

TROTSKYISM TODAY ★

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THEORETICAL SUPPLEMENT
TO SOCIALIST PRESS

On the 50th Anniversary THE GENERAL STRIKE AND TODAY

By John Docherty

Exactly fifty years ago, on the May Day of 1926, there erupted the most bitter and significant struggle in the history of the British working class. The miners were locked out on that day by employers who demanded the most enormous cuts in their wages and conditions. On 3rd May, millions of workers struck in support of the miners.

The forces of the capitalist state were brought into action, and after nine days the leaders of the trade unions declared unconditional surrender. Many strikers were victimised, and after six bitter months, the miners were forced back to work, alone and defeated.

These events affected class and political relations in every corner of the world at the time, and since then they have had their echo in every generation. Every social class, every political tendency, has laid claim to some fragment of them.

Thus when it was recently proposed that the Greater London Council should spend a tiny proportion of its vast budget to support an exhibition on this 'major event in social history', the Tories on the Council were scandalised. This was not just because they thought the General Strike is best forgotten, but also because it could not be said that any commemoration of these events would be 'unbiased and objective'. They know very well that many of the characters of that drama still walk the land. There are still geriatric militarists and 'patriotic' students who would rush to the side of the 'law and order'. There are still tough, determined miners and cringing union leaders. Even if the

drama is now different, many of the same *dramatis personae* will be appearing again in the future.

It is for this reason that in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the General Strike, we intend not simply to draw attention to some of its main features, but also to say something about the various points of view on what happened, and to illustrate how these views are reflected through into attitudes to the struggles of today.

There are now a number of books produced by bourgeois academics and journalists that provide details of the main events of the 1926 struggle. The oldest and largest of these is by Crook. Another account by Symons is now almost twenty years old, but covers well the treacherous role of the union leaders. Farman's account is fuller and is available in paperback. The latest version is by Renshaw, with new information, but it naturally suffers from efforts to be 'fair to all sides', even mineowners. (1)

HISTORY

Anybody seriously interested in the history of the working class must study at least one of these books. Each in their own way outline how the crisis of British capitalism at the time reflected itself most sharply in the mining industry. They describe how all sections of the working class, despite the unwillingness of their leaders, lined up to defend the miners in July 1925, when the Tory government capitulated, and in May 1926 when it was ready for the battle.

All the books say something about the important role of the early Communist Party and its efforts to build up a militant Minority Movement which could challenge for leadership in the unions. They portray the strength and determination of the workers on strike, the effectiveness of their efforts despite the criminal hesitations of their leaders. Finally, they describe the abject surrender of these leaders after nine days, and the effect this had on pushing back the working class for a generation.

The General Strike was the culmination of an entire decade of militant struggle by the British working class. With the emergence of the wartime shop stewards movement and the flooding of workers into the newly amalgamated and centralised working class organisations in the brief period of post-war boom from 1918 to 1920, the class struggle reached a high point. The police strikes of 1918-19, the railway strike of 1919 and many other important battles were dealt with by a combination of careful strategy on the part of the Lloyd George Coalition Government and the lack of fighting spirit of the union leaders. Jimmie Thomas of the NUR, for example, deliberately timed his 1919 struggle so as *not* to seek the support of those miners and transport workers who were combined with him in the 'Triple Alliance' and had undertaken to give



Armed police escort for scab driver

During these months, the Cabinet received regular reports from its Directorate of Intelligence about the changes in mood and activity within the working class and left wing political organisations. With mutinies in the army, strikes in the police, and many waves of struggle from miners and others to contend with, it is not surprising that during 1920, the Cabinet discussed 'military plans for dealing with a possible insurrection', including how, in the event, they might take 'private steps to secure the aid of a certain class of citizen'. (2)

COUNCIL OF ACTION

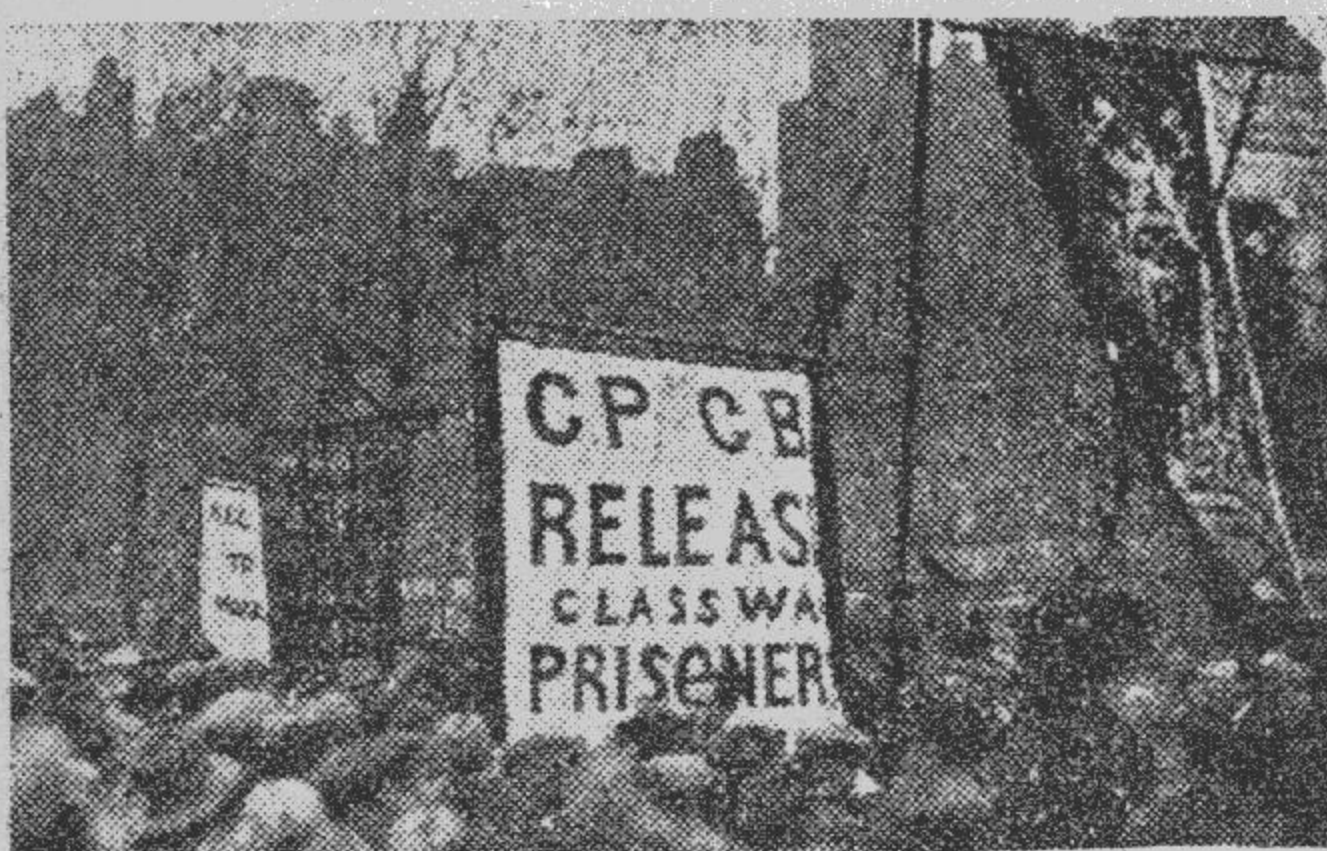
In August 1920 a National Council of Action was formed by all the main organisations of the labour movement to oppose any possible intervention in the war against the Soviet Union. Meanwhile local equivalents with the same title began to prepare strikes. The Directorate of Intelligence wrote to the Cabinet that these first Councils of Action 'were taking on more the form of Soviets and in some areas (were) forming plans for the seizure of private property and the means of transport'. But the job of heading off this enthusiasm was left to the trade union leaders, who instructed the councils that they should 'not in any way usurp the functions of Trade Union Executives, especially so far as the withdrawal of labour is concerned, but to act as centres of information'. (3)

When the mines were handed back to the owners in the following July, and the miners were threatened with wage cuts, the Prime Minister Lloyd George knew he could rely on the leaders of the other partners in the Triple Alliance to leave them in the lurch. 'Thomas', said the Premier, 'is all for peace....I have complete confidence in Thomas' selfishness'. When Hodges for the miners publicly expressed a willingness to compromise, this provided exactly the division that the Government wanted, and it was exploited to the full.

BLACK FRIDAY

On 15th March 1921, the miners were left to fight on alone. This was 'Black Friday'. As the Prime Minister and his Secretary observed in an exchange of notes at the time: 'It is not enough to have a good cause. You must have good leaders'. (4)

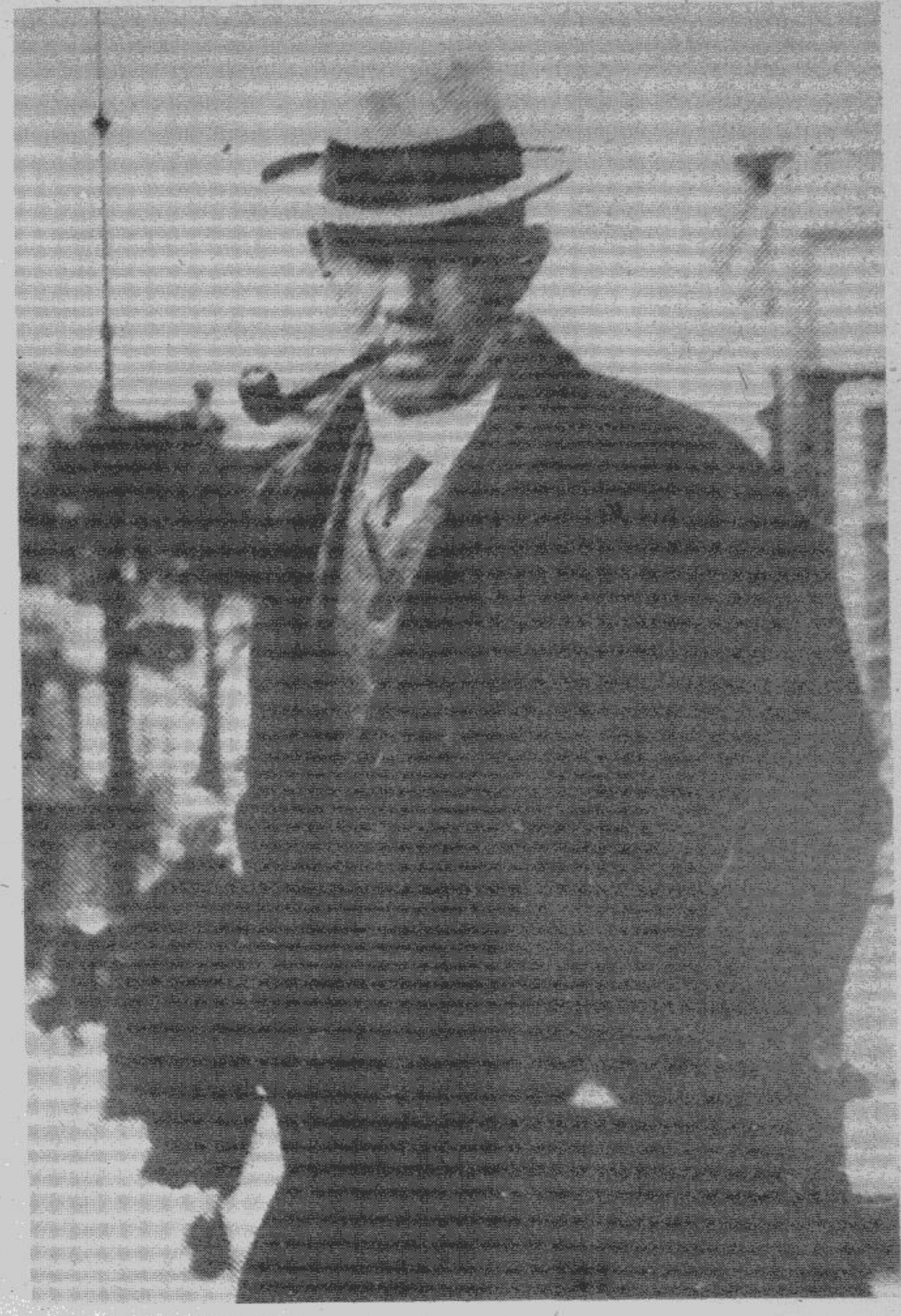
The period between 1921 and 1925 saw an ebb in the class struggle. The ruling class was now armed with an Emergency Powers Act and with a range of strike-breaking machinery that was carefully preserved through the period of Labour Government in 1924. The need for such powers grew more acute as the post-war problems of British capitalism intensified, and the markets for British goods, especially coal contracted. The return to the gold standard



May Day demonstration, 1926



1926 Cartoons by Communist Party members.



J.H. Thomas.

at the old rate in 1925 further increased the prices of British exports and forced the reduction of living standards of those who produced for this market.

In this period Tory Prime Minister Baldwin told the miners that 'All the workers in this country have got to face a reduction of wages to help put industry on its feet'. (5) It became more and more clear to the Tories, however, that they would have to enforce an exemplary show-down, preferably with the miners, in order to bring this about. In July 1925, on 'Red Friday', when the Triple Alliance together with the engineers threatened to come in together to protect the miners from wage cutting, Baldwin was compelled to retreat for a time by granting a temporary subsidy to the mining industry.

From July 1925 to May 1926, the Government carefully prepared. The country was divided into military districts, and officials were put in charge of food distribution and other tasks within each one. The semi-official Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies recruited retired army officers, members of various extreme right-wing organisations and other disaffected sections of the middle class into a strike-breaking force.

DID NOTHING

During these months the trade union leaders did nothing to prepare for the forthcoming struggle. In their heart of hearts even the most left wing of them always believed that a settlement was just around the corner. Thus Arthur Cook, Secretary of the Miners Federation of Great Britain and in many ways a genuine militant, while publicly repeating the slogan 'not a penny off the pay, not a second on the day', in private was prepared to suggest compromises of all kinds.

On 21st April 1926 Cook spoke of a 'national minimum not only with plusses above it, but also with minuses below it'. On 2nd May he even admitted to the Prime Minister's Secretary that 'the word revision would ease matters if it was understood instead of reduction'. MFGB President Herbert Smith, before the General Strike was even over, mentioned wage cuts for miners between 10 and 15 per cent. (6)

The fact is that however much even the most militant union leaders were prepared to compromise, this was not good enough for the ruling class. Though Baldwin and his Government negotiated right up to the last moment in the hope that the union leaders would make major concessions, once this became impossible they simply seized on the pretext of the workers at the *Daily Mail* refusing to print a lying strike-breaking editorial to leave the TUC negotiators standing alone in the dark outside Downing Street faced with the task of leading an all-out struggle against the Government.

At this point the Government's strike-breaking machinery came into operation. Telegrams were sent to all the regional civil commissioners set up under the Government's preparations containing the single word 'Action'. Those who received them knew what to do. Immediately all naval and military leave was cancelled. Troop reinforcements were moved to London and the main industrial centres, and two battalions of infantry marched through Liverpool with steel helmets, rifles and full equipment. The battleships *Ramillies* and *Barham* were recalled from the Atlantic fleet and anchored in the Mersey. Warships were also anchored in the Tyne, the Clyde and the Humber, and at Bristol, Cardiff, Swansea, Barrow, Middlesborough and Harwich.

The military were used for various purposes. They were sent out in plain clothes to infiltrate the strikers and 'report any evidence.....of sedition and subversion'. They were also used in enormous numbers to break the very effective picketing of the London docks. On Friday night, 7th May, scabs were moved into the docks from the river and the following morning 105 lorries moved out, containing food and armed soldiers and accompanied by armoured cars. The reporter from the *New York World* thought that this activity was supported by 'enough artillery to kill every living thing in the neighbourhood'. (7)

Over the week-end of 8th-9th May, there were baton charges by police against crowds of strikers in many parts of London, in Plymouth, Swansea, Southsea, Nottingham, Middlesborough, Newcastle and in Hull, where there were 25 arrests and 41 hospital admissions. In York the crowd tried unsuccessfully to rescue an arrested striker from jail, and there were violent scenes over four or five nights in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Early the following week many hundreds of strikers were arrested, often for nothing more than possessing copies of Communist Party literature. The Government's *British Gazette*, edited by Winston Churchill, notified individual members of the forces on 7th May 'that any action which they may find it necessary to take in an honest endeavour to aid the Civil Power will receive both now and afterwards, the full support of His Majesty's Government'.

BOOK

There are many other aspects of the events of those nine days which it would need an entire book to describe. For example, there were the interminable and self-deceptive efforts of Thomas and the other union leaders to achieve a 'settlement' and there was the pathetic sight of the leaders of the most powerful action in the history of the British working class trooping to Downing Street on 12th May to announce their unconditional surrender. This was partic-

ularly well portrayed in Jim Allen's *Days of Hope* TV play and in the novel based on it.

But the great mass of workers showed a great deal more courage and inventiveness than this. On 13th May, there were more of them on strike than the day before, as they fought tenaciously against the efforts of their employers to victimise individuals or to deprive them of trade union conditions. In this they were largely successful, despite being abandoned by their leaders.

METHODS

The failure of the union leaders to prepare for the General Strike in advance was closely linked to the methods they used to limit it once it got going. Bevin of the T&GWU was the strongest voice in the TUC's Organising Committee and he was determined that all effective decisions should be made by the Unions themselves, even on a local level. Jimmie Thomas said what he 'dreaded about the struggle more than anything else' (including presumably defeat) was that power 'should have got out of the hands of those who were able to exercise some control'. (8)

The activities of the union leaders during the strike simply sabotaged its effective operation. At Wellingborough the Secretary of the Building Trades Federation went to a meeting where he found that 'each affiliated secretary was on the platform with me, each with differently worded instructions'. (9) The Swansea strike committee sent a message to the TUC on 8th May which said 'Telegrams are being received at intervals, cancelling one another and signed by leaders of different unions.....is government concocting conflicting telegrams to mislead Strike Committee?'

Such a situation could not be allowed to continue, and although in some important centres such as Leeds rival strike committees continued in operation throughout the struggle, generally speaking local trade unionists pooled their resources, ignored their leaders, and set up joint bodies often under the title 'council of action' taken over from earlier struggles. Many of them then issued permits for the movement of goods. Most issued strike bulletins, against the wishes of the TUC. Some set up defence squads or organised mass picketing, and as a result had little trouble from the strike-breaking authorities in their areas.

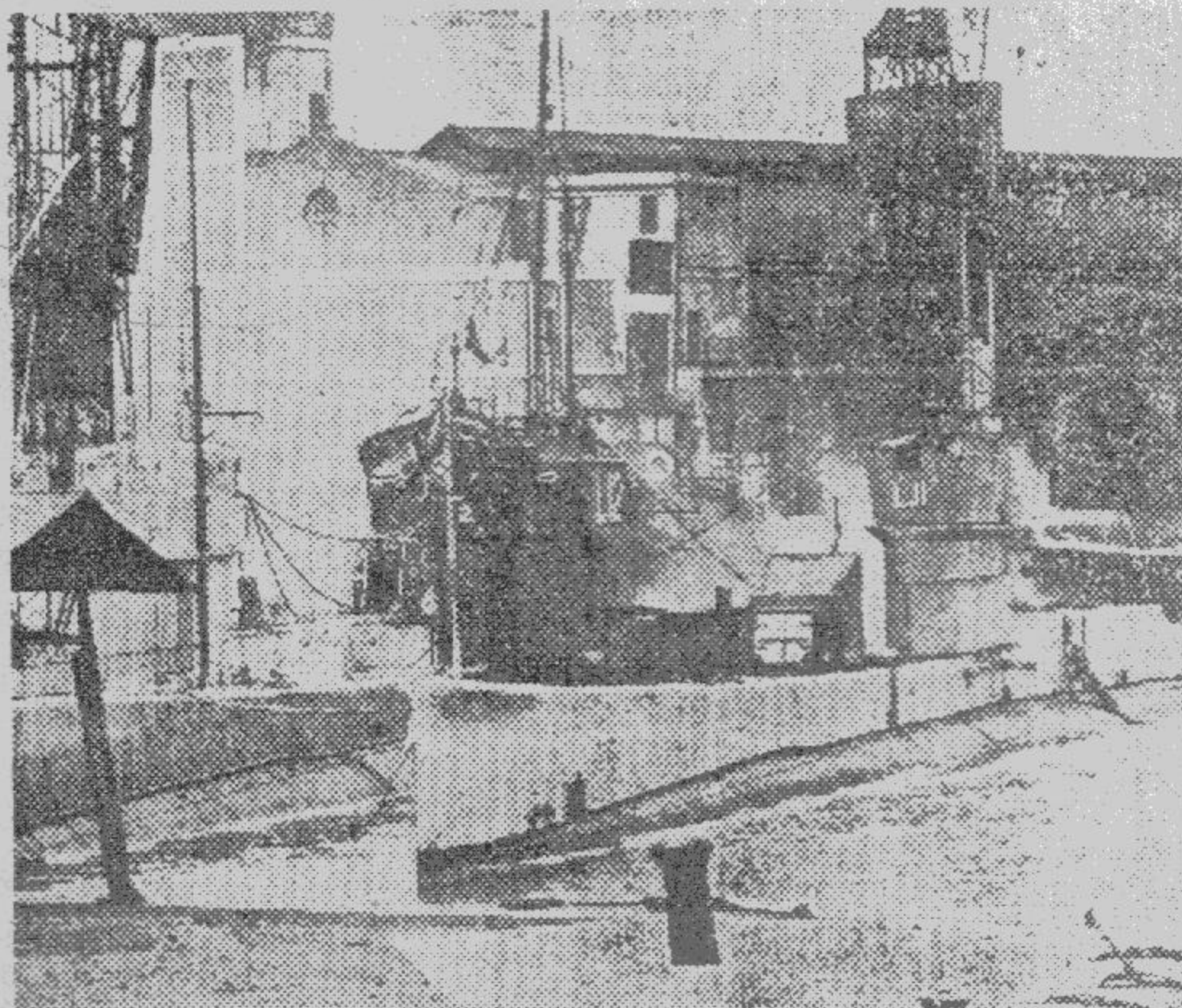
It remained a major fear of the union leaders, as Charles Dukes of the G&MWU later explained to the TUC, that 'every day the strike proceeded the control and the authority of that dispute was passing out of the hands of responsible Executives and into the hands of men of no authority, no control, no responsibility.' (10) The councils of action and local strike committees certainly won increasing power and authority within the working class movement during the General Strike, and they took on a range of tasks which the leaders of the movement simply tried to ignore.

MYTH

There has often been a myth put forward about the councils of action, particularly by Stalinist authors that during the strike they 'exercised complete control over their areas' or even 'began to develop an embryo alternative centre of government'. (11) It is true that such possibilities were implicit in the situation. They might even be said to be grasped for by the striker in South London who shouted 'we are your masters now' after a blackleg bus. But the possibilities did not become the reality because quite simply there was nobody at all there to point the way to develop beyond such possibilities. The struggle to build an alternative state power can in no way be carried through in a spontaneous way, without conscious leadership.

In order to explain this point it is necessary to go on to consider in some detail the activities of revolutionaries before and during the General Strike and the views of their activities which have been put forward since that time.

For a long time after 1926, it was often considered that the Communist Party had done what it could. After all, despite the arrest of most of its leaders in 1925, and of many hundreds during the strike itself, the CP had played an active role in almost every area, been represented on numerous strike committees and councils of action, and recruited large numbers of workers, especially miners, after



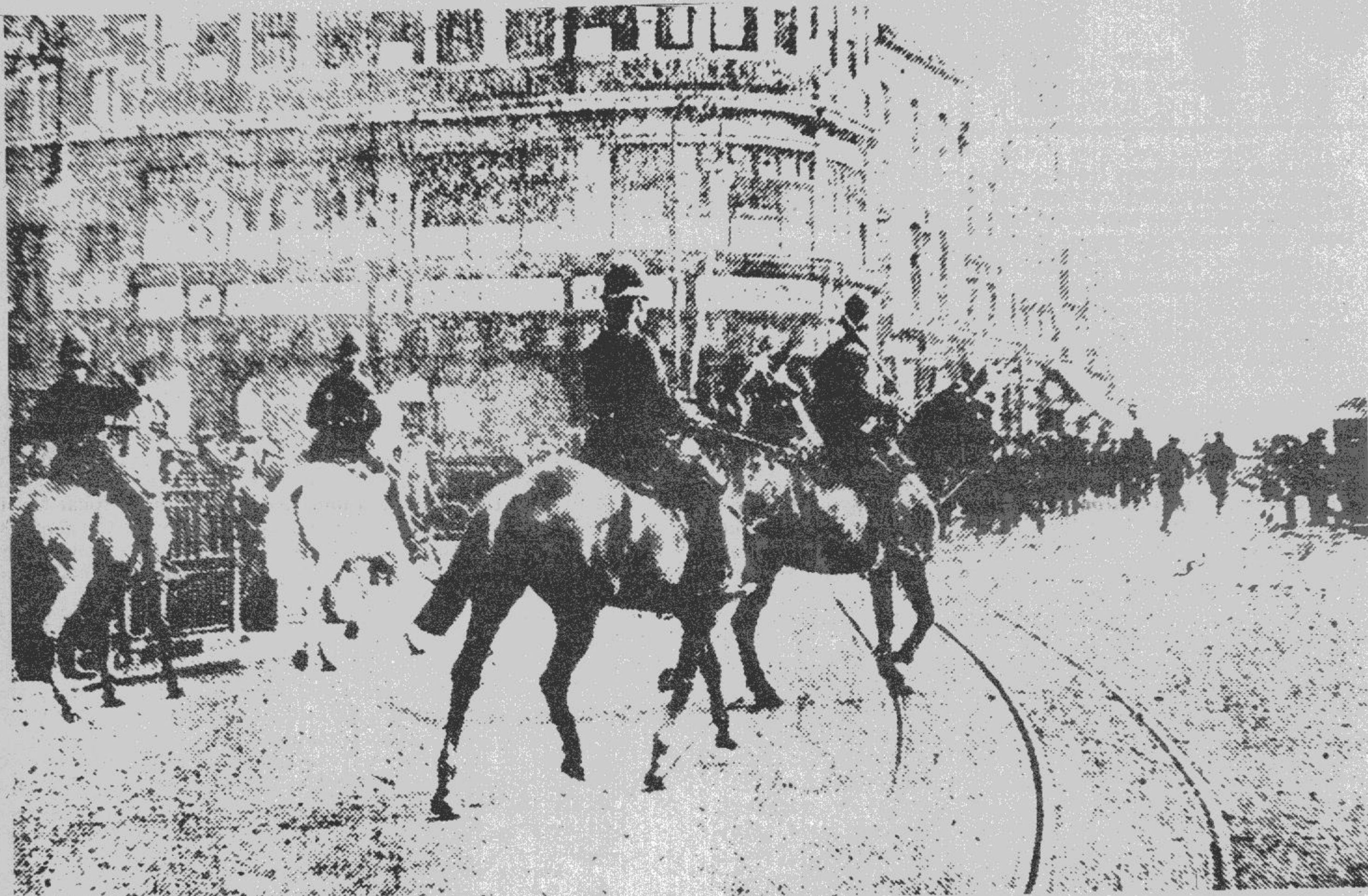
Submarines sent to London Docks



Armoured cars to protect scab traffic.



Top left: Arthur Cook addresses workers on May Day 1926; Centre: Communist Party cartoon - note 'All Power to General Council'; Above: Bevin; Left: mounted police at Elephant and Castle.



the General Strike. The Communist Party alone, through its press, had warned in advance of the importance of the struggle and called for the establishment of councils of action, defence squads and other necessary forms of preparation.

ACHIEVEMENTS

All of these steps represented undoubted achievements. However, they were closely allied to a political line which was unable to bring out the strengths of the working class in such a way as to take the necessary steps to victory. The last Party publication before the beginning of the strike echoed the views of the union leaders by saying that the proposed councils of action 'should not take over any of the duties that ordinarily belong to the Trade Unions', and in its first statement after it started said, 'All that it needs now is for every man to stand firm and the fight is won'.

It was the great achievement of Brian Pearce in a series of articles originally published in the late 50s to draw attention to the origin and international character of the development of the early Communist Party in Britain, to describe how it built its industrial base and how it made the errors that it did in 1926. Some ten years later, in 1967-69, Michael Woodhouse systematically analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the British Communist Party in the crucial period of the early 20s, the only time it tried seriously to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class movement. (14)

The main arguments of Trotsky, and, following him, of Pearce and Woodhouse, about the struggle for revolutionary leadership in the British working class in the 1920s may be briefly summarised as follows. Although it was an enormously positive step to establish the Communist Party in 1920, to reorganise it on democratic centralist lines in 1922-23 and to make the necessary turn to mass work by setting up the Minority Movement in 1924, the Party failed to break decisively from its own sectarian and syndicalist roots and to develop a policy which could mobilise the working class independently of its bureaucratic leadership.

SUPPORT

In the period from the collapse of the Labour Government at the end of 1924 to the great victory of 'Red Friday' in July 1925, the CP made some inroads into the mass movement, winning support in the trades councils, in the Miners Federation and many other areas. This impetus was lost as the Stalinist faction consolidated its hold on the Communist International, supported a policy of alliance with sections of trade union 'lefts' through the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee, and turned the British Party away from the positive, independent policies for which it had begun to search in its first hesitant steps into the mass movement.

In 1925 Trotsky outlined in *Where Is Britain Going?* the need for a decisive break from the trade union 'lefts' as well as the rights, the need for an ideological struggle against Fabianism and the decisive importance of the building of 'a correct and resolute revolutionary leadership'. However, as the struggle which the CP correctly warned was inevitable grew closer and closer, there was, as Woodhouse puts it 'very little concrete evidence that the party did anything to break out of the limitations placed on preparation imposed on the rank and file by the trade union apparatus

or that it saw its role as anything more than 'gingering up' the official leaderships'.

One of the leading members of the Party at about this time presented a 'Plan of Action' to a strike committee in the North-East which repudiated a concern 'with any wider horizons', and restricted the committee to 'our limited objectives'. (12) It was only days later, and effectively after the end of the strike that the CP called for independent joint meetings of the councils of action or even posed in abstract general terms the replacement of the current leaders of the movement.

For many years after 1926, it was very difficult to discover how it came about that such a poor lead had been given to the embattled British working class. Only in the late 1950's did Trotsky's writings on this period become generally available, showing that there was quite a different method in existence which called for the independent mobilisation of the working class in a way that challenges the bureaucratic leadership. (13)

TROTSKY

Since these views were first fought for by Trotsky within the Communist International in the 1920s, they have been subject to attack in a number of different ways. At first of course, the Stalinists developed a style of polemic which accused the opponents of their opportunist policies of being agents of fascism and counter-revolution. It is of some interest to see the re-appearance of such views in a pamphlet by Ernie Trory published last year and entitled *Soviet Trade Unions and the General Strike*. (16)

This is written in a quaint Stalinist knockabout style, with long quotations from the works of Stalin, no references to any books containing a different point of view, and a complete ignorance of the difference between the various opposition tendencies within the Communist movement during the 1920s.

It is of interest to note that Stalin is quoted as describing the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee as a 'bloc which could be used' to 'organise a united movement against the capitalist offensive'. It was certainly nothing of the kind. He also goes on to mis-represent his opponents as supporters of break-away 'dual unionism'. This in fact was Stalin's own policy for Britain two years later.

The lies, distortions and pure ignorance contained in this pamphlet are easy enough to refute with the most elementary knowledge of what actually happened. Nowadays the Stalinist leadership has to take more serious account of the careful analysis of the history of our movement undertaken in particular by Woodhouse and Pearce though generally they prefer to exclude specific reference to this work, perhaps in the hope that people may not find out about it.

Thus the Party's 'official' historian James Klugmann agrees that the slogan 'All Power to the General Council' perhaps the most common one in the Party's press during 1925-6 'was certainly incorrect', and even refers to the attacks on the trade union lefts after the end of the General Strike. Such points do little to support the view he continues to maintain that the line of the party was 'overwhelmingly correct'. (17)

To submit the wordy and tendentious views of Klugmann to careful analysis is rather like trying to study the specific gravity of suet pudding. However, the defence of the Stalinist positions on these questions has now gone stage further with the publication earlier this year of a collection of articles edited by Jeffrey Skelley and entitled *The General Strike 1926*.

MATERIAL

It must be said that this book contains some useful material, particularly in the new information it provides on local activities. However, its main purpose is to associate the mistaken but sincere and combative Communist Party of 1926 with the utterly rotten policies of today. The Martin Jacques, who is both a university lecturer and member of the CP Executive Committee writes about the

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Top left: Two views of the police in action against workers; Bottom left: scab woman acts as bus conductor; miners' leaders Smith, Cook and Richardson; Above; sailors arrive in London.



period as if all that was involved was the manoeuvres of various sections of the bureaucracy, without any independent mobilisation of the working class. To see things in that way is to gratuitously insult those who once fought for something different.

JUSTIFY

It is left to Klugmann in another essay in the volume, entitled *Marxism, Reformism and the General Strike* to justify once again the line of the CP at the time, and indeed ever since. He writes at enormous length to arrive at the irrefutable proposition that reformists cannot lead revolutionary struggles. He concludes from this that 'It has been a tragic feature of British working-class history' that resentment against betrayal has been directed 'against individual betrayers, and not against the most real enemy - reformist theory, reformist ideas'. If this odd statement means anything, it must be that revolutionaries should *not* in fact cease to struggle to replace the present counter-revolutionary leaders at all but should manoeuvre around them on the basis of 'revolutionary ideas'. This is certainly the kind of policy he considers to have been appropriate for the General Strike, when 'The Party well knew that...the workers...were not ready to challenge the social system'. (18) Everything else that they did flowed from this, and has been used to justify every Stalinist effort to hold back and defeat the working class ever since.

There is a curious congruence between these views and those presented in a recent pamphlet by James Hinton and Richard Hyman, two lecturers at Warwick University associated with the International Socialism group, entitled *Trade Unions and Revolution: The Industrial Politics of the Early Communist Party*. (19) The main thesis presented in this work is that the CP *could not* have done any better. The fact is, we are told, 'it was a mistake to construct a mass revolutionary party' in a 'profoundly unfavourable situation'. Though they agree that the Communist Party in the period before the General Strike tied itself too closely to the trade union lefts, they also quote a most uncharacteristic statement from just before the struggle pointing to the potential of the councils of action. (20) Even the Stalinists themselves have not gone that far in defending their position!

HINDSIGHT

By the use of statistics about strikes and union membership in a way that must have gone down well in many a postgraduate seminar, Hinton and Hyman argue from their Olympian hindsight that there was no 'revolutionary situation' in the mid-1920s. They sneer at the

'orthodox Trotskyists', who, unlike themselves, fail to understand that history moves 'in its devious way through the contradictory cross currents of the immensely varied and many-sided consciousness of the working masses'.

However, it is they who show an utter contempt for the needs and aspirations of the working class in failing to even consider how revolutionaries could or should have intervened in the dynamic relationship between the workers and their established leaders. In fact it is they who leave the masses to the tender mercies of the bureaucrats and the Stalinists.

The one question that our authors refuse to consider in all their grand talk of revolutionary situations and the self-action of the masses, is just how revolutionaries were supposed to confront the real problems that faced the miners and all sections of the working class. The capitalists and the ruling class decided to make a stand after July 1925. Hinton and Hyman apparently consider that at this point they should have been 'cadre building', and preserving the purity of their theory.



Trotsky

But the efforts of even the smallest group of revolutionary workers cannot be developed in this way. The miners and the rest of the working class were not thrown in May 1926 into a 'revolutionary situation' that they could smell or measure with a slide rule. They moved in a mass way in a struggle which could have developed on to a much higher level. Revolutionaries had a responsibility to present policies to develop this struggle, even if they could not predict in advance how it would finally work out.

While it is certainly true that the orientation towards the trade union 'lefts' in 1925-6 represented a fatal error, it is also worthwhile recalling the strengths and achievements of the Minority Movement before it finally succumbed to Stalinist degeneration. It was above all *not* a kind of precursor of the IS 'Rank and File' organisation, placing itself outside the dynamic of the struggle for leadership in the working class. (21) It represented a considerable step forward from the wartime shop stewards movement in that it hoped not to bypass the official leadership, but in putting forward a programme to bring together the interests of all sections of the working class in a unified, revolutionary way.

By challenging the established leaders within the mass organisations, it openly proclaimed that it aimed to become a 'majority movement'. There is no doubt that they had a considerable effect in forcing the hands of the union leaders

ence to the trades councils, and did much to prepare the working class for the battles that were bound to come.

It was a lack of sensitivity to the moods of the working class as the struggle developed that made the denunciation of the 'lefts' by the Communist Party and the Minority Movement after the General Strike ring much less true. The failure of anybody at all to present any other possibility meant that there was no new road open to the working class when they were overwhelmed by the sell-out. When the Coventry Council of Action sent a delegation to the TUC after the surrender to demand 'the recall of the General Strike in the name of the workers of Coventry', one of the delegation found that when they met the 'left' Purcell 'the mighty leader whom I had known as a fighter... was cowed and beaten....The iron man....had feet of clay'. (22) At this point what else was there to do but minimise the victimisations?

TODAY

It is clear that fifty years after the event, the General Strike and its problems live with us. We can of course see a capitalist class still determined to solve its crisis at the expense of the working class, and a trade union and Labour bureaucracy determined to help them with the task. Many echoes of the strength and determination of the working class could be heard in the battles of the miners, the dockers and the engineering workers in recent years.

It is important not to confuse the wrong policies of the Communist Party in those years with the counter-revolutionary activities of those who masquerade behind the same name today. Above all, it is necessary to see that the struggle for a revolutionary programme in the working class is inseparable from a continual analysis of the political process within the working class and the testing of different layers of its leadership. It is in this process that even small groups of revolutionaries can play a central role in the construction of the mass revolutionary party which is necessary to put an end to capitalist exploitation for good.

FOOTNOTES

FOOTNOTES.

- (1) W.H. Crook *The General Strike* (University of North Carolina Press, 1931); J. Symons *The General Strike. A Historical Portrait* (Cresset Press, 1957); C. Farman *The General Strike. May 1926* (Rupert Hart-Davis, 1972); P. Renshaw *The General Strike* (Eyre Methuen, 1975).
- (2) T. Jones *Whitehall Diary* Vol 1, ed. R.K. Middlemas (Oxford University Press, 1969) p. 99f.
- (3) Form Your Councils of Action! - leaflet issued on 20th August 1920.
- (4) Jones pp. 136, 151.
- (5) Baldwin denied he actually said this, but, as Farman (p. 25) puts it, this was 'hardly an exaggeration of what he meant'.
- (6) Jones II pp. 16, 32, 43.
- (7) Symons pp. 113, 193.
- (8) Crook p. 398.
- (9) R.W. Postgate and others *A Workers History of the Great Strike* (Plebs League, 1927) p. 25.
- (10) TUC 1926 Conference Proceedings p. 345.
- (11) P. Carter in *The General Strike 1926* ed J. Skelley (Lawrence and Wishart, 1976) p. 111; J. Klugmann *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain* vol II (Lawrence and Wishart, 1969) p. 159.
- (12) *Workers Daily* 3, May 1926; *Workers Bulletin* 4 May; R.P. Arnot *The Miners. Year of Struggle* (Allen and Unwin, 1953) p. 346.
- (13) These writings are now given in full in L. Trotsky *Collected Writings and Speeches on Britain* vol II ed. R. Chappel and A. Clinton (New Park Publications, 1974).
- (14) These writings are now collected in M. Woodhouse and B. Pearce *Essays on the History of Communism in Britain* (New Park Publications, 1975). This book is a must for all those seriously concerned with questions of revolutionary leadership in the working class, though the 'Introduction' shows clearly that the WRP leadership who produced it have gone one step beyond Louis XVI's courtiers: they have remembered nothing of what the articles say and understand nothing now of what the method that lies behind them means. They show a wilful inability to deal seriously with points raised by the WRP opposition linking the history of the CP with their own degeneration.
- (15) L. Trotsky *op cit* p. 123; Woodhouse and Pearce p. 97.
- (16) The publisher in Crabtree Press, Brighton.
- (17) J. Klugmann *op cit* pp. 191-4.
- (18) Skelley *op cit* pp. 101, 79.
- (19) Published by Pluto Press in 1975.
- (20) p. 41, quoting Tom Wintringham.
- (21) On p. 34 they seem to be arguing that the councils of action should have been built outside the existing trade union machinery. Such a policy would certainly have failed.
- (22) G. Hodgkinson *Sent to Coventry* (Maxwell, 1970) p. 99.

TROTSKYISM TODAY

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