to reconcile the competing class forces. This effort will inevitably fail. The Spínolists and their friends are still waiting in the wings.

Social democratic leader Soares is said to have asserted that Spínola could return to the country "providing he obeys the law". The Stalinists try still to find allies among all supporters of the bourgeois state and they retain the confidence of the new Prime Minister Azevedo.

The workers, soldiers and small farmers of Portugal will have to break from such leaders as these before they will be able to guarantee the democratic rights which they have been tenaciously defending, as well as the socialist revolution which alone can guarantee the gains that have so far been made.



Peaceful Co-existence: Chou En Lai with Nixon

CHINA STRIKE WAVE

A series of press reports in recent weeks have made it clear that during July and August the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party faced major unrest in a number of industrial centres coupled with sharp struggles within local party organisations.

Hangchow, an industrial town of over a million people on the coast of central China, was reported to be the scene of widespread industrial stoppages, partly directed against the freezing of factory workers' wages and the shortage of goods. These were accompanied by intense political battles between rival factions in the party organisation.

"Radicals" protected - with the aid of massive poster campaigns in the factories - against the restoration of "moderate" figures removed from Party positions during the cultural revolution. At one point railway workers cut the main line linking Shanghai with Canton and the other ports of southern China.

sought to suppress the trouble with the urban militia, but the militia-men themselves became involved in the political struggles; as did the standing army garrison of the area. Finally the local troops were withdrawn and units of the First Army were brought in from Wuhan, 350 miles away. 11,000 troops were sent into the factories to restore order.

The reports in the capitalist press, of course, must be treated with considerable caution, since they are subject to manipulation to serve the anti-communist ends of press tycoons and the information and propaganda agencies of imperialism. But the scale of the reports indicates that a national, not just local, crisis was involved.

Industrial stoppages were reported from Wuhan and Chungking, two key cities in central China, and from Mukden in the north. And in mid-August troops were sent into the coal-mining area round Suchow, north-east of Shanghai.

The industrial struggles in

Party cells throughout the country. Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-Ping, who has been acting as head of the state apparatus since Chou En Lai was hospitalised over a year ago, was the man finally brought in to restore "order" in the city. His purge of radicals in the local party apparatus was used to underline the theme of "party unity" laid down by the Party congress.

Teng, who was bitterly criticised at the time of the cultural revolution, was only restored to power two years ago. Since then he has brought back a number of senior state and military officials who were removed along with him during the cultural revolution.

But in the Chinese press at the beginning of September different factions within the Party hierarchy appeared to be airing their differences openly. In *People's Daily* (with a readership of over thirty millions) and the Party theoretical journal *Red Flag* a campaign was launched against "capitulationists" (widely interpreted as referring to the 'moderate' leaders brought back since the cultural revolution).

The idea of "unity" as a supreme principle within the Party was also challenged. But, like many recent campaigns, the criticisms were not explicit but veiled in the form of commentaries on works of classical Chinese literature.

The Stalinist character of the controlling leadership within the Chinese Communist Party was underlined last week, though, with the visit of a major trade delegation from Chile to Peking. It intends to arrange for the sale of greatly increased amounts of Chilean nitrate and copper to China, and to establish 'normal' commercial relations between the two countries.

China never broke off diplomatic relations with Chile after the military coup which overthrew Allende's 'Popular Unity' government in 1973. Not only that, but Allende's ambassador to Peking was forced to leave the country, and the Chinese embassy in Santiago (the Chilean capital) refused to give political asylum to the left-wingers who were being hunted down by the military dictatorship - even though a number of western states, such as Sweden, offered

ITALY US PRESSURE GROWS

The fiction of 'non-interference' by US imperialism in the internal affairs of European countries took another knock last week. As the Italian Communist Party renewed its efforts to force or cajole the Christian Democrats (Italy's main capitalist party) into some sort of joint agreement on a new coalition with Communist Party participation or support, the US Ambassador in Rome attempted to put his foot down.

In an interview with the weekly magazine *Epoca* Mr. John Volpe, ambassador since 1972, announced that 'President Ford, secretary of state Kissinger and other officials have declared explicitly on a number of occasions that the participation of the Communists in the government and their taking of power in a member state of

NATO would be a basic contradiction.

Warming to his theme, he added that 'in view of the political, historical, cultural and social links which firmly unite Italy and the United States, we could not favour the installation of a system of government foreign to the western democratic tradition'.

Mr. Volpe is only stating only a little 'indiscretely' - which is universally accepted among the senior officials of the US State Department. As in Portugal they are eager to use every possible avenue to bolster pro-American capitalist regimes.

The fact that Mr. Volpe's views on the manoeuvres for a coalition coincide with those of the large majority of Christian Democratic politicians is also well known. But they are not free agents in the matter - the offensive of the Italian working class, both on the trade union front and in the swing to the left in the June regional elections - force them to consider the need to buy their way through readmitting the Communist Party into government.

In 1948 US imperialism and the Papacy openly united in an anti-Communist campaign which drove the CP out of the post-war government. But the reaction of the Communist Party to Volpe's open intervention against them was of the most minimal cowardly sort.

They politely appealed Signor Moro's Christian Democratic cabinet to 'prevent acts of this type' - while the Socialist Party leadership, partners in the coalition, protested at Volpe's 'impermissible interference'. The centrist *Manifesto* group demanded that the government should request that the ambassador be withdrawn.



CHILE TWO YEARS OF BRUTAL REPRESSION

On the second anniversary of the military coup in Chile General Pinochet's regime announced a number of measures 'easing' the dictatorship — all of them shallow frauds aimed at making international support for the junta easier for foreign governments.

A 'consultative' council of state is proposed — not elected and without powers — on which three former presidents have been invited to sit. They include Eduardo Frei, Christian Democratic president from 1964-70.

Pinochet also claimed that political prisoners will in the future be tried before civilian, not military courts. But the state of emergency remains in force, meetings, strikes and demonstrations are banned.

One figure stands out, underlining the international character of the Chilean defeat. US sales of arms to Chile totalled \$68 millions in the year up to September 1974, compared with \$65 millions in the twenty-two years from 1950 to 1972! In 1975 the military budget was twenty per cent higher than the health and education budgets combined.

Pinochet's junta bases itself on the most brutal and systematic repression of the working class and peasants, carried out with a huge volume of weaponry supplied by American imperialism and other capitalist governments — including Britain and France.

What are the economic results of the junta? Most wages are fixed by decree, while prices are

market) shooting up fifty-fold in less than two years. And at least one in seven Chilean workers are unemployed.

ARRESTS

The political repression — spearheaded by the political police DINA — continues unchecked since the coup of September 11th, 1973. A decree of May this year promising access to arrested persons within forty-eight hours, has remained a dead letter, and the junta was even forced to refuse a visit in July by a United Nations commission on human rights.

A recent report by 'Amnesty International' identified a number of houses, barracks and other military premises in Santiago and Valparaiso which have been specially equipped as centres for torture. The methods generally used include beatings, forcing victims to stand for days on end, electric shocks to the genitals, isolation and deprivation of sleep and food for long periods. Small children are tortured in front of their parents' eyes.

The regime officially admits to holding over four thousand political prisoners; the true figure is many times this. The 'Amnesty' report states that it has checked the names of over two thousand persons who have 'disappeared' since the coup, and on whom the regime refuses to provide any information to relatives.

Pinochet's dictatorship is the bitter price paid by the Chilean



Political prisoners under guard in Santiago football stadium

allowed to race forward unchecked. Official figures put the rate of inflation during 1974 at over 370 per cent (that is, almost a quadrupling of the price level); the World Bank estimated it at 600 per cent.

For millions this has meant extreme poverty, in many cases to the verge of starvation. Most forms of basic medical care are out of the reach of workers, with the price of medical supplies and drugs (many unobtainable except on the black

working class for the Popular Front policies of Stalinism, which refused to break with the military officers even as they were preparing the coup.

A number of Stalinist governments continue to bolster Pinochet — Rumania and China, for example, continuing not only diplomatic relations but trade: even when the blood on the dictatorship's hands has forced a number of capitalist governments to break off diplomatic relations.

SADAT SELLS OUT PALESTINIAN MASSES

The agreement signed on 1st September between Israel and Egypt has been hailed as a step towards 'peace' in the Middle East. It is nothing of the sort.

In fact it is a significant victory for United States imperialism which has firmly established its role as the policeman between the expansionist Zionist settler state and the

and power. Their client state of Israel has always been a reliable ally in extending their influence and diverting the struggles of the Jewish and Arab masses.

However, a number of circumstances have made it essential for the US to win support in the Middle East broader than simply from Israel and the reactionary governments of Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The growth of the world

obtain more of the patronage of the US. The rapid move of American capital into Egypt in recent months shows that it is the American monopolists who hope to be the first to benefit.

News has recently come to hand to indicate that the first to suffer from these new relationships will be the Egyptian working class and those who try to fight for their interests.

On 3rd August a report appeared in the Cairo daily *Al Akhbar* giving details of the arrest of twenty alleged members of the 'International Communist League' said to be associated with the 'United Secretariat' of the Fourth International. The arrested include Ussama Khalil, an employee of Cairo University, a number of students including Ibrahim Azzam, and several workers who were not named.

Although this group have now appeared before a court, relatives have not been allowed to visit them in prison. There must be an immediate campaign in the labour movement for the release of these socialists, as well as for those others who may still remain in prison following the arrests of hundreds of students and trade unionists earlier this year.

The bloody fighting in Lebanon since the signing of the 1st September agreement also arises from protests against the capitulation to Zionism in the only Arab country where it is possible to mount significant popular protest against it. Further conflict will inevitably arise as the bitterly disappointed Palestinians look to new ways to obtain their just national rights.



Sadat defending the sell-out on television

bourgeois nationalists of Egypt. However much Sadat and Kissinger may blink and smile at TV cameras, their efforts are directed against all of the Arab masses, especially the Palestinians.

economic crisis, and the use of the 'Oil weapon' by the Arab states has made it imperative for the Americans to expand their power over the bourgeois nationalists.

The 1st September agreement was a triumph by Kissinger for these efforts. The placing of American 'technical experts' where they can supervise the marginal Israeli withdrawals and limit the increasingly unlikely attempt at Israeli expansionism allows them to prevent Sadat or any other forces taking active steps to win back any of the territory occupied by the Zionist settlers.

DESERT

The treaty returned to Egypt about 13% of the inhospitable desert area which was appropriated by the Israelis in the 1967 war, containing just one almost exhausted oil field. And the bloody fighting in the Lebanon that followed the signing and the news of continuing repression in Egypt shows that this agreement will do nothing to resolve the social and political conflicts in the area, particularly between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

COAT TAILS

The new situation must show clearly that the Egyptian bourgeoisie is now so firmly tied to the coat-tails of US imperialism that it is incapable of winning back a single inch of occupied territory for the Palestinians or anybody else. The very advances of the war of 1973 were simply used as bargaining counters to

PRESTIGE

Since the major defeats inflicted on them in Indo-China, the US imperialists have sought desperately to restore the shattered vestiges of their prestige



One thing that is becoming clearer than ever is that they will have to build a movement to do this that not simply fights the Zionists themselves, but also all those in the Arab world who are prepared to compromise with imperialism.

WHAT IS THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE?

The Workers Socialist League was formed on December 22nd 1974 as part of the fight to carry forward the method and principles of Trotsky's Transitional Programme, the founding document of the Fourth International. The WSL now represents the continuity of the struggle for these principles in the workers' movement.

The formation of the League followed the expulsion of over 200 members from the Workers Revolutionary Party, carried out bureaucratically by the WRP leadership in order to prevent discussion of their own abandonment of the Programme both in theory and in practice. These mass expulsions showed that there could be no hope of correcting the WRP — an independent organisation had to be founded to maintain the fight for Trotskyism.

Such a split came out of particular conditions. The rapid development of the economic crisis of capitalism and the forward movement of the world working class, which has now overthrown imperialism in Vietnam and Cambodia, began to produce the conditions to build revolutionary parties internationally.

At such a point the importance of a fight for the method and principles of the Transitional Programme, against both sectarianism and opportunism is paramount in the preparation of revolutionary leadership. After a hard period of isolation from the mass movement, Trotskyism now emerges as the only tendency with a programme and a history of struggle to lead the working class in the taking of power.

The defence of jobs through the fight for work sharing on full pay, run by trade union committees; the defence of living standards through the fight for all wage agreements to include a sliding scale to compensate for all increases in the cost of living as determined by trade union prices committees; the challenging of the 'rights' of the employer and the preparation of the struggle for power through the fight to open the books of industry, and to establish workers control in the fight for

nationalisation under workers' management: all these policies are now called for in this situation. As they are fought for and workers are mobilised to win these demands, they begin to form a bridge between the present level of political consciousness of workers and the need for the working class to take the power. Yet the WRP refused to take up a fight for this method.

For this reason the most important developments in our work have centred on a break from WRP sectarianism and propagandism, bringing important gains in trade union work and opening up completely new areas. We are beginning to recruit and train from the new forces thrown into struggles in this period — not only trade unionists, but also professional workers, housewives, students and youth — in the fight to construct the party.

Our record shows that we continue to fight uncompromisingly to expose all those who attack and revise Marxism — not only the WRP but also the 'rank and file' policies of the IS group who refuse to defend the Soviet Union as a workers' state, and the IMG who liquidate the revolutionary movement into unprincipled blocs and liaisons with anti-revolutionary tendencies, as well as against Stalinism and reformism.

Already it is clear that throughout the world the movement of the working class poses similar questions for those groups calling themselves Trotskyist, particularly sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International, producing similar splits and offering a rich possibility of developing a truly international movement based on the Trotskyist programme. For this reason the WSL is now engaged in a process of internal discussion prior to a full founding conference, a vital part of which is to hammer out and adopt perspectives for the building of the Trotskyist Fourth International, and the development of revolutionary parties based on the Trotskyist programme in every country in the struggle to end capitalism.

SOCIALIST PRESS SUBSCRIPTIONS

6 Issues £1.00
12 Issues £1.98
24 Issues £3.96

I would like to take out a subscription to SOCIALIST PRESS; I would like..... issues, I enclose £.....

Name.....
Address.....
.....

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

I would like information about the WSL.

COMPLETE and SEND to:
31, Dartmouth Park Hill,
London NW5 1HR

Name.....
Address.....
.....

BEHIND THE SMOKE SCREEN

WRP OPPOSES MARXIST METHOD

For those who thought the bottom of the ditch had been struck, 'Workers Press', daily paper of the Workers Revolutionary Party, has yet again revealed undreamed of depths of distortion and slander against the Workers Socialist League. Although most of the present members of the WRP have probably never known any other political method from their leadership, it has not always adopted such positions.

Until 1974, members of the Workers Revolutionary Party and its predecessor the Socialist Labour League had for many years been able to subject to the most merciless criticism the various tendencies inside the labour movement proclaiming themselves to be Marxist. To carry out this task, the WRP in the main had no need to misrepresent the political positions put forward by these groups. The speeches and publications of representatives of these organisations provided the WRP with all the ammunition they needed.

It is an indication both of the political strength and integrity of the Workers Socialist League and the continuing political degeneration of the WRP that, in order to attack our group, the WRP is forced to distort and misrepresent our programme and analysis to a degree unheard of in the workers movement since Stalin first set about trying to discredit Trotsky by slandering him and falsifying his political positions.

DISHONEST

The latest example of this misrepresentation can be found in an article in the August 27th issue of *Workers Press*. The article is written by Jack Gale, for many years the 'whipping boy' of WRP General Secretary, Gerry Healy, who saw Gale as representing centrist tendencies inside the WRP. Gale now seems to be worming his way back into favour by his scurrilous attacks on the Workers Socialist League which appear from time to time in the pages of *Workers Press*. His latest offering must qualify him for the title "Most Dishonest Political Writer in British Journalism". No mean feat when one considers the many (un)worthy contenders for that particular title.

Perhaps the most glaring distortion to any objective reader of Gale's article is the way in which he reprints our statement of critical support for the LCDTU lobby of the TUC Conference (published days before the WRP announced they were holding a lobby). The statement exposes the Stalinist policies of the LCDTU and states that the WSL will fight to expose these through its own slogans. Gale reprints the statement and then

blandly asserts that it says the opposite of the words on the page! He writes:

"His call to support the Stalinist lobby does not include a single demand which could separate his tendency from Ramelson's stunt". and goes on:

"Thornett has no difficulty in placing his group in total subversion to both the Stalinists and the reformists".

Such statements by Gale tell us nothing about Thornett's policies but speak volumes on his inability to read even a simple passage written by the WSL.

TROTSKY

But the main aim of Gale's article is to demonstrate that on the question of the Labour Government Trotsky stands on the side of the WRP and not on the side of the Workers Socialist League.

The present policy of the WRP is to call on the working class to "force the Labour government to resign" on the grounds that it is an anti-working class government that is a coalition with the Tories in all but name. The WRP propose that the Labour Party conference must adopt the WRP's socialist programme on which the Labour Party must fight the election that would be brought about by the resignation of the government.

The Workers Socialist League believes that this policy is incorrect. Of course, we do not disagree about the totally reactionary nature of the Labour government. The Wilson government is leading a massive attack on the jobs and living standards of the working class. They do this because they start, not from the need to overthrow this bankrupt capitalist system and introduce socialist policies, but from the need to prop up capitalism at the expense of the working class who voted them into power.

The so-called 'left-wing' of the Labour Party, while they object in words to the policies that Wilson is carrying out, in practice do nothing that would seriously challenge his right to attack the working class on behalf of the bosses.

What, then, is to be done about this Labour government? The Workers Socialist League believes that most members of the government have nothing in common with the labour movement at all. They really belong with the Tories. We believe that these ministers, like Wilson, Callaghan, Healey and Jenkins, should be removed from power.

But then the question is, how is that to be achieved? We demand that those members of Parliament and Cabinet ministers who claim to be lefts should stop simply talking about their opposition to the Labour right-wing. Instead, they should immediately start a campaign inside the Parliamentary Labour Party to force the right-wing to resign.

We propose this because it is our firm conviction that these 'lefts' like Benn, Heffer and Foot have no intention of fighting the right wing and we want to demonstrate this in practice to all those class conscious sections of the working class who still believe that the Labour government would be all right if the 'lefts' were not obstructed from carrying out the Labour Party manifesto. Only by exposing their support for the right wing can the 'lefts' be exposed and destroyed as a political force.

SPONTANEOUS

The call to "force the Labour government to resign" on the other hand, assumes that the working class has already spontaneously broken from positions which it is quite clear that they still hold, including extensive grass roots support for the so-called lefts.

Moreover the WRP do not propose how the Labour government should be forced to resign, or what government should replace it.

government to resign. Today, the WRP refuse to propose such action and at the same time offer no alternative as to how Wilson can be forced to call another election. Their apparently 'revolutionary' demand thus becomes a form of words to cover their complete lack of serious intervention in the working class.

In his article, Jack Gale sets out to distort our policy on the Labour government. He accuses Alan Thornett, a leading member of the WSL, of arguing, at the time of his expulsion from the WRP, that the Labour government would be forced to the left by the pressure of the working class, and would therefore come into conflict with capitalism. In this way Gale seeks by barefaced lies and distortion to show that the WSL has a tradition of 'wrong positions' on the Labour government.

But then another question must arise. Since this was supposedly such a basic difference with the WRP, surely such a position would have emerged as a part of the WSL's position, and not be confined to an alleged verbal statement at one WRP central committee meeting? Thornett has consistently denied ever making such a statement, and Gale, after more than 6 months publication of the WSL *Socialist Press* is unable to find a single quote in any of the documents of the split or any issue of our paper to support his accusation. If Thornett and leading WSL members did hold this incorrect position it would inevitably be reflected in the pages of *Socialist Press*. We challenge anyone to produce a single quote from our publications that supports Gale's accusation.

NOT SERIOUS

In fact Gale's accusation on this question is not even serious. Its main role is to conceal at all costs the real political differences which Comrade Thornett raised first on the WRP Central Committee and in one opposition document (given a restricted circulation by that CC) together with another one authorised by Healy but suppressed. As Gale well knows and seeks to conceal, the discussion within the WRP on these differences was blocked at each point by the leadership and then abruptly ended altogether by the bureaucratic expulsion of over 200 WRP members immediately prior to the party's First Annual Conference last December.

Cde Thornett's differences were not on the reactionary role of the Labour government, but on the sectarian wrong positions of the WRP leadership and its consequent abandonment of the method of Trotsky's Transitional Programme, the Founding Document of the Fourth International. As his first document clearly stated:

"At the same time the party in its practice abandons the characterisation of this period in the Transitional Programme as:

"A pre-revolutionary period of agitation, propaganda and organisation."

and therefore abandons what is the strategic task in such a period - again from the Transitional Programme:

"Overcoming the contradiction between the maturity of the objective revolutionary conditions and the immaturity of the proletariat and its vanguard."

This has in my view led the party into propagandising the maximum programme on the basis that the revolutionary situation has grown so sharp that any other programme does not apply. It leads to the conclusion (rationalisation) that the working class has broken from reformism and Stalinism. The mechanical link between economics and politics, which has become central to the party's theoretical position over the recent period is in essence the abandonment of the Transitional Programme in which Trotsky says:

"It is necessary to help the masses in the process of their

Instead of this approach, we have predominating the sectarian conception condemned by Trotsky that "revolutionary events inevitably push the workers towards us. This passive expectancy, under a cover of idealistic messianism, has nothing in common with Marxism".

What today is the WRP's ultimatic demand "make the Labour government resign" if not a refusal to help the masses of workers who still support the fake 'lefts' find a bridge between their present demands and the socialist revolution? Workers test their leaders in struggle, and it is in struggle to make their 'left' leaders fight that they will learn the need of new leadership and new policies. We support and seek to politically direct their demands on the 'lefts' because we see this as the only way of discrediting the 'lefts'.

But the 'lefts' both in the Labour Party and in the unions must also be confronted with a programme of demands which starts from the present problems confronted by workers, and goes beyond simple trade union demands - containing within them the necessity for the working class to take the power.

ADAPTATIONS

It is difficult for new WRP members and those who simply see each day's *Workers Press* in itself, and have not seen objectively its many changes, reversals, and subtle adaptations over the last year, to understand that, prior to



Wigan Builders Action Committee Meeting addressed by WRP's Mike Banda; campaign began after opposition in WRP

Comrade Thornett's opposition within the WRP, virtually none of the demands now bandied around its pages were to be seen at all.

The sliding scale of wages had been mentioned only twice, and the sliding scale of hours (now our slogan of work sharing on full pay) not at all. Indeed these slogans are still not understood or used correctly to this day by Gale since he confuses the two together, calling for an undefined "sliding scale of hours and wages".

The demand for the opening of the books of the employer and an end to business secrets had never appeared in *Workers Press* prior to October 1974, and the demand for nationalisation was always followed by the wrong slogan of "under workers' control" - while workers' management was never called for.

To complete the picture, the demand for a programme of public works to ensure the defence of jobs in nationalised industries was never advanced.

For those WRP members who doubt this, the October 1974 Election Manifesto epitomises the empty rhetoric of the WRP programme at the point where Alan Thornett raised his differences. It was directly out of his intervention that subsequent verbal changes have taken place.

In addition of course the WRP only undertook any kind of campaign on the Shrewsbury Two after the opposition arose within the party, in an attempt to create the appearance of a serious trade union base.

But while cloaking themselves in

Healy leadership has found it impossible to cover the cloven hoof of the sectarian method which since the election of the Labour government has dogged the WRP and created its continuing political crisis. It emerges in the "force Labour to resign" slogan and in the inability of the WRP to penetrate the unions (so that not one WRP policy went on the agenda at the T&GWU conference, and not a single trade union other than Equity has seen any serious WRP intervention). It emerges in their pat maximum slogan, attached to everything and addressed to no-one, "nationalise industry, banks and land under workers control without compensation" - calling presumably on a Labour government of 'corporatists' legislate what amounts to the social revolution!

Because the WSL does not follow these sectarian lines and directs instead a continuous struggle for programme and revolutionary leadership right into the labour movement, particularly in areas where the WRP has never been able to hold an organisation, Gale emerges to accuse us of reformism. He claims that because the Workers Socialist League does not support the policy of forcing the Labour government to resign, they therefore support keeping the Labour government in power.

Trotsky, says Gale, has demonstrated how every Labour government is a capitalist government that given the choice between defending capitalism and taking the road to revolution, always chooses to defend capitalism. Therefore the Thornett group are agreeing to keep a

BREAK

It is because the Labour Party was built by and through the trade union movement in order to defend in parliament the trades unions from the attacks of the bosses and their political agents, the Tories, that the task confronting revolutionaries is to devise the means to break the working class from the Labour Party and in particular the 'lefts' who in the present economic crisis claim to oppose the attacks of the right wing in the Labour government on the working class.

It was just such a fight that established the SLL and the WRP. For instance, in 1961, in a letter to the American SWP, the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League detailed some of the struggles it had undertaken against revisionist tendencies within its own ranks, each resulting in splits. It states:

"Finally there was Brian Behan, who proposed the ultra-left theory

TUC LOBBY

We call on all our members and supporters to support the lobby of the TUC called on September 2nd, and organised by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions.

The lobby is demanding a rejection of wage restraint and a fight against unemployment.

We support this lobby even though the record of the LCDTU has always been to come to the defence of the trade union bureaucracy.

We consider it necessary to pose our alternative demands to the TUC and expose those of the Communist Party, for which the LCDTU is a front organisation.



G. Healy

It goes on to show how the NC did not regard 'left' and 'right' within the Labour Party as meaningless terms as Gale suggests:

"Whilst in the initial stage of the witch hunt (against the newly-formed SLL) we suffered some casualties through expulsions from the Labour Party, nevertheless, we have been able during the past year not only to make good these losses but in addition to organise an important campaign around the defence of Clause Four and the promotion of a policy for implementing this clause. This has brought our comrades into closer relationship with some of the Left centrists in the 'Victory for Socialism' organisation, whom we can influence and from whom we can recruit." (Trotskyism v. Revisionism, pp. 50-52)

A few years later took place the mass expulsion of the SLL-led Young Socialists from the Labour Party. This obviously changed the situation within the Party and squashed once and for all the idea of simply "taking control" of it by a revolutionary party standing on principles. We do not want to ape the actions of the SLL - but rather to draw attention to the sectarian revisions the WRP have now made on the nature of the Labour Party, and the method they once defended.

PRACTICE

The Workers Socialist League does not support a capitalist government. It is our intention to fight to break the working class from their reformist leadership and we say this can only be done by demonstrating in practice the role of the Labour government and those that cover up for them.

But let the WRP answer the following questions. If every Labour government is a capitalist government and nothing else, then why has the WRP and the SLL called on the working class to vote Labour back into power at every election since the war? Moreover, since in the past the WRP have pursued the same policy as ours, that is demanding that the 'lefts' fight Wilson and the right wing, why have they suddenly dropped this policy in favour of the abstract demand to force the Labour government to resign?

They could only justify this change of policy if they could demonstrate that this Labour

government is somehow different from previous Labour governments. But they themselves quote Trotsky to the effect that all Labour governments defend capitalism rather than take the revolutionary road. That includes Wilson's 1964 and 1966 governments as well as the present Wilson administration. Why did the SLL not call for the removal of the last Labour government by the working class?

It is no good the WRP listing all the terrible things that this Labour government is doing, with the implicit (and on occasions the explicit) support of the Tories and then suggesting that this coalition in all but name makes this Labour government different from previous governments.

In 1966, Wilson launched a series of attacks on the working class, including the notorious Incomes Policy, the anti-union laws proposed in 'In Place of Strife' and the vicious attack on the leaders of the 1966 seamen strike. There can be no doubt that at the time he received the support of the Tories in all these actions which were aimed at making the working class pay for economic crisis which was at that time beginning to emerge in a big way.

It is not the WSL that is breaking from the "entire programme, analysis and strategy of Trotskyism" as Gale falsely accuses us, but the WRP.

Trotskyists do not simply proclaim general truths in the hope that if they repeat them often enough, the working class will eventually catch on. That is why it is not good enough for Gale to quote a passage in which Trotsky points out that the 'lefts' of his time were just as incapable of carrying out socialist policies as the right wing led by MacDonald. And it proves nothing for him to declare that it is not enough to expose the lefts, they must be actually removed. He knows the WRP at this point can not remove either left or right wing MPs and that his words are mere bluster. Of course the lefts have to be removed but this cannot be done by telling workers that Trotsky demonstrated 50 years ago that the 'lefts' are no better than the right.

Before the lefts can be removed they have to be exposed. The way to expose them is demand that they carry their words into actions: fight to remove Wilson and the right wing, form a government and implement socialist policies. It is through the struggle that the working class puts up to place these demands on the 'left' MPs that the possibility of winning large sections of the working class away from reformism becomes a reality, for if it is demonstrated in practice that the Benns and Heffers of this world are in fact no different from the Wilson and the Jenkins, then the question of an alternative leadership is immediately posed to the most class conscious layers of the working class. By seeking an idealist short cut round this struggle the WRP ensures it can remain only on the fringes of the Labour movement, and can never develop the revolutionary party necessary in the coming period.



WHO CONTROLS SCIENCE?

Marx writes in *Capital*:

"Moreover, all progress in capitalist agriculture is a progress in the art, not only of robbing the labourer, but of robbing the soil; all progress in increasing the fertility of the soil for a given time is a progress towards ruining the lasting sources of that fertility. The more a country starts its development on the foundation of modern industry, like the United States, for example, the more rapid is this process of destruction. Capitalist production, therefore, develops technology, and the combining together of various processes into a social whole, only by sapping the original sources of all wealth - the soil and the labour." (Vol. 1, p. 506)

The technical level of production has advanced enormously since the period in which Marx wrote *Capital*, and the one-sided development of science and technology under capitalism now contains great dangers. The purpose of this article is to consider some of these and attempt to place them in perspective.

PERSPECTIVE

If the working class were to be badly beaten by the bourgeoisie and capitalism were to survive its present crisis, there would begin a new chapter of capitalist progress. The consequences of this would be incalculable. In 1923, Trotsky wrote:

"While increasing the power of man over nature and while arming man with new technological methods and means, natural science makes man himself all the more powerful, and consequently all the more destructive, in the arena of war between nations and classes. If the workers had agreed to accept the conclusion that their liberation would come through natural science - without class war and revolution - then, undoubtedly, the bourgeoisie at a certain level of development of natural science would have put to work those methods of psychological technique that would have strengthened the reflexes of subjugation in the exploited and those of domination in the exploiters." (Problems of Everyday Life, p. 204)

During the Vietnam war, the American government spent huge amounts of money on 'social' research in an attempt to inspire 'loyalty' in the Vietnamese peasantry. This was distinctly unsuccessful, but they keep trying and given time and money, the results under other conditions could be very different. Nobody knows.

In their struggle for survival, the capitalist states may alternatively resort to nuclear war. The US military are constantly striving to develop their nuclear weapons to the point where they could win a decisive victory over Russia or China.

LATEST ADVANCE

The latest advance is the 'strategic cruise missile', which is evidently accurate enough to destroy enemy missiles in their silos. The counter to this, apparently, is to develop mobile launching pads, but it is obvious that if the USA ever does obtain a large advantage, then the chance of nuclear war will increase greatly.

Apart from this, the crisis may become so severe that the USA could turn her nuclear weapons against one of her so-called 'allies' to eliminate them as competitors and redivide their share of the capitalist world market.

Irreversible pollution of the oceans also threatens the existence of society. At present, unknown quantities of untreated wastes are being dumped in the oceans with an absolutely minimal amount of knowledge about their effects.

"... an international body of marine biologists assembled at the 1971 Pacem in Maribus Conference concluded unanimously that marine life was in serious danger of destruction by pollution".

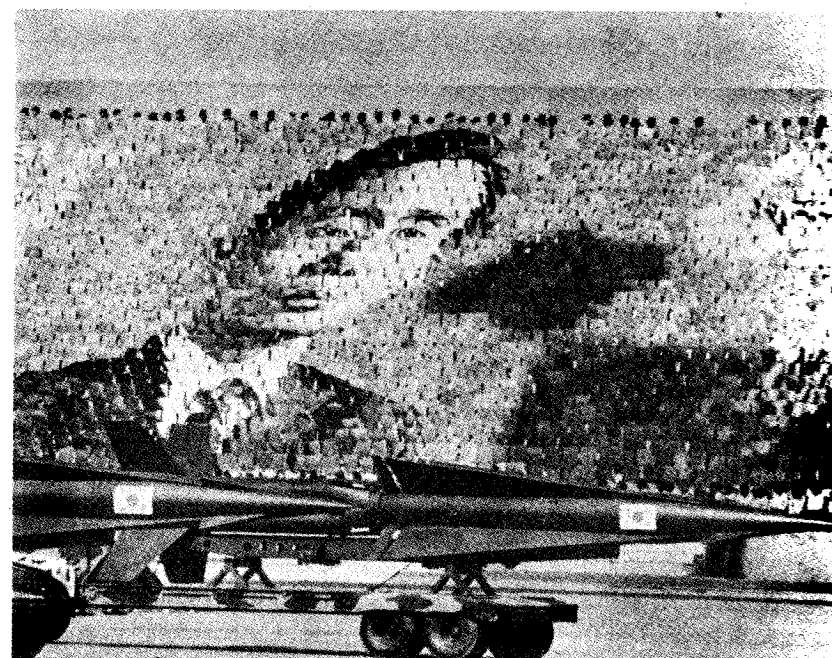
And the plant life in the oceans is responsible for about 30% of the world's production of oxygen. The solution to the problem is, of course, to ensure that only properly treated wastes are discharged.

"... there seem to exist microbes capable of destroying and degrading almost any material mankind can produce. We understand but little of the biochemistry of these processes, and, indeed, we have only a vague knowledge of the microbes involved. ... The fragments of knowledge we have concerning the roles of methane bacteria, detergent- and plastic-degrading bacteria make it clear how rewarding a sustained and basic investigation of microbiological disposal pro-

first experiments, they added genes which confer resistance to antibiotics such as penicillin, but a kinds of additions are possible. They even added toad genes to bacteria!

BACTERIA

At the present level of knowledge, the properties of most of these 'hybrid' bacteria are totally unpredictable before they are made. Realising the potential hazards of this, the scientists who made the discovery wrote to leading scientific journals calling for a moratorium on certain types of experiment using



South Korean missiles supplied by US imperialism

cesses could be; the problem is, who will pay for it." (Postgate, *Microbes and Man*, p. 179)

Who indeed, and, even assuming the research is done, which capitalist nation is going to buy an expensive new sewage system to protect the oceans while all the others carry on dumping?

SCANTY DATA

The widespread use of fluorocarbons as aerosol propellants has been pointed to by some scientists as extremely dangerous. (I say some scientists, because the available data is so scanty that no definite conclusion is possible.)

It may be that fluorocarbons are depleting the ozone layer in the atmosphere, which shields the earth from ultraviolet radiation. If this layer became seriously weakened, then the resultant increase in radiation might cause an 'epidemic' of skin cancer. That is the risk. But nobody knows.

Some states have passed anti-pollution laws; clearly, no capitalist class wants to ruin its natural resources and thereby handicap itself in international competition. But even within any one country, there is far from a rational use of resources because any measure which will hit hard a particular section of business (e.g. the chemical industry) are going to be met with stiff opposition from that section.

On an international scale this problem is magnified: there is more likely to be war over ocean pollution than co-operation in eliminating it.

And finally: "... the appearance during experiments in viral genetics of a polio virus with the full virulence of, for example, Mahoney I, and of a serological character quite distinct from any current human parasite might represent a very serious danger. Any escape into circulation that was not immediately dealt with could grow into the almost unimaginable catastrophe of a 'virgin soil' epidemic of poliomyelitis involving all the populous regions of the world." (F. M. Burnet in the *Lancet*, January 1st, 1966.)

In 1973 a technique was dis-

the new technique.

This raises the question of the control of scientific research. A policy decisions in this area are, of course, taken by the bourgeoisie. A major problem for the working class and students is simply to know what is going on. All capitalist states have their secret military laboratories, and the industrial laboratories are accountable to no-one.

But even the so-called 'bastion of academic freedom', the universities, are not quite what they appear. In 1968, for example, it was revealed that 13 British universities had research contracts with one of the chemical and warfare laboratories at Porton Down.

Most of these contracts looked quite innocent in themselves: "The effect of drugs on neuro-muscular transmissions and contractile force of mammalian skeletal muscle" (University of Bristol) sounds like an important piece of human research until you find out that the Chemical Defence Experimental Establishment paid for it.

In 1973 it was discovered that Southampton University was running courses on counter-insurgency for members of the armed forces. In America, the situation is far worse.

The abolition of "business secrets" in science and the establishment of workers' control are therefore essential for eliminating the dangers that have grown up.

REVOLUTION

But science and technology are much more firmly under the control of the bourgeoisie than, for example, motor car production, so this could not be achieved apart from the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism by the working class.

In this struggle scientists, intellectuals and students must play a role. To resolve the crisis, not simply of the working class, but of the culture of all mankind, demands the building of revolutionary leadership for this fight.

A discussion article

by Mark Watson

TUC TURNS ITS BACK ON JOBLESS YOUTH

Many crocodile tears were shed at the Trade Union Congress over the level of youth unemployment; yet the trade union leaders, by openly collaborating with the Labour government and backing the state pay laws, ensures that the working class shoulders the burden of the capitalist crisis.

Even on Scanlon's own admission, the resolution he moved at Blackpool demanding increased training facilities for youth cannot shorten the length of today's growing dole queues. Capitalism in decline can offer nothing to the great mass of working class youth but unemployment, poverty, and misery, while its "lieutenants of labour" offer, instead of class programme and leadership, mere empty rhetoric.

This came in the form of Scanlon's speech on the question. "What a waste", he said, "what a condemnation of our society and ourselves if this level of unemployed school leavers is allowed to continue". But by leaving the youth leaderless the trade union bureaucracy has indeed condemned itself to every young worker who joins the 1,250,000 unemployed.

BLACK YOUTH

The central problem facing working class youth is unemployment. Hardest hit are black youth, of whom 30% are unemployed as school leavers. Over 158,000 school leavers are unemployed, including many who left last Easter - an increase of 280% on last year's figures. The trend towards long term unemployment is also certain for many areas, and the spectre of youth unemployment would be even greater but for the raising of the school leaving age.

A secure future for unemployed youth cannot be found by further reforms - by further "training", by unemployment subsidies or any other scheme proposed by the government or the TUC. Youth have no future today because capitalism has no future, save through the crushing defeats of the working class.

For this reason both right and left wings of the labour bureaucracy can offer no policy to inspire the struggles of working class youth. Instead, while expressing their platitudes of "sympathy", they make every effort to exclude youth representation in the unions:

"Opportunist organisations by their very nature concentrate their chief attentions on the top layer of the working class, and therefore ignore both the youth and woman worker". [Trotsky: Transitional Programme]

The bureaucracy fear the mass mobilisation of the working class youth who could represent a powerful lever in the struggles of the working class which they daily struggle to head off. The youth, who have not experienced the demoralising betrayals in the workers movement of the 1930s, and who

have not been party to the formation of an opportunist trade union leadership reared in the boom period, (although they plainly lack experience in the organisations of the working class) come forward with a readiness to fight.

Youth's fighting spirit will only be harnessed by a revolutionary leadership which adopts the correct political approach to youth. Both Lenin and Trotsky stressed that the question of a political approach - how revolutionaries take a programme of transitional demands to youth - is decisive in winning youth to the revolution.

Youth face the problems which confront the working class as a whole in a special way. The young unemployed worker is deprived not only of a job but of any possibility of material and social independence. Capitalism cannot offer youth a trade, only a succession of dead-end jobs. It fetters youth's independent development by barring all access to higher education, intensifying the division between mental and physical labour, and at the same time forces youth into financial and social dependence on the family.

All this accentuates the instability and disorientation of the youth. Their opinions are yet to be formed on questions such as the family, marriage, jobs, unionisation or politics. This makes youth as a stratum open to new ideas, and today simultaneously prone to the influence of various "cults".

With the creation of the so-called "youth market", capitalism fosters "youth" itself as a cult. These cults provide no long term solution to the subjective problems of youth's development. Hence the never-ending succession of them. Yet the revisionist left groups base their interventions amongst youth by entirely capitulating to this cult image of youth, to an abstract concept of "youth" and "youth culture".

Failing to recognise the roots of youth oscillation between various bourgeois cults, the IS group saw the basis for its youth work in any manifestation of spontaneous activity by youth, such as skinheads, etc. It placed its emphasis on mindless activity. For example, the front page article of one of the first issues of its youth paper, *Rebel*, read:

"Talk about revolution - let's see action".

Likewise the Stalinist youth movement the YCL set about to foster socialism as a cult for youth: "The whole point of YCL ideology is to build a new socialist society. To portray a new society we need to capture other young people's imagination".

[29th Congress Document]

Rather than struggle against the spontaneity of youth, and win young workers to revolutionary politics the Stalinists and revisionists try to latch on to the same youth cult fostered by capitalism.

Their youth sections address youth in general, and fail to face up to the problems of working class youth. In a liberal way, they water down their own opportunist politics

for youth. There is a necessary conflict between the standards necessary for the revolutionary movement and the cultural background of working class youth. A struggle for development is necessary to raise the youth's level of understanding to enable the construction of revolutionary leadership. But this problem cannot be overcome by pretending there is no gap, and pandering to the political backwardness of youth.

"There are not two politics, one for youth, the other for adults. Insofar as youth carry on politics - and that is their duty - their politics must be adult".

[Trotsky, 1934-1935 Writings]

YOUNG SOCIALISTS

The central weakness of the WRP's Young Socialists, which in many ways stands head and shoulders above the youth organisations of these other groups, is the centrist politics of the WRP leadership itself. The youth movement has only a fictional independence, and its campaigns are directed like those of the WRP, not into the mass organisations of the working class - putting demands in the trade unions and fighting for support - but simply to an abstract concept of "building the YS".

For this reason, despite the real history of principled struggle established by the YS in the struggle against the Labour Party bureaucracy resulting in the mass expulsions of 1964, and the continuing strength of the organisation in the following period, with campaigns winning broad support and respect in the workers' movement the WRP YS has been unable to bring forward a trained leadership cadre or politically develop the forces it attracted in its periodic campaigns.

Similarly with the *Militant* grouping within the Labour Party YS, a separation between the repeated calls for the maximum programme of socialism (nationalise the top 250 monopolies) and their daily coexistence with reactionaries within the Labour Party results in a one-sided development of youth, persuading them that policies which require revolution can be attained through manoeuvres and resolutions in the reformist Labour Party.

But youth will only be won to a revolutionary party if they can see its relevance to their own circumstances. A programme to fight youth unemployment must start from the programme on unemployment argued for in *Socialist Press* number 16, but the form has to be adapted to cater for the special problems of youth.

It is not enough to raise with youth the demand "work sharing on full pay". A large proportion of youth are out of work. For them it is not just the defence of existing jobs, but the creation of new ones. That is why the trade union bureaucracy's acceptance of the employer's device of "natural wastage" to cut the labour force is such a betrayal.



Unemployed youth

Youth's right to a job has to be part of every struggle over redundancies - the maintenance of recruitment and the extension of training and release schemes paid for by the employers but under the control of trade unionists and and young workers representatives. This must be fought for along with the demand of work-sharing on full pay.

To fight for these demands in the trade unions, youth must have their own representatives. We call for youth commissions to be established in all branches of trade union organisations, and imposed on the trade union bureaucracy, which must study the demands of youth and recruit and educate young workers. Similarly delegates from young workers must be brought on to Trades Councils to play a leading role in organising the unemployed youth.

The Tories recent call to employ youth on subsistence wages in "community work" to patch up the crumbling social services must be answered by a campaign for an expansion of useful public works under workers management, with employment at trade union rates.

Youth have a right to economic independence from the family. They must not be used as a cheap labour force. We demand the adult rate for apprenticeships - the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work - but under workers control. Through developing a struggle for control, this leads on to the fight for a sliding scale of wages pegged to an index of prices worked out by trade union committees.

In the context of the mounting unemployment, we would support the raising of the school leaving age, but the costs must be carried by the capitalists, not the working class. Raising of the school leaving age must be linked to a fight against existing overcrowding and bad conditions in schools, and thus

to a fight for a sliding scale of education expenditure.

For working class families, hit in this way by the loss of a potential wage packet we demand that students be entitled to grants, tied, on a sliding scale, to a working class cost of living index to be supervised by workers representatives - not a means test.

These demands do not constitute a finished approach to the fight to organise the working class youth and win them to revolutionary politics. They will be developed by the WSL out of the experience of coming struggles. But we raise these demands now because the fight must begin - both among youth and older workers. They must be taken up actively by every trade unionist.

RESOLUTION

As the resolution of the 1938 conference of the Youth of the Fourth International makes clear:

"The struggle for these demands cannot be separated from the struggle for the demands of workers as a whole, both employed and unemployed...."

"The struggle to drag out of capitalism those reforms which aim at developing the class consciousness of working youth is closely linked with the struggle for workers control of industry and factory committees. The struggle for public works is closely linked with the fight for the expropriation of monopolies, for the nationalisation of credit, banks and key industries...."

"It is within the framework of the transitional programme of the Fourth International that the present programme should be developed and applied. It is under the ensign of the proletariat fighting for power that the Fourth International will win the demands of exploited youth".

I.S. PURGE 50 MEMBERS

The International Socialists are in the process of expelling 50 of their members, including members in Cardiff, Nottingham and London, one by one. Their offence is "factional activity", the refusal to dissolve their faction, the 'Left Alternative'.

IS policy, reaffirmed at their last conference, permits factions to form only in the period immediately preceding the annual conference, so that no group is able to develop sufficiently to challenge the leadership's politics. Political debate within IS takes place therefore on an annual, rather than a consistent basis, so that it precedes each period of practical activity rather than being a part of it.

In this the IS leadership seek to preserve the necessary separation between words and deeds to cover

their opportunist positions.

SPLITS

The present IS expulsions take their place therefore not only in the list of similar moves by the IS leadership to suppress any fundamental opposition to its politics, but must also be seen in the context of the many other splits, purges and divisions which are beginning to tear apart all the major groupings to the left of the Communist Party.

In the crisis of these groups and the sharpening objective conditions, serious cadres from them have responded to the WSL's fight to return to the method and programme of the Trotskyist Fourth International and have joined with both the initial group of revolutionaries expelled from the WRP last year, and further recruits from the WRP itself, to conduct the struggle for revolutionary leadership in the workers movement.

These groups all achieved their most significant growth in the late 1960s and early 1970s as the first stages in the development of the crisis threw a variety of social groups, including sections of workers, into clear and violent conflict with capitalism. But the theoretical development of the founders and leaders of the political groups took place during the period of the long boom.

One of the effects of this unprecedented era of capitalist expansion was that it severely restricted the possibility of building mass revolutionary parties in the metropolitan countries. The tiny forces of Trotskyism in Britain, largely deprived of the possibility of actual leadership, were reduced to various forms of propagandistic activity. Under these material conditions various tendencies to throw overboard the method and principles of Marxism in the light of supposed "new" conditions were



Paul Foot, protected by purges strengthened.

The development of the crisis has created the conditions for Trotskyists to build mass revolutionary parties in all the advanced capitalist countries and the necessity that they should do so. Yet members of the IS, IMG and WRP are finding that their growth, far from increasing, is actually stagnating and in some cases even declining. At the same time the one-sided and revisionist conceptions of Marxism they bring from the boom are inadequate to understand or correct-

ly orientate in the changed situation.

PROGRAMME

The IS Left Alternative's indictment of IS concerned principally its inability to develop a programme capable of mobilising the working class in a struggle for power. Yet their own suggested programme, despite some considerable strengths, suffers from a weakness of method inherited from IS. That is, an inability to understand the significance of revolutionary tradition or to analyse the present in historical terms. Thus they write: "In a transitional period such as this the class can either go forward or accept swingeing defeats. The task of developing and arguing for transitional politics becomes ever more urgent. There are no ready-made answers. Those who reach for their 1938 Trotsky will find a crucial example of clarity in transit-

CP ABANDONS TURKISH WORKERS JOBS

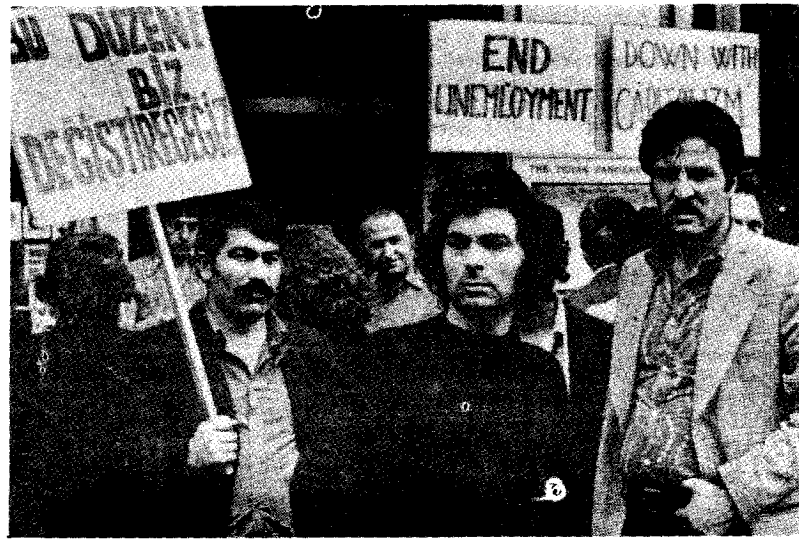
Over 800 workers, the majority of them Turkish, have been made redundant through the closure of a large restaurant chain, London Eating Houses. The workers, all members of the International branch of the Transport & General Workers Union, were earning wages as a result of unionisation considerably higher than non-unionised catering workers.

It therefore remains to be seen whether the alleged "bankruptcy" of London Eating Houses is a deliberate attempt on the part of the employers to smash the development of elementary trade

jobs can only lead to demoralisation of immigrant workers who find themselves in vulnerable positions under the reactionary Immigration Act. These sackings come at the same time as the arrest and intended deportation under the Immigration Act of another Turkish worker, Sabri Genk, and possibly others whose names are unknown.

Under the Immigration Act, work permits for immigrant workers are renewable only with the consent of the employer. This makes the struggle for basic trade union rights by immigrant workers at the outset a conflict with the state, and also makes the position of unemployed immigrant workers extremely vulnerable.

Therefore, the struggle for jobs,



London Eating House workers demonstrate

unionism among the largely immigrant workers who staff the catering trade.

The only way this can be fought is to subject the employers' claims of bankruptcy to the scrutiny of elected trade union committees. The proven bankruptcy of the employer must lead to the demand of the nationalisation of LEH by the Labour Government. If LEH is to be "sold" to another employer then there must be no reduction in employment, and no refusal to re-employ or employ trade union members.

These demands could only be fought for from the position of occupation of the larger restaurants organised by the T&GWU to prevent victimisation of workers under the immigration act.

OCCUPATIONS

At a mass meeting in Conway Hall last week the question of occupation was raised by a few workers, but was quickly squashed by the Stalinists who form a party block in the Turkish section of the IT&GWU. These Stalinists were prepared to use the tactic of forceful removal from the meeting of anyone who opposed their line of restricting the struggle to demanding overdue back pay.

The complete failure to take

up the question of the defence of wages, and trade union rights cannot be separated from the demand for the repeal of the work permits system and the Immigration Act itself which acts only against the interests of the working class.

The attempted deportation last year under this Act of the Italian trade union militant Franco Caprino makes it quite clear that the Immigration Act which was brought in in 1971 precisely for the purpose of preserving immigrant labour as a low-wage, strike-free labour force, needed now more than ever by the employers in an attempt to preserve profits in the economic crisis.

Needless to say, this aspect of racial discrimination is completely ignored by Jenkins' proposals published in the White Paper last Thursday to "strengthen" anti-discrimination legislation. All sections of trade unionists have an interest in the fight to repeal the Immigration Act, both to prevent the employers from forming a reserve of low wage docile labour, and because of the attack on trade unionism implicit in the work permit system is only a particular example of the attack on trade union rights now being waged by the Labour Government through the state control of wages.

Continued from Page 6

ional politics, not a ready key to our own crisis...

This position reflects the determination of IS itself to wipe clean the slate of Trotskyist tradition, as a superficial reaction to the temporary weakness in numbers of the Trotskyist movement

METHOD

The method which lies behind this sees history not as a process determining present conditions but as a series of static vignettes. The Left Alternative see only the apparent differences between 1938 and 1975 and underestimate the importance of the essential continuity - the dominance of capital in the age of imperialism and the need of a small Trotskyist vanguard to mobilise broad layers of workers in the struggle for power.

The demands put forward in the Transitional Programme were designed to lay bare to workers,

qualities of capitalism, and the requirements of the working class in the struggle for power, not merely those factors which were accidental to 1938. If there are demands which are no longer relevant, the case against them must be argued specifically. Most of the demands retain complete validity in 1975 and can be a powerful factor when fought for in the workers movement.

To defend the Transitional Programme is not, however, to restrict the movement simply to those demands put forward in 1938. The requirements of both capitalism and the working class have developed continuously in the post war period and it is certainly necessary to struggle for demands which apply the methodology of the Programme to take account of those developments

SLIDING SCALE

WAGE CUTS DON'T SAVE JOBS

Unemployment in Britain is still rising rapidly towards the 1½ million mark. The cutbacks in steel production and rail services, the closure of three GEC factories with five thousand redundancies, and the intention to close sixteen power stations in the North of England are the latest manifestations of this trend.

At the same time, the retail price index continues to surge ahead at 25% per annum. The 20% gas and electricity price increases, the proposed increase of 20 to 30% in telephone and postal charges over the next three months guarantees further continued massive increases in the cost of living.

Meanwhile, as real wages are falling, Wilson openly admits his intentions - "rough justice", as he calls it. According to the *Economist* indicators average earnings have

risen over the last three months at only half the rate of increases in prices.

The increase in unemployment at the same time as a fall in real wages gives the lie to the campaign waged by the Labour and trade union leadership to persuade us that wage cuts by reducing industrial costs will protect jobs.

FALL IN DEMAND

It is obvious that a wage cut also leads to a fall in demand, further collapse of production and more redundancies. That is not to say that jobs will be produced by an increase in wages: a completely reformist position peddled by the Stalinists.

The point is that wage cuts are only one factor in restoring profitability for capitalist industries. The key factor is the increase in the productivity of labour which

can only be achieved by reducing the number of men per machine through speed up, closing inefficient plants and sackings.

Wage cuts and unemployment are not alternatives - they are both necessary to capitalism to restore profitability.

For this reason also, the scheme put out by Jones at the TUC conference as an attempt to sugar the pill of the £6 wage limit by calling for £500 million investment to protect jobs is so much hogwash.

State finance investments in slump conditions merely adds to already excess capacity in industry. It does not restore the rate of profit; in fact it will drive it down further. The rate of profit will only be restored by productivity increases which must involve redundancies.

That is why the demand for a programme of public works to defend jobs poses immediately the necessity of developing a workers economic plan and the ending of the capitalist system of production for profit.

BELFAST 'CONDUCTED TOUR'

The report-back conference of the Greater London County Association of Trades Councils "fact finding" delegation to Belfast was held in London on Saturday 13th September.

While in Northern Ireland, three of the delegation, Mike Knowles, Gerry McMorrow and Rosemary Sales had been expelled from the delegation. They had protested that the GLCATC name and reputation was being used to organise without the knowledge of its constituent bodies what was in fact nothing less than a "conducted tour", calculated to reproduce the statement in support of the Communist Party.

DELEGATES EXPELLED

Before the expulsion they had met the executive of the Belfast Trades Council and had toured the Harland and Wolf shipyard where management representatives and two loyalist stewards guided them round the shipyard where only two to three hundred Catholics work in a total workforce of over 10,000. Also on the itinerary was a visit to the government training centre, and the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, which although it previously influenced many Catholics, is now in its own words "irrelevant".

The tone of the report-back conference was set by the Stalinist-dominated GLCATC's executive calling the police against a picket called in support of equal speaking rights for the expelled three. Within the conference, the platform accused all opponents to the CP line of "red-baiting", compounding one case with accusations of "Trotskyism". And although members of the Communist Party were in a minority on the floor, the Chairman ensured that they dominated the speaking time.

In keeping with the views of the people they visited, the official delegation's proposals consisted in the implementation of the Communist Party's reactionary programme for Northern Ireland.

That is, enactment of a "bill of rights", (presumably enforced by the British Army) to include 1) civil rights - that is, an end to internment, confining the troops to barracks, and their 'phased withdrawal by 1980 (as suggested by the Belfast Trades Council); 2) reduction of unemployment by the creation of an effective develop-

ment corporation with powers similar to Benn's NEB, and the enactment of a "fair employment bill" for Northern Ireland; 3) expansion of the housing programme.

Not one of these policies could hope to be implemented, and any event they go no way towards solving the real problems of Irish workers, because they accept completely the continued domination of Ireland by British imperialism. They result in the Stalinists continually opposing calls for the withdrawal of British troops and self-determination of the Irish people.

The alternative programme put forward by the minority, and receiving the support of most of the people they met outside of the official delegation recognises the national question as the central issue. It calls for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and its right to national self-determination.

Trade union organisations in the London area must invite minority speakers to their report-back meetings.

AUEW ELECTION

Yet again the right wing inside the AUEW are moving towards bringing the capitalist courts into the internal affairs of the union.

Terry Duffy, the right wing challenger for the seat on the National Executive held by Bob Wright, is saying that if the decision of the National Executive to defer this year's election to next year is not reversed he will seek court injunction against the delay.

The right wing has been strengthened in their attack by the attitude of Scanlon and Wright who made no challenge to the court's rulings over the case of the two disqualified National Committee members. Now they go further on the attack and will continue to use the capitalist courts until they are challenged.

This is one of the points made by Ken Tyrrell, a candidate for the vacant National Organiser position. In a strong election address he connects it up to an alternative programme.

"In accepting nomination for National organiser I am conscious that the working class faces a period of very bitter struggle in defence of their jobs, wages and working conditions and that the decisive factor will be the leadership

"As I write this address the Labour government is preparing to solve the economic crisis with statutory wage controls backed up by unemployment and threats of massive unemployment.

"The majority of the TUC is backing them to the hilt by discussing ways and means of using the trade unions to impose substantial wage cuts. Such policies open the door to state control."

"Our union took the decision to attend our national conference which had been invalidated through the normal procedures of the union. The right to the Capitalist state to decide what should be in union rule books and to enforce ballot votes were defeated with the return of a Labour government. It was wrong to accept those delegates at the conference."

"Similarly our union has a strong record over the industrial relations act yet we allow, because of the decision of a high court judge, two delegates to attend our national conference who had been invalidated through the normal procedures of the union. The right to the Capitalist state to decide what should be in union rule books and to enforce ballot votes were defeated with the return of a Labour government. It was wrong to accept those delegates at the conference."

Progressively as capitalism's crisis develops, more anti union legislation is introduced. The Shrewsbury 2 are in prison. Recently we at Massey Ferguson have been accused of similar actions during our occupation of the factory and we had High Court writs served against us. Our union should campaign for a general strike to force the release of the Shrewsbury 2 and defend the

LEYLAND: STEWARDS MOVEMENT THREATENED

There are dangerous signs that the Ryder Report, having been accepted by the 'leaders' of British Leyland workers, is being accepted without resistance in almost all the BLMC plants. If this is true, it has serious implications for the whole of the labour force. Because of the confusion being introduced, many workers are accepting the argument - fraudulently put forward by management and trade union leaders alike - that acceptance of Ryder is the only way to stop Leyland going into liquidation and to save 160,000 jobs. The people who push this line do so with the full knowledge that it is the declared intention of Ryder to reduce the BLMC labour force to a fraction of its present size; and this with 1¼ million already on the dole.

Time is very short. While shop-floor workers and shop stewards are told nothing, the knife is being prepared behind closed doors. For six days in the plush Royal Suite in the Allesley Hotel in Coventry, 32 hand-picked convenors, enjoying the sumptuous trappings of management hospitality, have worked, together with 10 top company executives, to clear the way for the introduction of the Ryder Report proposals through the so-called 'worker participation' schemes, designed to suck shop stewards into doing the job of management.

MASSIVE PUBLICITY

The massive publicity suddenly being given to 'worker participation' is an indication of the importance the employers attach to it as a means of separating the shop steward from his traditional job of defending and improving the wages and conditions of his members by making him a part of management.

Under Ryder the steward finds himself on a committee, the terms of reference of which are "more efficient production", with the management delegation having the unchallengeable right to make the final decision. If anyone doubts what kind of decisions management will be making, they need only look at the current proposals put forward by Leyland's £50,000 per year top management to get rid of 30,000 jobs in the Cars Division.

There are wider implications to the Ryder proposals than simply forcing speed-up and redundancy into the individual Leyland plants. Taking shape is a root and branch attack on the shop stewards movement, aimed at ending the independence and power achieved by the movement over the last 20 years. The employers know that the shop stewards movement has been largely responsible for the improvement in wages and conditions won in the past. This has convinced them that the strength of the stewards must be destroyed if the full effects of their plans are to be introduced.

The unpublished sections of the Ryder Report containing detailed plant by plant proposals for manning cuts almost certainly include selective closures as part of a rationalisation plan which could not be carried through whilst the shop stewards movement remains strong.

The damage already been done to shop floor strength can be seen in the way the Ryder Report has been 'accepted'. This important decision was taken by a dubious meeting of convenors called together not by the Combine Committee as in the past, but by management in consultation with the national officials. By management instigation, staff representatives were included, allowing them for the first time to take part in trade union policy making.

This decision fundamentally changed the principle of trade union decision making in the combine. It allowed Leyland to achieve a posi-

tion where a large section of the meeting were foremen and superintendants. As if this were not enough, the decision also meant that another large group at the meeting were the representatives of the industrial engineers - work study men employed by Leyland to speed up the tracks. At the meeting itself both foremen and work study men spoke from the rostrum arguing the case. No one need ask what they said or how they voted, they make their position clear every day on the tracks - if an industrial engineer was opposed to speed up he would put himself out of a job.

COMBINE COMMITTEE

The effects of this new type of meeting on the BMC combine committee could be seen at its meeting on Saturday, 6th September - the first time the committee had met since the Ryder proposals were announced. The chairman, Derek Robinson, Austin convenor and a Stalinist, refused to accept a motion rejecting Ryder, ruling that the decision had already been taken. For 30 years the combine committee, developing as the combine grew, has been the traditional organisation which has confronted struggles as they have come up and in which a fight for leadership has taken place. Robinson's ruling meant that for the first time this committee, which has reflected the strength of the shop stewards movement throughout this period, was unable to play any role whatsoever in a major issue facing workers in the Corporation.

Now, with the shop floor movement under the heaviest attack since the introduction of Measured Day Work (which was also aimed at the shop stewards movement and has had an effect) 'worker participation' is being imposed from above by the trade union leaders without a single vote at factory level. Instructions are being

sent out to form what amount to speed up and redundancy committees and anyone who raises a voice of opposition is stamped on by the trade union leaders. Those who advocate participation in management will not allow any participation at all within the trade unions. In the Cowley Assembly plant for example, an overwhelming majority of the T&GWU shop stewards voted to hold a shop stewards meeting to discuss the Ryder Report. Because the officials thought that the meeting might vote against Ryder, they banned it. Each shop steward was served with a written instruction (delivered by management) not to attend the meeting, signed by the district official and clearly implying that action would be taken against any steward who turned up.

Both the trade union leaders and the management are desperate to get Ryder implemented. Trade union leaders do this because they accept the management line of making the company viable, and they are prepared to make the working class pay for the crisis of the capitalist system over which they have no control. Ryder is being supported from many directions. Those who argue that participation is a step forward for car workers, or as Derek Robinson put it at the combine committee meeting, "it is limited workers' control", should explain why Chrysler paid out a £100 lump sum bonus to every worker employed for the acceptance of an identical scheme.

The situation is urgent. If action is not taken to stop them, the committees will soon be in operation. This will mean that future attacks on jobs and conditions will not come, as in the past, from management, but from these committees, with the stewards who are supposed to be leading the fight to protect workers sitting on them, alongside superintendants, who for the rest of the week are imposing discipline on their members. This is class collaboration with a vengeance.

For all these reasons it is crucial

that shop stewards' committees refuse to participate in Ryder, maintain their independence and prepare to lead their members in defence of their jobs and conditions when Leyland workers hit back at the company against speed up and redundancy - as they undoubtedly will. Shop stewards should not get involved in any way. Once a body of stewards elects a representative on to the participation committee this gives it credibility and strength which will be used against the shop stewards movement itself.

SACRIFICE JOBS

The trade union leaders advance the unprincipled position that workers should sacrifice their jobs and conditions to save the company. What they should be saying is that their members have a right to a job and if Leyland is unable to guarantee that right then the books of the company should be opened and the case established for the full nationalisation under workers' management and not state shareholding with the big stick for the shop floor. This would create the conditions for a nationalised car industry to demand that the Labour Government provide state contracts to keep the factories in production with work sharing on full pay where plants were still working below capacity.

Ryder stands in the way of all this and worker participation is intended to destroy jobs and long-established working conditions. We say that it is a matter of principle for every shop steward to be separated from these committees in every way. The position of Arthur Harper, for example, convenor of Tractors and Transmissions and a much-lauded ex-IS member who has sat right through the ad hoc committee meetings at the Allesley hotel, helping to organise the whole thing, must be condemned. Shop stewards must fight for the independence of the trade union movement and the shop stewards movement and for a leadership which will use the strength of the working class, through the unions, to defend the wages and living standards of the working class against the attacks of the employers and the Labour Government which is acting on behalf of the employers.

AUEW continued from page 7

working class against this type of reactionary class legislation.

Reformist union leaders argue that we must accept a wage cut now in order to break the inflationary spiral and protect the Labour government in order to defend its wages against the Tory government pay laws. To accept the social contract on wage cutting only strengthened the Tories as was shown in the Woolwich by-election. Labour was defeated by working class abstentions brought about by disillusionment through the actions of the Labour government.

In my view, the correct policy of opposition to the social contract passed by the National Conference together with the call for the defence of jobs is not enough. We have to have a programme to put forward in this struggle.

Every employer will use the threat of unemployment in the same way as the government. Every time workers fight to defend their living standards the employer will use the threat of redundancies and bankruptcy to defeat them.

I stand for substantial wage increases to re-establish and improve the standard of living. I consider that every wage should rise automatically point by point with a cost of living index compiled by elected committees of trade unionists and workers wives. This is the only answer workers can have to inflation which stems from capitalism and can only be solved by ending that system.

WSL PUBLIC MEETING

LIVERPOOL

Wednesday 24th September
7.30 pm

AUEW Hall,
48 Mount Pleasant St.
Liverpool 3
"Ireland"

To the threat of redundancy I advocate a policy of work sharing, as decided by elected trade union committees, on full pay. In the event of closures we must call for and support occupations. Strikes under these conditions are not the answer.

If the employers say that redundancies are inevitable or that they cannot pay then we must say open the books. If it is shown that they can't provide us with jobs and a decent standard of living, then this proves the case for nationalisation without compensation and under the management of committees of elected trade unionists (not appointed bureaucrats).

We must demand once nationalisation has taken place that state contracts are provided to keep the factories open.

The logic of the National Conference decision for the nationalisation of BLMC must be rejection of the capitalist Ryder plan and a fight for the programme I am putting forward. This policy should be fought for throughout all industry. This will give us the material base to end capitalism and establish socialism. For this we will need a new leadership and I put myself forward for election because I believe I can make a contribution towards the building of such a leadership.

I have been a member of our union for 11 years and for most of that time I have been an active trade unionist. I have been a shop steward in a highly organised factory for 7 years and from time to time I have held Coding positions within the organisation. Also I am a delegate to the Trades Council at Nuneaton where I live and I attend all meetings called by our union.

During my life as a shop steward I have supported every lobby and demonstration called by the TUC and every action called by the AUEW especially during the campaign against the Industrial Relations Court.

At the same time however I have been critical of our union. For instance, locally I believe that the fight to protect the Coventry Tool Room rate was let down by the area leadership. This was a glaring example of why we need a leadership that has the kind of programme I am proposing and above all the will to fight for that programme. I ask you brothers to give me the chance to do just that."

BLAST FURNACEMEN STRIKE

As we go to press, members of the Blast Furnacemen's union are going on strike all over the country - at Scunthorpe, Cleveland and East Moors, Cardiff.

The strike is in support of 500 workers at Llanwern steel works who are refusing to work on a new furnace which will produce twice as much with half the labour, and for which there is no agreement

PORTUGAL MARCH

The Workers Socialist League is going on the demonstration called in solidarity with the Portuguese working class by the Portuguese solidarity committee in London on Saturday September 20th. The WSL delegation will march behind the central demand that the Portuguese working class break from the Armed Forces Movement. The demonstration will start from Charing X Embankment at 2.30pm.

WSL PUBLIC MEETING

LEEDS

Sunday 5th October
7.30 pm

Leeds Trades Council Club
Leeds 7
"Ryder and Unemployment



Fred Knapp union official

on payment.

The management is offering an average £74 per week with approximately £6 bonus and the union is claiming a further £7.

At the heart of the dispute is the government's decision to cut subsidies to nationalised industries and in that way create the necessity for closures, redundancies and speed up.

Having gone into action they threaten to upset the plans of the Labour government and its servants in the TUC. So they are receiving all the pressure of the capitalist press (they are claiming £120 per week in *Daily Telegraph* stories) ACAS steps in, the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation leadership asked them to go back, and Len Murray steps in.

Backing up these moves the British Steel Corporation says it will import steel to break the strike.

NUPE

In the latest issue of their union paper, issued just before the TUC Conference, NUPE the public employees union declare that they "could not support the government white paper".

Yet speaking on the radio on Sunday September 14th, Alan Fisher, the general secretary of that union, said that unions would withdraw their support for the £6 pay curb policy if the economy is not reflationed by the Spring.

So he follows a whole stream of trade union leaders who accept the 'majority' vote of the bureaucrats at Blackpool and refuse to fight to defend their members against the attacks of the Labour government.

The Workers Socialist League calls on its members and supporters in all unions to reject the 'majority' vote and fight to break the £6 state pay laws in both national claims and in supporting their members who come into conflict with this legislation.

The diversion of fighting for the full £6 which the government says is not an entitlement but a maximum is a policy of accepting a wage cut. The only policy to fight for is a substantial wage increase and a sliding scale of wages clause in every agreement.