

SOCIALIST PRESS



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CHINA

Stalinist leaders

close ranks p.2

Backing for Bakers Back page
Birth of US Marxism pp.6-7
SWP on Cuba p.8
'Perks' review p.9

IRANIAN WORKERS DEFY MARTIAL LAW



The already dented authority of the Shah's emergency military government has been under frontal attack since last Friday.

Every night literally millions of Iranian workers and students have been taking the 9 p.m. curfew not as a signal to retreat to their homes but to come out onto the streets and rooftops in massive protests against the Shah's tyranny.

In doing so they knowingly risk being shot down and killed by the army or police, whose leaders are becoming increasingly desperate as they see the masses' unanimous contempt for their orders.

Murder toll

The regime has tried to belittle these nightly battles by claiming that since 1 December, when the largest demonstrations took place since Black Friday in September, it had killed only 12 demonstrators.

All other sources, however, reveal that the murder toll was at least in the hundreds, some reports putting it as high as 3,000.

Even this slaughter has not curbed the courageous resolve of the masses.

The Shah and the army now cringe in terror before two more threats which could finally settle their fate—the possibility of an intensification of the wave of strikes which brought down the previous government, and a growth of mutiny within the army as conscript soldiers refuse to shoot down members of their own class.

Books opened

Many of the strikes which began in September are still going on and are gravely undermining the economic strength of the regime.

And last week one of them—that of workers in the Central Bank—dealt a major body blow to the credibility and authority of the crumbling tyranny.

The bank workers—who followed the example set by Portuguese bank workers in

Build armed workers' militias! General strike to bring down the Shah! For a workers and peasants government!

1975—opened up the books to reveal exactly how since August of this year 177 named members of Iran's ruling elite, including the royal family and army generals, had transferred assets worth over £1,000 million to Swiss, French and American bank accounts.

This important move to open the books of the ruling class had a shattering effect on the morale of the dictatorship in Tehran.

In all these ways the largely spontaneous actions of the mass movement is bringing about the destruction of one of the richest,

best armed reactionary regimes in the world which has for years received the backing both of imperialism and both Soviet and Chinese Stalinism.

Dangers

But even this enormously powerful mass movement nonetheless faces enormous dangers which can only be resolved through the building of a revolutionary leadership on a programme which represents the independent interests of the oppressed classes in Iran.

One urgent part of such a

programme is the formation of armed militias of workers and peasants to defend them against the murderous brutality of the dictatorship.

The task of building the militias should be linked to the dissolution of the present army, police and secret police (SAVAK).

Such militias should include those soldiers who are ready to mutiny against their officers, as groups of them have already been doing.

In the factories and oil-fields, too, it is necessary

to establish strike and occupation committees which should join with peasants' and anti-Shah soldiers' committees to form organisations like the Soviets in Russia in 1917.

The establishment of these independent organs of power by the workers and the other oppressed classes is an essential part of the fight for an authentic workers' and peasants government and the struggle for socialism in Iran.

This is the only way to prevent the anti-working class tyranny of the Shah

being replaced by another anti-working class regime led by the opportunists who are claiming to be the leaders of the present mass movement, which in reality they are trying to use for their own ends.

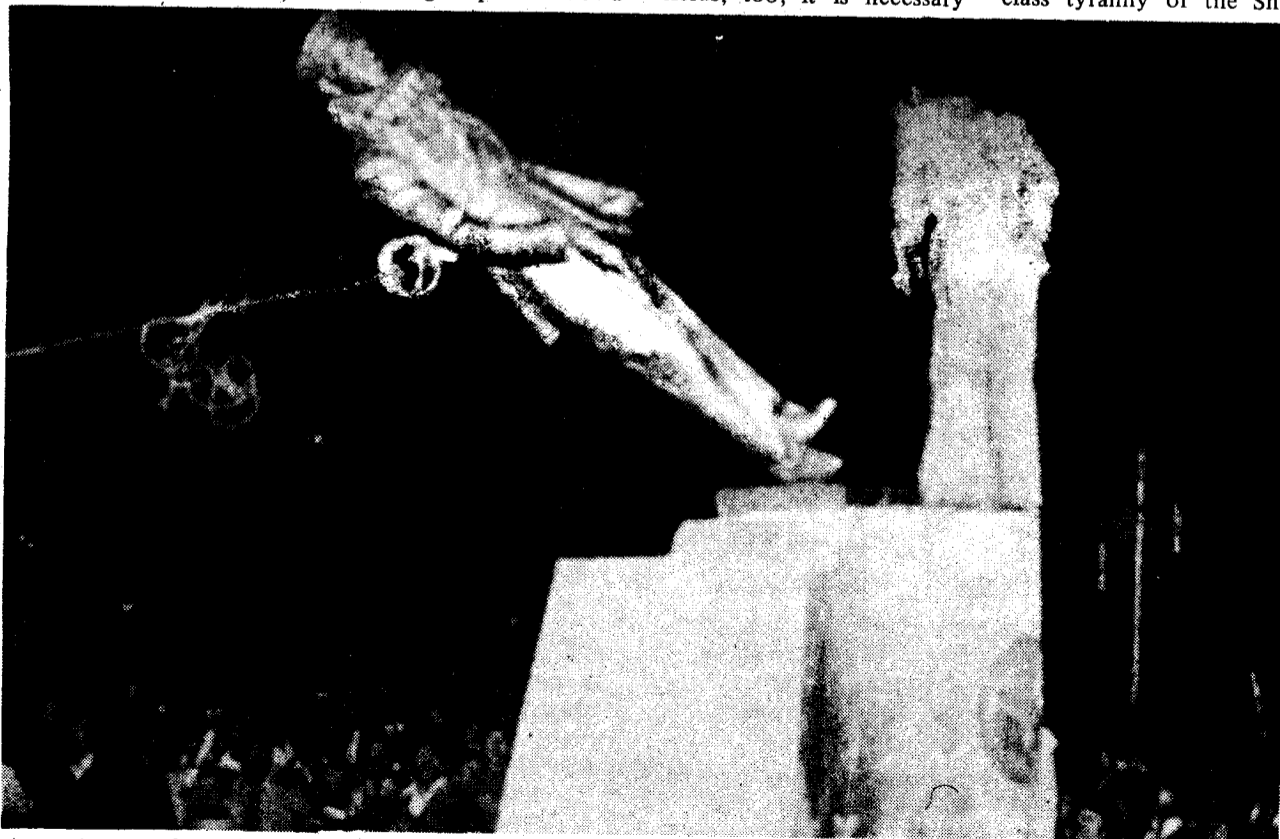
At present the religious leaders like Ayatollah Khomeini or their uneasy allies in the bourgeois National Front "lead" this extraordinary mass uprising very much from the rear, calling for no more than bourgeois democratic and Islamic demands.



Students flee from gunfire

But in the absence of an alternative revolutionary leadership, they stand ready to reap the harvest which has been sown by the masses.

However "democratic" are the words of such leaders today, the whole history of imperialism shows that democracy and the rights of the oppressed classes can only be won as part of a struggle against capitalism under revolutionary working class leadership.



A massive crowd topples the Shah's statue in Tehran

Black all arms to the Shah!

INTERNATIONAL



Peking Stalinists try to close ranks against workers

What is the meaning of the eruption of 'free speech' in Chinese cities during the last few weeks? Does it indicate that the dictatorship of Stalinism is being shaken? What are the political forces at work?

The Party leadership seem to have resolved at the end of the week to act on the maxim 'We must hang together or we shall hang separately'.

Official statements, press articles, officially-inspired wall-posters, have all stressed the themes of 'unity and stability'.

Teng Hsiao-ping has gone out of his way to say publicly that he should not supplant Hua Kuo-feng as Prime Minister. (Though the ambiguous grounds he gives—his old age—suggest that Hua should not sleep too easily).

The 1975 campaign of the (safely dead) Chou En-lai for 'four modernisations' (agriculture, industry, defencescience and culture) has been revived as the anodyne main plank of official propaganda.

It thereby reaffirms the continuity of Party leadership, while administering a none-too-subtle 'criticism by omission' to Mao Tse-tung—now on the road to becoming the 'most well-known 'non-person' of all time. And—most directly to the point—the press has resumed a unanimous chorus of precautionary political advice.

Permissible

Wall posters are 'permissible' means, but not necessarily 'the best', for raising criticisms.

Public speaking and meetings are discouraged, and those who may have ideas for 'improving' the system are urged to go and discuss them with Communist Party officials.

A closing of bureaucratic ranks, therefore, are combined with a few calming words which are undoubtedly accompanied by more energetic, but discreet, actions by Wang Tung-hsing's security forces).

But it is doubtful if these can put a stop, even very temporary, to mass political activity in China.

Crisis in Warsaw Pact

A new crisis developed last week in the difficult relations between the Stalinist bureaucracies within the Warsaw Pact.

Romanian Stalinist leader Nicolae Ceausescu refused demands emanating from the Kremlin for an all-round increase of military spending throughout the Warsaw Pact.

Last week Ceausescu made several speeches defending 'national independence' while rumours were growing of impending retaliation from Moscow.

Next week's Socialist Press will carry a full analysis of this important new development in the crisis of world Stalinism.



Teng with former Japanese PM Fukuda

Most of the detailed reports in the last few weeks have come from the capital, Peking.

It is here that foreign diplomats and journalists mostly lodge. Many of them have become used to the excellent Pekinese cuisine regularly produced for them by 'the Chinese people'.

With much wider possibilities for digestion than investigation, many of them make a living retailing to their readers, with a polite lack of incredulity, the statements and 'leaks' emitted by official agencies.

Wall posters

Though they have reported the crowds of thousands, the sensational political summonses of some of the wall-posters in Tien An Men Square, the gaze of these observers remains focussed at the top.

Rumoured purges and reshuffles in the leadership, the 'rehabilitations' of Mao's victims and the nuances of the official press are the staple of the

typical Peking correspondent.

Much scantier reports have come from the other great cities where many fewer foreigners circulate.

But it is clear that in Shanghai—the 'capital' of the Chinese working class, not of the bureaucracy—there have been rallies of tens of thousands which have heard calls, for example, for the open election of leaders.

What are these masses thinking and wanting? The press reports give few clues.

But we can be certain they are not exclusively concerned with the 'four modernisations' or the possible rehabilitation of Lin Shao-chi or Peng Te-huai.

And we may take it that they are not all spontaneously inclined to take their humble proposals for 'improving the system' to the nearest petty functionary.

The sinking of the profound differences and hatreds among the bureaucrats indicate most of all the fear with which they regard the Chinese masses, and

especially the city proletariat, which has been enormously expanded by the process of industrialisation since 1949.

They all remember that the intra-bureaucratic battles of the Cultural Revolution in 1966-67 opened up gaps through which flowed—starting in Shanghai—a year of strikes, mass demonstrations and virtual civil war in city after city.

Lost authority

And they are determined this shall not happen again.

In 1978 the Chinese Communist Party has lost the personal authority of almost all the veterans of the civil war.

There is no Mao to rally the army and the state, or to numb all independent politics with the cult of his personality.

Nor could the situation be brought back under control by the means that have traditionally been used in Eastern Europe when the bureaucracy has split and its control of political life has slipped.

The situation in Hungary and Poland in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968, was 'resolved' by Soviet tanks, or the threat of them.

But there is no external force which could conceivably—from either a political or a physical point of view—bring even a fragment of China under control.

On the last occasion when the CCP leadership gave way to the pressures for political freedoms—in 1956-7, after the 'thaw' of Soviet Stalinism—repression on a considerable scale was necessary for them to reassert their control.

Dangers

Even the present political flux that came essentially from within the bureaucracy contains serious dangers for it; especially the moves to 'rehabilitate' purged leaders.

The main problem is that those responsible for the purges include the whole historical leadership of the CCP, each time acting in sanctimonious unanimity, and—of course—headed by Mao.

The proposed rehabilitation of Peng Te-huai, however, would be a murky victory for Teng's faction of the bureaucracy.

Peng was purged in 1959 for opposing Mao over the economic policies and suffering of the disastrous 'Great Leap Forward'; Liu Shao-chi (Mao's later victim) acted as Peng's political executioner.

Peng made his 1959 protest

with the support of the Soviet leadership.

Kruschev later publicly expressed a concern for his fate.

One implication, therefore, of the widespread 'unofficial' noises being made for his rehabilitation may be that a form of rapprochement with Moscow is contemplated in Peking.

And for that, too, it would be necessary to lay Mao's ghost.



Liu Shao-chi



Hua

Dutch pay talks crisis

Total breakdown appears to have been reached last week in Holland's annual national wage negotiations.

The unions of the private sector last week rejected a wage deal with the government and the employers' organisation because of opposition to plans of the right wing coalition government to cut state spending, especially social security.

This breakdown of talks (followed by a similar development between the government and the public sector unions a few days later) opens the way for new higher wage demands which the employers say they will fiercely resist.

Spanish King meets Videla

Franco's specially groomed successor King Juan Carlos has in the last fortnight been trying to show in Latin America that he is the equal of old hands like Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom as a touring agent of imperialism.



Juan Carlos

In Lima, Peru, he was protected from any contact with a new strike wave against the military dictatorship by an unprecedented military security operation.

The regime was no doubt glad to get the troops and police back to protect itself when they packed Juan Carlos off to enjoy the hospitality of military dictator Videla in Argentina.

There Juan Carlos, who hopes, with Stalinist and reformist support, to be voted a 'constitutional monarch' in Spain's constitutional referendum on 6 December, issued a joint declaration with that butcher of the working class supporting 'human rights' and condemning 'terrorism'.

Big setback in Eritrea

Backed by Soviet and Cuban troops and advisors, the army of the Ethiopian dictatorship last week recaptured Keren, the last major city held by the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front.

Though the fall of the city took place only after a planned evacuation of liberation forces and supplies, the setback to the morale of EPLF guerrillas must be considerable.

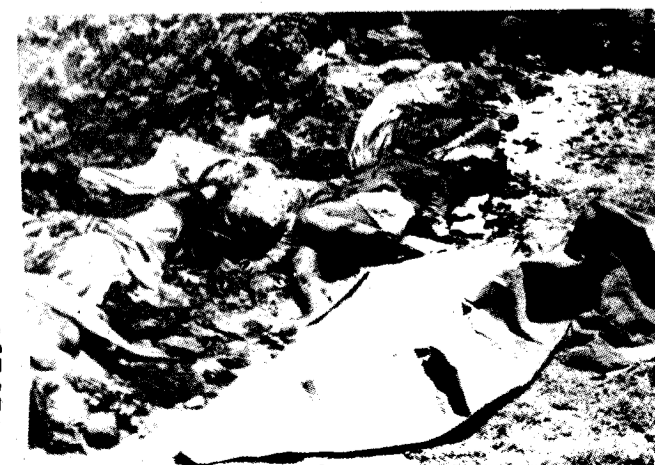
Keren was first taken from Ethiopian government forces in July 1977, as Eritrean forces went in to the offensive and inflicted a series of defeats on the massively larger, better equipped and Soviet backed army of Ethiopian dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam.

Guerrilla war

Now the city has been recaptured by the enemy, the Eritreans will undertake a prolonged guerrilla war waged from the mountains against the extended supply lines and isolated outposts established by the Ethiopians.

The danger is stronger than ever that in their determination to liquidate the Eritrean

revolution the Stalinist-backed Ethiopian forces will step up their savage napalm artillery and bomb attacks on Eritrean people to the level of near genocide.



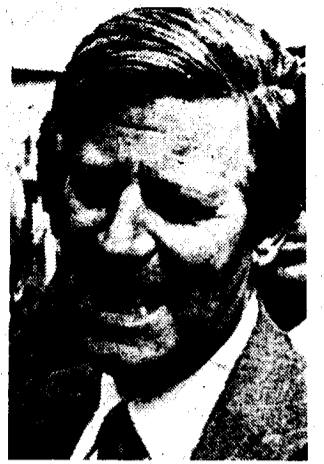
Children slain by Ethiopian military junta



INTERNATIONAL

CRISIS IN EUROPE'S

STEEL INDUSTRY



Schmidt

As their nightmares take shape in a stark daylight form, the labour bureaucrats of West Germany are flying even faster into the open embraces of the bourgeoisie.

Two weeks ago a massive 87% of steel workers voted to take strike action in support of their claim for a 5% wage increase and a 35-hour working week.

The 200,000 workers in the West German steel industry are organised in IG-Metall, the metalworkers union, which earlier this year called strike action in other industrial sectors on the issues of new technology and job security.

Now Eugen Loderer and the other officials have once again been forced to hold a ballot which predictably revealed the enormous militancy of workers and their readiness to fight against the attacks of employers.

But within a day of announcing that the strike would begin on Tuesday 28 November, they leapt at the chance to re-open negotiations with the employers.

Inadequate

These new talks at Duisburg were not a conflict over the 5% wage claim, which is generally agreed to be 'moderate'—in other words, hopelessly inadequate to protect workers' living standards against the ravages of inflation.

Although the employers have offered only a derisory 3%, they have refused absolutely to negotiate on the 35-hour week.

Last week 37,000 workers came out on strike at seven plants in the Ruhr

German workers strike to save jobs



Steel apprentices march through Bochum near Essen

which supply materials to the motor industry. With a further 13,000 refusing to cross picket lines, a quarter of all steel workers in the region are now involved.

The employers have carried out their threat to

respond with lockouts, and on Friday another 29,000 workers were barred from work in this way.

Although its main impact will clearly be within manufacturing industry, the strike has already produced effects in other sectors.

Printworkers, who have themselves been involved in major struggles against new technology and redundancies in the last year, took solidarity action in northern Bremen by blacking a full-page advert placed by the steel industrialists to witch-hunt IG-Metall.

The whole dispute, and the positions taken up by employers and union bureaucrats, is not restricted to West Germany. It is yet another example of the international crisis of the steel industry.

State ownership

Belgium has been the latest in the line of bourgeois states driven to step in and attempt to restore some order on the industry's chaos.

The plan proposed by the coalition government amounts to a form of state ownership such as operates in British Leyland.

Along with state control of investment and planning, go promises for the re-employment of the 15,000 workers who will be made redundant as one-third of the total workforce is 'rationalised' out of a job.

Such pledges are only to be expected from a government which faces elections next month.

As the economic crisis of imperialism has produced a catastrophic fall in orders for steel, capitalist employers and governments have scrambled around for measures to meet both their short-term and long-term problems.

Within the Common Market, the Davignon plan of the Steel Commission has been an attempt to co-ordinate and plan these moves in a 'fair' way.

of the industry.

These moves have taken place against a background of increasingly militant resistance from workers to the redundancies proposed to ease the capitalists' profitability slump.

At the Solmer plant near Marseilles, which is jointly owned by France's two major steel companies, a lock-out was imposed on the 7,000 workers who have been engaged in a series of struggles against 'rationalisation'.

Debts cancelled

Central to the government's plan is the cancellation of the vast debts owed to the state by the private steel companies. This is just one of the symptoms which reveal the true character of such a 'nationalisation' process.

The Social Democrats, who dominate the coalition numerically have not taken these measures to advance the interests of the working class. Their concern has been to preserve the structure of Belgian capitalism by rescuing from collapse a crucial section which the capitalists cannot continue to organise themselves profitably.

As with the mines, railways, shipbuilding or steel industries in Britain, it is this factor which has determined the course of the labour leaders.

The Social Democrats and their allies cannot have forgotten the mass rallies and demonstrations earlier this year, where steelworkers showed their opposition to any redundancies and demanded the introduction of a 35-hour week.

Same crisis

But once they have taken the responsibility of running the steel industry from the capitalists, the state employers will find themselves driven by the same crisis of capitalism which forced the private owners into a state of chronic unprofitability.

The Social Democrats will then turn inevitably to plans for 'restructuring' and 'rationalisation', for redundancies, closures and speed-up.

Although such 'nationalisations' are in one sense phoney—nationalisation for the bourgeoisie, not for the proletariat—they do represent an important, but one-sided gain for the working class.

Driven by its own inner contradictions, imperialism is forced to reveal in practice how private ownership is unable to organise production to satisfy human needs.

In developing state ownership and state control of the steel industry, the imperialists themselves have to take steps towards building the very organisation of production which is required as the basis of a socialist planned economy.

S. African 'corruption'

There is something a little sick about revelations of 'corruption' in a country like South Africa.

Just as the American Indians were surprised to find that the place they had been quite familiar with for some time had in fact only been 'discovered' as recently as 1492, black workers in South Africa woke up a few weeks ago to find there was corruption in the South African government.

Cabinet Minister Connie Mulder had to resign following the emergence of the fact that government money had been used to finance a pro-government newspaper.

Caught

The only significant thing about this is that Mulder was caught.

For a moment the thin facade of respectability with which the white population try to conduct their dealings with each other was torn aside.

Power base

Mulder has gone from the Cabinet but remains an MP with a significant power base to call on.

If the event had led to a

farce

massive governmental crisis, signifying a shift in power from one section of whites to another, then the case might have merited some detailed analysis and reportage.

United

But in fact all those involved in the arguments around this minor piece of petty-corruption are united in their defence of capitalism and apartheid in South Africa.

The very capitalist newspapers which are objecting to Mulder's misappropriation of public funds are themselves financed through the most massive "misappropriation" of all—the super-exploitation of South Africa's black workers who daily lead a desperate existence on starvation wages (if they have a job at all), and who suffer lack of housing and every other sort of deprivation.



While the revelations might upset a section of the white workers whose standard of living the nationalist government is finding even more difficult to defend in the face of a mounting economic crisis, there will be little else of significance to come out of all this.

Real battles

It is the stirrings of the black workers which will bring on any real inner battles within the capitalist camp and the real issues which will be fought out there will be around how

best to stop the rise of revolution in South Africa.

INDIA

The Janata has just won another resoundingly hollow victory. At the parliamentary by-election in northern Samastipur, the ruling coalition beat off a challenge from Gandhi's Congress Party with a majority of more than 27,000 votes. When the Janata first won the seat in 1977, their majority was over 300,000. For the ingenious bourgeois press of Britain, such a result is a setback—for Gandhi!



French President Giscard

But individual producers have steadily refused to cooperate in the scheme, which aims to share out the reductions in sales so as to prevent the collapse of the weaker national sections of the steel industry.

This utopian plan has foundered on hitting the fundamental realities of capitalist competition.

By dumping their surplus commodities, rival producers have attempted to undercut internationally agreed pricing and so force less competitive sections to the wall.

While these methods have intensified the crisis in some countries, they have not been able to overcome the problems of even the strongest competitors.

In both France and Spain the state has been forced to intervene and organise a wholesale 'rationalisation'

IRELAND



Bomb damage in Belfast

Defend Gay Rights

Dear Editor,
Whilst agreeing with the conclusions of the front page article on the Thorpe case (Socialist Press 127), that this is more than simply another scandal and that the evidence being heard is exposing a great deal about our so-called 'democracy', I do feel that there was an important omission in the article.

The article states that in the same way as the media turned the Watergate scandal into the indictment of one man so now, "the Thorpe case is being focused on one party and one or two politicians". Presumably, though, another important facet of this 'scandal' for the media is the alleged homosexual relationship between Thorpe and Scott.

This provides another excellent opportunity for the media to associate homosexuality with the seedy underworld dealings within what you refer to, perhaps rather moralistically as "the sewer of bourgeois democracy".

While I do not assume that readers of Socialist Press will make a similar association I do think that it is important that we express our opposition to the sensationalising of alleged 'homosexual practices' which serve only to further prejudice and bigotry in order to uphold bourgeois sexual morality that furthers the existence of the family as a unit.

We recognise that gays under capitalism are an oppressed minority and that their oppression in its many forms, is maintained in order that, under the guise of notions of deviance and normality, the family is upheld as an economic unit to serve capitalism.

While we recognise as socialists that under capitalism the liberation of gays can only be at the level of reforms—overturning the 'over-21' age of consent for male homosexuals and removing homosexuality from the World Health Organisation's classification of diseases (no. 302.0)—we must nevertheless have the perspective of fighting to defend gay men and women as an oppressed minority.

At a time when the Labour government is striving to uphold the family through its new policy document on 'The Family' and the introduction of a minister for marriage we must take up a fight against the perpetuation of the family to serve capitalist ends. We see the fight against the cuts, which place more responsibility back into the family, as a perspective for doing this. But along with our fight to prevent the further oppression of women in particular, in this additional burdening of the family, we must also defend the right of gays to express their sexual preferences.

Yours in sisterhood
Teresa Munby

Editor's Reply:
We fully accept the point made on the need vigorously to oppose efforts by the capitalist press to exploit the Thorpe case for propaganda against gay rights.

We have made this point in our pages a number of times previously.

We would point out however that while this aspect of the case came to the fore in the second week of the trial, the lead article to which the letter refers deals solely with points emerging from the first week's proceedings.

There seems little doubt that the efforts by the press to sensationalise Norman Scott's evidence is related not only to attacks on gay rights but also to the desire by the capitalist class to blunt the impact of the political scandal unleashed by Bessell's evidence and the revelation of Thorpe's letters.
Editor.

IRA BOMBS NOT ENOUGH

The war against British imperialist oppression of the Irish people goes on!

This is the unmistakable message of the coordinated series of major bombings carried out by the IRA in the last three weeks, linked to the mobilisation of mass demonstrations both in Britain and the Six Counties demanding the restoration of political status to republican prisoners of war.

The new upsurge comes after a period in which a shortage of explosives and reorganisation within the IRA ranks had left the main focus of the Irish struggle as the heroic 'blanket' protest by the 350 prisoners in 'H' Block, Long Kesh and the women in Armagh Jail.

The bombings, according to *Republican News*, are seen as:

"a means of struggle (unique in Western Europe) which has far-reaching political effects. It challenges the Brits who claim to be in control of the Six Counties, and successes show to the world the instability of the State."

"Behind all these IRA bombs is a structure of nationalist sympathy and support, and we know that politically the bombs destabilise and cause crises for Loyalism."

"Roy Mason, presently on an investment tour in America, will look ridiculous trying to sell the British-occupied Six Counties as a peaceful land where things are 'returning to normal' and where the IRA are 'beaten'."

We have no quarrel with the IRA's absolute right to fight British imperialism and to use such tactics, which they feel are the best way of driving British troops out of Ireland.

But though these methods undoubtedly draw upon and reflect a strong base of support amongst the Catholic minority in the North, they inevitably exclude the participation of the working class in the struggle against British imperialism.

Alternative

The courage and sacrifice of a few is seen as an alternative to patient agitation and political mobilisation of the masses, who have recently shown themselves willing to take up issues relating to the national struggle.

The near-death during a hunger strike of republican frame-up victim Willie Gallacher brought sympathy strikes in key centres in the Six Counties, and indications of widespread working class support.

The use of the so-called "Prevention of Terrorism" Act to detain Belfast dockers sent on a training course to Liverpool led to even more militant industrial action.

And the hanging of trade unionist Brian McGuire in the notorious Castlereagh torture centre led to massive protest strikes and demonstrations in Belfast.

Additional forces

Agitation around demands to fight the mass unemployment, low wages and slum housing which are the fruits of British imperialist rule in the Six Counties could mobilise



PHOTO: Laurence Spatham, IFL

The PAC demonstration in London last week demanding restoration of POW status to republican prisoners

additional working class forces around the fight for an immediate withdrawal of the troops and for socialist policies to provide jobs and decent living standards.

Such policies are relevant both in the North of Ireland and in the struggle against Lynch's capitalist regime in the South.

But instead, the IRA's approach relegates the militant

Irish working class to the role of passive spectator to the clandestine activities of an elite.

The IRA have certainly shown that the Irish war of liberation cannot be subdued by army repression, arrests, tortures or SAS murders.

But their latest campaign also indicates the severe crisis of political leadership which acts to retard the successful

completion of the Irish revolution.

A Trotskyist party must be built in Ireland to answer this crisis and offer a clear way forward.

British workers must also play a role in furthering the struggle in Ireland, taking up the fight for the restoration of political status, for the removal of Labour's torture chief, Roy

Mason and the reactionary Callaghan cabinet, and for concrete solidarity action including the blocking of military supplies to the British army of occupation in Ireland, as part of the fight for the complete withdrawal of British troops.

Broad Left defeated at NUS Special Conference



CARWORKERS CONFERENCE

THE CRISIS IN THE MOTOR INDUSTRY

Called by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement

January 20, 1979 in Birmingham

Conference Statement in next week's Socialist Press

Full details from CDLM, c/o 37, Birchfield Close Blackbird Leys, Oxford

After years of inactivity and betrayal of the interests of students in the Further Education sector, the Broad Left majority of the NUS executive have suddenly discovered a new concern for these weakly unionised students.

At the Emergency NUS Conference, called in the face of opposition from the Broad Left, to discuss the government's latest proposals on student union finance and autonomy, the Executive claimed that "everyone was agreed" that these specific proposals should be rejected.

This was despite the statement made by Sue Slipman—ex-NUS President—welcoming the proposal.

The alternative system that the Broad Left put forward reeks of collaboration and was not only thrown out by a very militant conference representing over 100 colleges but the Executive were censured for devising it.

National talks

The system hatched up by this alliance of Stalinists and left reformists would take negotiations over capitation fee levels out of the hands of local unions and into the hands of the National Executive.

This, they claim, will put the power of the national union behind the weaker colleges. This

system will not only take away influence in the local student bodies but the "negotiating" procedure is to be through a national council composed of one-third NUS representatives, one-third representatives of the Committee of Local Education Authorities and one-third representatives of the Department of Education and Science.

Whatever this body decides will be binding on local unions and the NUS Executive will doubtless then be in the position of enforcing the decision on its membership.

Defeated

This proposal was defeated by 80,000 votes on a card vote. Other amendments put forward by the SWP and the Socialist Students Alliance were also defeated. Both of these stressed the importance of defending student union autonomy but failed to put specific demands on the Executive to win the struggle. They also failed to put the crucial demand for capitation fees to be linked with a workers and students price index to keep pace with inflation.

Danger

The danger for student unionism now is that, despite the opposition from militants at the Emergency Conference, the Broad Left proposal might be accepted at the Annual Conference in Blackpool this weekend.

Censures of the NUS Executive are not enough: they must be removed and replaced by those prepared to lead a principled struggle if students unions are to be defended.

Who profits from Iran slaughter?

It is not only because he is a major bulwark of capitalist control in the Middle East and Gulf area that the Labour leaders fully support the Shah of Iran.

They also recognise Iran as a major customer of the British arms industry—and as such as a major factor subsidising the maintenance of the British armed forces themselves.

According to Anthony Sampson in his book *The Arms Bazaar*, the great majority of Britain's £1,500 million arms export orders in 1977 were for Iran.

The Shah has bought (and is now using) more Chieftain tanks than the British army itself.

The Iranian navy is a major customer for military hovercraft. And a whole host of electronics, aviation and engineering firms derive added profits from arms sales to this butcher regime.

Rushed for export

Two weeks ago *Tribune* highlighted the particular role played by one small firm out in Dorking, Surrey, at which CS gas grenades, riot guns and rubber bullets are being rushed out for export to aid the Iranian dictator in repressing his working class.

The firm, Schermuly, is a subsidiary of British Match. The total workforce is only 200, of which, according to *Tribune* reporter Chris Mullin, a quarter—nearly all TGWU members—

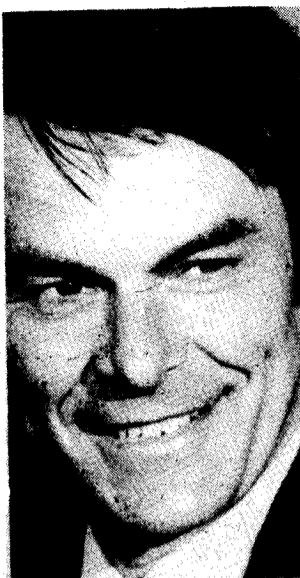


PHOTO: Derek Spekreijjs IFTL

Owen

work on producing riot gear.

The Department of Trade—as reported recently in *Socialist Press*—has sanctioned the export of 13,000 riot guns, plus CS gas cartridges, rubber bullets, helmets, batons, and other related equipment since the mass struggles began in Iran.

250,000 rubber bullets—all perfected during the British military occupation of Ireland—are still on order.

All of this material passes through the hands of trade union labour both in the manufacturing process and in transit to the Shah's murderous state forces.

Production workers, lorry drivers, railwaymen, dockers and seamen all therefore have the opportunity—through blacking action—to cut off these vital supplies and thus assist the struggles of their Iranian brothers and sisters for the most rudimentary democratic and political rights.



And TUC leaders—ominously silent about the Iranian events—have it in their power to ensure that such blacking action is imposed.

Labour 'left' MPs who produce ringing speeches on the evils of the Shah's regime, and even denounce David Owen's craven support, could spearhead such a fight, and link it to a fight to remove Owen and the whole pro-imperialist Callaghan-Healey leadership.

Trade union branches and Labour Parties must insist that such a fight is taken up.

Already the 5/293 TGWU Branch at Cowley has called on the union's National Executive to press for full scale blacking action.

Call for blacking

But the campaign has hardly started. Why hasn't the Communist Party—which controls the Sheetmetal Workers Union acted?

The call for blacking must ring out loud and clear throughout the workers' movement.

Workers in the arms industry

or related industries should set up trade union inquiries to investigate the final use and destination of the lethal equipment they are helping to produce—and call on the rest of the labour movement to assist.

Workers control

Any threat of disciplinary action, use of the Official Secrets Act, or redundancies must be fought with the aid of the whole working class.

Such inquiries could also reveal the huge profits made by the arms industry from the mass murder of Iranian, Irish and other oppressed workers.

They would point to the need for workers' control of the export of arms, so that such material aid is directed not to the enemies of the workers' movement but to those forces fighting imperialism in Asia, Africa, the Arab countries and Latin America.

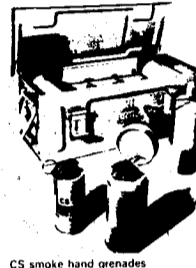
And they would show the necessity for the nationalisation without compensation of the capitalist armaments industry under elected committees of workers' management.



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Gone-and hoping to be forgotten

Two more Parliamentary Private Secretaries resigned last week—with again no prospect of carrying out any serious fight against the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

The resignations of Bruce Grocott and Ivor Clementson came with their vote against the Second Reading of the Bill proposing an increased number of MPs from Northern Ireland.

The Bill itself is part of the reactionary deal through which Callaghan's government has enlisted the Parliamentary support of Enoch Powell and the Ulster Unionists.

But sooner than launch any fight on the real issues at stake, Grocott and Clementson merely followed Tribunes Bob Cryer and Brian Sedgemore out of their junior governmental positions—leaving the right wing leaders untouched.

Labour whip Jock Stallard even managed to

retain his job while abstaining on the same issue.

Meanwhile the speed-up, wage controls, cuts and military terror in Ireland continue unabated.

The workers' movement does not need the fake heroics of individual protest gestures—but a determined fight, even if led initially by only one or two people, for the removal of Callaghan and Healey.

The constituency parties represented by Cryer, Sedgemore, Clementson and Grocott should demand that these MPs undertake the task—and appeal beyond the confines of the Labour Party itself to the entire trade union movement for support.

They should be offered full backing insofar as they carry forward the fight against the right wing leaders, and urged to go further and to spell out a socialist programme to defend workers' independent interests.

Worthlessness

The persistent refusal of even the most 'left' talking Labour MPs to wage such a fight is a clear indication of their worthlessness, and the necessity to construct a leadership that goes beyond their reformist approach and offers workers a revolutionary perspective and programme.

Vicars' pay goes sky high

There will be no government moves to block 20% pay increases for Britain's vicars, it was announced in Parliament last week.

The Church Commissioners had more success than Ford chief Sir Terence Beckett in arguing that this wage rise will not cause unearthly price rises.

And their Parliamentary spokesman Terry Walker assured MPs that vicars'

present wages are by no means out of this world.

There was no talk of any productivity deal. But then, with huge increases being paid out for the police, judges and top military chiefs, and 60% rises on the way for TUC leaders, vicars must feel that they have a case for some kind of parity claim to keep pace with the other oppressors and misleaders of the working class.

PRESS GANG



If half those who have shed tears at the absence of the *Times* read the paper when it appeared, it would have a mass circulation, instead of the scanty readership it so richly deserves.

The loss of the *Times* as a source of news and comment is no loss to anyone except the capitalists and even they have plenty of other avenues for their propaganda.

Orgy

But this did not stop the *Times* and the rest of Fleet Street indulging in an orgy of whimsical farewells as the management lockout began.

The *Times* leader—"There will be an interval"—was suitably dewy-eyed about its readers for whom the paper "is an important part of daily life".

To the almost audible strains of 'Land of Hope and Glory' the mouthpiece of bourgeois reaction linked together its favourite clichés in a few paragraphs:

"It is not for us at the *Times* to assess our significance to British society or to British national life... British liberty... free newspapers... serve the causes of liberty and objective reporting"... etc... etc.

Despite the lockout, the ultimatum and the pistol held to the head of *Times* workers, the leader calmly claimed:

"There is in this no intention to engage in some total conflict with the trade unions. The *Times*... is seeking a responsible and productive new relationship with the trade unions, one which will secure regular production, will create productivity and enable us to improve pay."

Nothing here about the 400 jobs they are trying to axe and the straightjacket clauses which will seek to prevent chapels taking action over any grievances.

Bound hand and foot

The rest of the leader is given over to assuring trade union leaders that they will gain by having their members bound hand and foot.

"We shall have done a service to the trade union movement by showing that good trade unionism backed by good negotiating can produce real benefits, benefits which are not available to the trade unionism of the mass rally and the sudden walk out."

In the letter columns Major (who else?) Hugh Walter quoted from the first *Times* leader of November 29, 1814, which sung the praises of the Koenig and Bauer steam press in lyrical

terms.

"The reader of this paragraph now holds in his hands one of the many thousand impressions of the *Times* newspaper, which were taken off last night by mechanical apparatus. A system of machinery almost organic has been devised and arranged, which, while it relieves the human frame of its most laborious efforts in printing, far exceeds all human powers in rapidity and despatch."

Later the leader went on to voice "the various disappointments and deep anxiety to which we have for a long course of time been subjected," including "fear of an anti-machinery combination within Printing House Square" and "a demonstration of compositors, who saw their labour at less demand as a result of the abolition of the hitherto necessary practice of composing duplication pages."

Which shows that it is not the technology itself which is at stake but the owners.

Or as J. Freedman, NATSOPA Night Machine Chapel FoC at the *Times* put it, in the only letter not backing the management:

"My Chapel will receive under the New Agreements Project less wages for longer hours with a greatly reduced staff, no longer holidays"... etc.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Sedgemore

THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN MARXISM

1978 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the emergence of the Trotskyist movement in the United States. The Socialist Workers Party which today claims to represent that tradition offers no more than a hollow mockery of the fighting spirit of that early movement. This article is Part 2 of a series in *Socialist Press* which will examine the early history of the SWP, the party so central in the 1930s to the launching of the Fourth International.

By Graham Bond



Huge crowds at Lenin's funeral in January 1924. That year also saw the birth of Stalin's "theory of socialism in one country"

The faction struggle that was developing in the crisis-wracked Soviet Republic reflected itself throughout the Comintern.

In August-September 1923 a massive strike wave gripped the cities of the Soviet Union as a result of the economic policies which were being imposed on the workers.

This strike wave threatened the power of the government which was rapidly becoming bureaucratized under the control of Stalin.

The GPU, the political police (which was once used against the enemies of the Soviet state) had to be informed of any groupings that existed in the Soviet Communist Party.

Trotsky launched an attack on this state of affairs in his "First Letter to the Central Committee" in October 1923:

"Both these facts testify to an extraordinary deterioration of the situation within the party since the Twelfth Congress... Many, many party members, by no means the worst, have felt the greatest alarm at the methods and procedures used in prepara-

tions for the Twelfth Congress..."

The Challenge of the Left Opposition 1923-25 by Leon Trotsky, pp51-2.

This deterioration did not stop in the Soviet Republic:

"Beginning with the autumn of 1923, the history of the Communist International is a history of complete renovation of its Moscow staff, and the staffs of the national sections, by way of a series of palace revolutions, purgations from above, expulsions, etc.

"At the present time, the Communist International is a completely submissive apparatus in the service of Soviet foreign policy, ready at any time for any zigzag whatever."

Revolution Betrayed pp186-7.

Temporary concession

Trotsky's answer to these problems, argued in 1923, was a change of course away from the crisis measures embodied in the New Economic Policy of 1921 towards socialist planning and long term development of industry as the bedrock of the economy.

The NEP itself had

represented a temporary concession to the peasantry, middle farmers and businessmen in order to release resources urgently needed for the war effort.

But if continued, these concessions would strengthen these elements at the expense of the working class and effectively rebuild the capitalist class in Russia, threatening all the gains of the October Revolution.

Prosperous layers

The emerging Party bureaucracy, however, was based very much on the peasant and prosperous layers that benefitted from the NEP, and was moulding the Party to conform to this line.

Thus as Trotsky began to attract youth and the most experienced and dedicated Communists to his positions he incurred the growing wrath of the bureaucracy itself. Though 'factions' were outlawed by the CPSU's Tenth Congress, the Stalinists began to organise themselves as a majority faction in moves to crush all opposition.

The impact of these changes were to be felt in the Communist Party of America, whose Fourth

Convention in 1925 was to have a Parity Commission chaired by a Russian Comintern agent called Gusev.

Foster, Cannon and Bittleman were elected for their faction to the Central Committee and its Political Committee.

Ruthenberg, Lovestone and Bedack were elected to both Committees from their faction.

All six were on the parity commission, with Gusev in the chair.

The Party membership had elected a total of 61 Central Committee members. Forty were elected by supporters of the Foster-Cannon faction and 21 by the opposition.

The parity commission agreed unanimously on both political and trade union resolutions, and there appeared to be a trend towards unification of the contending factions.

Cable from Moscow

But towards the end of the convention Gusev called both sides to a meeting of the parity commission and handed them a "cable from Moscow".

It said "The Ruthenberg group is more loyal to the

Communist International and stands closer to its views". It called for the Ruthenberg group to get 40% of the representation on the Central Committee.

At this Foster exploded, and decided he would not accept the majority under such conditions. He proposed Ruthenberg should take the majority, and stated that he would not accept membership.

50-50 basis

He moved this proposal at the Foster-Cannon faction meeting.

Cannon moved a counter-proposal that:

"We lock up the new CC on a 50-50 basis with each faction sharing equally in the responsibility in the leadership."

This split the faction down the middle. After a 24 hour debate on it, Cannon's "50-50" resolution was adopted.

But no sooner had they gone onto the "50-50" Central Committee, than Gusev announced that he would follow the spirit of the Comintern decision and support the Ruthenberg group.

Gusev said this meant that the Ruthenberg faction should have the majority.

The damage done by these bureaucratic manoeuvres developed even during the dramatic events which followed.

Violent clashes

The Passaic strike in 1926 sticks out like a sore thumb in the history of the American CP.

Albert Weisbord had gone into the field of organising the unorganised under the banner of the "United Front Committee".

In the spring of that year the strike broke out with CP member Weisbord as its leader.

It soon exploded into violent clashes with the police.

The Passaic strike put the party on the map. It revealed the Communists as a dynamic force in

unionizing workers.

But unfortunately for Weisbord this came into conflict with Foster's pro-AFL policy which had been endorsed by the Sixth Plenum of the Communist International.

The unorganised workers had been disregarded in the past by the craft-based union federation in the AFL.

The Passaic strike was certainly well organised and expertly led. But the bosses were too strong, and would not negotiate with the "United Front Committee".

When the strike began sagging and the bosses would not make a settlement with the UFC, they began negotiations with the AFL Textile Union—with one condition.

Much deeper

That was the ditching of the strike leader Weisbord (who later formed the Communist League).



Trotsky with Red Army Officers



Lenin and Trotsky



Washington hunger marchers in 1927

Both factions of the CPUS leadership agreed with it unanimously.

As the faction struggle unfolded, the divisions had become much deeper. The Party now split into three factions—Lovestone's, Cannon's and Foster's.

During the whole of this period the CPUS was given no information about the issues of struggle in the Russian Party.

Fought in dark

Official documents of Stalin's accusations and slanders against the Trotskyist Left Opposition were easy to come by but nothing from the Left Opposition itself.

As a result, in the USA as in many other Comintern sections the members failed to understand the complicated issues at stake.

They fought in the dark thinking only of their national struggles.

The faction fights still

raging in the US party began to take a more sinister turn once those factions, seeking more credibility from the Comintern began to realise that the way to gain favour was through indiscriminate Trotsky-baiting.

They began making big speeches against Trotskyism.

The expulsion of Trotsky and Zinoviev from the CPSU in the Autumn of 1927 were followed by demands that all the parties immediately take a position on the expulsions.

The Lovestoneites began to take the lead on this and the Fosterites followed suit.

They began to have battles as to who could shout loudest against Trotsky.

But then some of the issues at stake began to come through to the

Americans.

They heard about the struggle between the Left Opposition and the Stalinists over the role of the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee. This committee became a substitute for independent Communist work in Britain and gave credibility to the treacherous TUC 'lefts'.

The policy throttled the British CP on the eve of the General Strike in 1926.

Reduced to zero

Cannon started to have doubts about the Stalinist line—but doubts were not good enough.

Then another cable came from Moscow in 1927. This turned the CPUS minority into the majority, and reduced the democratic power of the Party's own conference to zero.

The Communist International was now the brutal arbiter of policy and perspective in the American Party—and Stalin the arbiter of the policy of the Comintern.

In the spring of 1928 Cannon went to the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in Moscow.

Fortunately Cannon was put on the Programme Commission.

Commission

Trotsky, then exiled in Alma Ata, had been expelled from the Russian party and the CI, but was appealing to the Sixth Congress through a document which arrived in the translating room.

This document was called *The Draft Programme of the Communist International: A Criticism of Fundamentals*.

After it had been translated it went only to the heads of delegations and the members of the Programme Commission.

Cannon got a copy of the document all to himself, in English. Maurice Spector of the Canadian party got one as well.

Having read it, Cannon no longer had any doubts. Neither did Spector.



Stalin

They made a pact between them that they would come home and start a struggle for Trotskyism.

Cannon smuggled Trotsky's draft criticism out of Russia and arrived back in the USA.

At once he set out to recruit a faction for Trotsky who had been condemned in every party of the CI and once again condemned as a "counter-revolutionist" at the Sixth Congress of the CI.

At that time no-one was known as an outspoken supporter of Trotskyism.

You could not raise questions about Trotsky without being labelled a traitor and being ostracised from the Party.

Expelled

Yet, using his one and only copy of the draft criticism, Cannon won over Rose Karsner, Max Schachtman, Martin Abern, and a

few others.

The Foster faction (who were then working in a joint caucus with Cannon's faction) got wind of the fact that Cannon was a Trotskyist.

Not wanting to be accused as "accomplices", the Fosterites expelled them from the joint caucus.

They were given a 'trial' before the Political Committee and the Central Control Commission in October 1928.

They were accused of "conspiracy to advocate" certain proscribed ideas.

Swore allegiance

They did not admit they were Trotskyists, because they wanted the party membership to know what was at stake, and the longer the trial lasted, the more the members would get to know.

The trial was allowed for

factional reasons to drag on by the Lovestoneites—who wanted to compromise the Fosterites as Cannon's accomplices in order to take complete control of the Party.

The accused took advantage of this division in order to gain time.

But eventually, as one Lovestoneite prosecutor objected to Foster's haste in finding them guilty, referring to the many years they had been in the Party, Cannon got up and swore allegiance to the Russian Left Opposition.

The American Trotskyist movement was launched under the most harsh and unfavourable conditions. Its problems were immense—but its strength was the continuity of the Marxist programme as defended by the Russian Left Opposition against every form of attack.



the youth rallied to the call of the Left Opposition



The young James P. Cannon

OLD PALS TOGETHER AGAIN

Part One of a review by Tony Richardson of "Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution—the Trotskyist View" by Joseph Hansen, published by Pathfinder Press in paperback.



Above: Hansen, below: Mandel

The last couple of years have seen some internal changes within the 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International.

The Leninist Trotskyist Faction, which followed the political line of the US Socialist Workers Party (though the SWP is prevented by reactionary US laws from actual affiliation to international bodies) has merged with the former International Majority Tendency headed by Ernest Mandel.

In opposition to these moves, a newly-formed Bolshevik Tendency has emerged, led by Nahuel Moreno, comprising the vast majority of the USFI sections in Latin America and some forces in Europe and declaring itself "a tendency more orthodox than ever".

Both the documents dissolving the LTF and the declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency give rise to numerous questions about the history of the USFI and the Fourth International as a whole.

For SWP leader Joe Hansen to come out now with a book defending the SWP's positions on the Cuban revolution is thus linked to the moves within the USFI to consolidate a new 'united front' of SWP and Mandel supporters against the new challenge from the Bolshevik Tendency and elsewhere.

Mass pressure

The Fourth International split in 1953 as a result of the false positions argued by its leadership—Ernest Mandel and Michel Pablo.

They declared that the objective "revolutionary process" would pressure the mass Stalinist parties of Europe to the point where they would "project a revolutionary orientation".

And they proclaimed that



Kruschev—used Cuban revolution for his own ends.

because in China and Yugoslavia the Communist Parties had become "centrist" parties under mass pressure, there was no need to build Trotskyist parties in those countries to carry through political revolution.

The SWP, and the British and French sections rejected this line in 1953. A public faction was declared against it.

The faction was subsequently "expelled" by Pablo and became the International Committee—which, in degenerate form, still exists today.

But, ten years later, in the wake of the Cuban Revolution, the SWP broke from its support for the IC and moved back towards the remaining International Secretariat, still led by Pablo and Mandel.

The earliest document in the book (which reprints material from 1960-70 with a 1978 introduction) confirms that, despite the hasty and unprincipled way in which the reunification took place in 1963 the political basis did exist for the SWP to accommodate to the empirical and opportunist method of Pablo and Mandel.

Hansen throughout the articles argues shamelessly that

political analysis must start not from the conflict of opposing class forces but "from the facts that everyone has to start with" (p.187).

He even goes so far as to call the Marxist method of dialectical materialism "empiricism systematically carried out" (p.137).

Material process

But the empirical "facts" are not simply "given"—they arise from a material process of struggle in which the continuation of capitalism and the treachery of reformist, nationalist and Stalinist leaders play key roles.

Thus, while Hansen in *The Truth About Cuba* can ape bourgeois historians by drawing together a strong potted history pointing to each major development in the revolution in relation to expropriation, this is little more than a catalogue of events rather than an analysis showing the connection between those events.

The reality is that Hansen starts and ends with the facts as they fit into his scheme.

Because capitalism in Cuba was overturned and this went against the previous position of the Cuban CP, therefore, he argues, Castro must be an anti-Stalinist, a "Marxist revolutionary" or even a "socialist revolutionary".

Credentials

And since the Cuban CP declared support for Castro, Hansen even awards revolutionary credentials to this Stalinist Party:

"The fact is [!] that the Cuban Communist Party supports the revolution. If a rift were to occur between Cuba and the Soviet Union it can be taken for certain that the loyalties of a decisive section of the Communist Party, if not the party as a whole, would remain with the Cuban revolution. The experience of Yugoslavia speaks eloquently for such an outcome."

p.76

"This party, like other Communist Parties, is favourably affected by the melting of the great iceberg of Stalinism, which began with the Soviet triumph in World War II . . .

"Viewed with cold objectivity, it is clear that the Cuban Communist Party is not a contestant for power but is instead one of the main components of a potential new political movement whose ultimate shape is yet to be determined."

pp.279-80

But these enthusiastic phrases are describing the same Stalinist party that had supported Batista in presidential elections in the 1930s!

Democratic conclusion

It never seems to occur to Hansen to ask why a counter-revolutionary Stalinist party should suddenly declare itself apparently in favour of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism.

Instead, his analysis starts from the "fact" that such a change has seemingly taken place:

"That serious differences appeared in the world Communist [Stalinist] movement after the decades of Stalinist monolithism was in itself a progressive development.

"Arising fundamentally from the victory of the Soviet Union over German imperialism, the post-war advance of the colonial revolution and a balance of world forces favouring the socialist camp, these differences have helped pave the way for a resurgence of revolutionary Marxism.

"What is bad [!] is the absence of any provisions, customs and institutions to carry the discussion of the differences forward to a democratic conclusion."

(p.336, 1966)

So Hansen, once thought by USFI members to be a staunch defender of Trotskyist "orthodoxy" actually believes that the Stalinist movement could be won back to revolutionary Marxism, given only adequate "provisions, customs and institutions"!

Open rejection

This position amounts to an open rejection of the very basis on which the fight for the Fourth International was taken up by the International Left Opposition in 1933: the fact that the Comintern was definitively "dead for the purposes of revolution".

The "serious differences" between Stalinist leaders, about which Hansen is so keen, amount in reality to no more than tactical disagreements on how best to control the working class.

For Trotskyists, the only "democratic conclusion" to such a "discussion" is the political overthrow of the parasitic bureaucracies in the degenerated workers states and the destruction of the mass Western CPs by the building of revolutionary parties.

The Cuban CP was actually driven into its initially uncomfortable alliance with Castro partly as a result of its determination not to allow any independent mobilisation of the Cuban masses, and to remain in control of such movements that did take place, and partly as a result of the foreign and military policy requirements of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

Strategic outpost

The Moscow Stalinists saw Cuba as offering a cheap and convenient means of establishing a strategic outpost on the doorstep of US imperialism.

This opportunity arose at the point where the Americans had taken a major stride ahead in the arms race, with the development of a highly expensive sophisticated network of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles.

Refusing to mobilise the working class either in the USA or internationally in defence of the USSR, the Kremlin bureaucrats seized on the chance offered by the Cuban revolution.

As Castro's nationalist government lurched into crisis because the US retaliated against initial nationalisations by imposing a blockade, the Soviet leaders stepped in, bought up the crucial sugar crop, and cultivated an alliance



with Castro. An obedient Cuban CP also complemented a parallel policy.

The Cuban Stalinists, at no point became revolutionaries, or broke from the Kremlin.

Wholesale adaptations

For Hansen to suggest that they did raises the whole question of whether in a revolutionary situation it is ever necessary to build Trotskyist parties at all—since, inevitably, such situations always involve mass pressure on the Stalinist parties, and the "melting of the great iceberg of Stalinism" and the colonial revolution have both gone a lot further in 1978 than they had in the 1960s.

Hansen's argument—now formally endorsed by the SWP in this reprinted edition of his writings on Cuba—shows beyond doubt his failure and that of his Party to understand or complete the split with Pablo in 1953.

Both the SWP and the British Socialist Labour League (now the WRP) had in fact supported Pablo's positions at the 1951 Third World Congress of the Fourth International.

And even after the 1953 split there was no serious attempt to work back through these wrong positions and correct them.

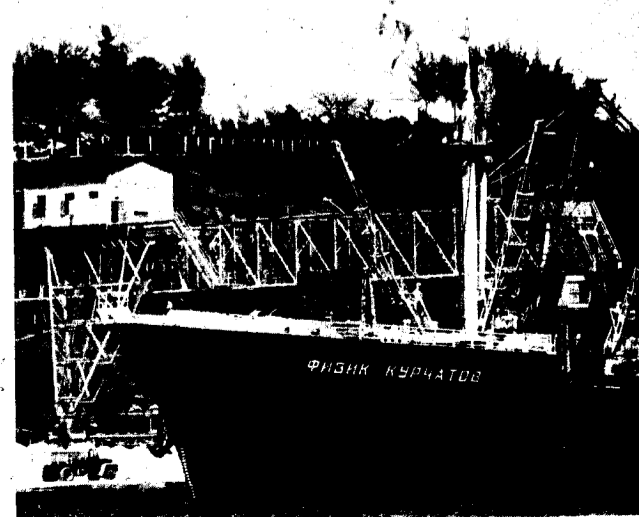
The result was that the SWP in only ten years drifted back to the politics it supposedly broke from in 1953.

But those politics had in fact grown even worse. Pablo and Mandel's opportunist revisions of the Trotskyist Programme in relation to Stalinism in 1953 had been extended by 1963 to include wholesale adaptations to petty bourgeois nationalists such as Fidel Castro!

Next week:
Hansen on Castro



Castro



Soviet freighter in Havana

Their 'perks' are more than your wages!



'Perks'—The 'Man Alive Report' BBC-2 Tuesday November 30, Reviewed by John Lister

"That's why some people seem so much richer than the rest of us".

This is the way last week's *Man Alive Report* (BBC-2) summed up a whole catalogue of tax-free perks which bolster the already fat salaries of top management.

There were some interesting statistics, particularly in a period of a rigid 5% limit on workers' wage increases.

For those workers struggling with the HP payments, repair bills, insurance fees, mortgages and prospects of rising petrol costs to keep family cars on the road, it is instructive to learn that three out of every five new cars that pass you by are provided free of charge by companies.

While families scrape around for the cash for one holiday a year, 48% of companies pay for wives/husbands to accompany representatives on business trips.

36% addition

And "perks" in one form or another account on average for a 36% addition to the salary of managing directors.

Foremen, on the other hand, have to scrape by with average benefits worth only an extra 13%.

The *Man Alive Report* detailed a number of case histories to prove how top bosses can easily add tax free perks to their salary worth more than the average annual wage.

One executive talked casually about the pension

scheme, free Jaguar car, sick benefits, free slap-up lunches, education grants, telephone rental and accountants' fees paid out by his grateful firm.

And merchant banker Tony Vernon-Harcourt welcomed the BBC cameras into his sumptuous home to tell viewers about his cheap mortgage, car, pension, medical insurance and meals worth, he estimated, around £4,750 after tax—or £15,000 before tax.

More ingenious

Whole businesses are now setting up to advise employers of new, more ingenious ways of forking out benefits for top management that evade government wage controls and taxation.

The new name for such perks is "alternative remuneration".

Virtually free suits, and even camera equipment are one possible new area still being explored.

Rigid controls

Meanwhile on the shop floor where workers' sweat creates the profit squandered by these parasites, wages are subject to rigid government controls.

It was typical of the BBC to attempt to defuse the dynamite contained in the first part of the programme with a futile "discussion" at the end in which an ageing TGWU convenor predictably bumbled on about how "disingenuous" it all was—before trotting out an absurd pet scheme for a universal 18% rate of tax to apply to all

wages and salaries.

This nonsense brought equally predictable favourable noises from employers' spokesmen.

And the regulation 'sociologist' was wheeled out to mutter that it was all "rather sad", lamenting the energy required to obtain sufficient perks to secure top management's "social status"—as if all the material benefits were sought for psychological reasons!

The fact is that under capitalism such corruption and inequality are built into the very system itself, where

the chosen representatives of the private owners of the means of production supervise the exploitation of the working class who own nothing but their ability to work.

The answer lies not in cosmetic measures to cut perks but on action to force the expropriation of basic industry, without compensation, under workers' management which will ensure that "managers" become accountable to and equally paid with the remainder of the workforce.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

CONFERENCE BOOST FOR CUTS FIGHT

An initiative which could transform the fight against the cuts in Sheffield was begun on Saturday with the calling of a delegate conference "On Cuts in the Health Service".

The conference adopted a fighting programme of policies to offer a lead to trade union branches and Labour Party wards, and a steering committee was elected to co-ordinate the campaign.

Rundown

Speakers from the Organising Committee presented a detailed report on the running down of the health service in Sheffield and brought out the importance of occupation linked to supporting strike action as the only tactics to defend threatened jobs and services.

Ron Giles (ASTMS) brought out the links between fighting the cuts and the struggle against low pay, stressing that only a sliding scale of wages could protect health workers' living standards.

In moving the Organising Committee's resolution to the conference he also emphasised the need for nationalisation of drug and supply companies, the importance of this to be demonstrated by a fight to open the books of Area Health Authorities to elected committees of trade unionists and users of the health service.

Programme

The resolution also spelt out a programme of occupation and strike action to combat the cuts in the city.

The extent of these cuts was outlined by Ian Davidson (ASTMS) who painted a familiar picture of job losses, reductions in hospital beds, long waiting lists and penny-pinching by the Area Health Authority which was resulting in totally inadequate facilities.

The start of the latest round of attacks comes with the closure of part of the Sheffield Royal Infirmary in January and the conference resolved to oppose this and to campaign to save the rest of the threatened hospital.

Other speakers included

Ted Eames (Oxford City Nursery Campaign), Ken Williamson (Chairman of the Longworth Hospital Support Committee) and Candy Unwin from "Fight-back".

Ted Eames attacked the treacherous role of the trade union bureaucracy in sabotaging the fight against the cuts and underlined the international nature of the crisis of capitalism which the Labour government is attempting to foist onto the working class.

Specific details of the occupation of the South Oxford Nursery, of the building of the Longworth hospital defence campaign and of continuing struggles in London and South Wales were brought out.

Supporting strikes

Ken Williamson used the example of the recently ended occupation of Hounslow Hospital to illustrate the absolute necessity for supporting strike action whenever services are occupied.

The Sheffield Campaign Against Cuts in the Health Service now has a clear



Mass support in the struggle to save Hounslow Hospital

programme on which to fight in the labour movement in the city.

Stalinists

Major battles lie ahead, particularly with the deeply entrenched Stalinists whose considerable strength in Sheffield is consistently used to attempt to undermine the labour movement's willingness to fight the cuts.

But the campaign, which has already successfully defended a threatened children's hospital, has the opportunity to provide the kind of revolutionary socialist leadership which the Stalinists, reformists and 'protest' groups cannot challenge.

How to fight the Cuts



How to fight the cuts

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INDUSTRIAL NEWS

HOUNSLOW WORK-IN ENDS



PHOTO: Laurence Spearman, IFL

The third day of the Hounslow work-in, September 1977

The occupation of Hounslow Hospital was ended on Tuesday 28 November after a statement issued by the Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow Area Health Authority that they were to arrange removal from the premises.

This was widely understood to mean likely moves to eviction by the AHA.

Hounslow Hospital had been occupied for over a year, (the longest occupation in the history of the NHS) as part of a campaign to re-open it as a community hospital.

Throughout this time the occupation was faced by endless manoeuvres against them by the AHA, culminating in the notorious raid, in which patients were snatched from their beds without warning to themselves or their relatives and bundled out to a fleet of private ambulances.

Those ten NALGO members who assisted in this action are currently appealing against their expulsion from the union.

Carl Brecker's initiative to continue the occupation, coupled with an immediate and successful appeal for national

and local press coverage turned the event of the raid in favour of the Hospital's defence and against the AHA.

Hounslow Hospital became a national focal point of the fight against hospital closures and cuts in health expenditure.

Assisted by the Hounslow Trades Council, the Occupation Committee was a major force in creating the Fightback organisation, and also launched a local Area Campaign Committee

against health service cuts.

However, the political weaknesses of the Occupation Committee were not corrected; namely mere protest politics, the spawning of illusions in "left" Labour MPs and union bureaucrats and the refusal to campaign for national indefinite strike action against cuts in the health service

Thus last store was put in last Friday's meeting of South East Region TUC Secretary Jack

Sell out deal at House of Holland

The union recognition strike at the House of Holland warehouse has been called off by TGWU full-time officials following a sell-out deal cooked up between them and the employer.

Though it had been clear for some time that the union bureaucracy were making moves in this direction, it was not until last Tuesday that they moved in for the kill.

The Northampton and Oxford-based officials Bill Morris and Geoff Hulett called the sacked workers together, making sure they included what was by then a majority who had abandoned the struggle since it began two months previously.

Morris, (whose record of activities on behalf of local employers has included most notably, supervising an all-out management-union offensive against the militant shop stewards leadership in the Export

Packing Service plant next door to the House of Holland) proceeded to announce the terms of the 'settlement'.

He said the firm would pay varying amounts as compensation which the strikers could accept or reject as they pleased, but as far as the TGWU was concerned the union had done pretty well as agreement had been reached and the dispute was over.

Well aware that most of the people there had no interest other than such a buy-off, he was able to brush aside the bitter opposition from the group of workers who had kept the strike going from its earliest stages.

efforts to end the strike had been increased by the success of the recent mass picket and the prospect of another one on the horizon for which bigger forces were being mobilised.

Justified

Hulett now justifies the betrayal by saying the company had threatened to close down unless the action was called off.

The lesson for workers in similar actions could not be clearer and confirms the role of the union bureaucracy in the fight to defend basic rights.



Hulett

Regional Secretary

Determined to hold out as long as possible, the group confronted Region 5 Secretary Brian Mathers and demanded the union continue its backing.

Mathers reply was that he had full confidence in Morris and was prepared to support whatever actions he had taken.

There is no doubt that the bureaucracy's desperate

Why join the WSL?

Quite frankly, we're unique!

We're the only movement that fights patiently and relentlessly for the building of a Trotskyist party capable of mobilising the working class in the struggle for state power and the establishment of a socialist society.

In doing so, the WSL alone does not shrink from head-on battles with the existing leaders of the working class - whether these be 'left' talking Labourites union bureaucrats, or Stalinists of the Communist Party.

In these battles we set out to prove to workers both in theory and in practice the necessity for a new leadership and for a programme of transitional demands which, starting from today's problems and today's consciousness within the working class, lead workers in struggle to grasp the need for socialist revolution.

For this reason, though we are smaller than some self-styled 'revolutionary' groups, the WSL has featured in the forefront of pay struggles in British Leyland,

in the fight against the sale of jobs by TUC leaders, in the struggle against the cuts, in unionisation struggles, and in the fight against bureaucratic dictatorship within the unions.

This method of approach - rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy, and any form of concession to the counter-revolutionary reformist or Stalinist bureaucracy - is of course essential for the working class not only in Britain but internationally.

In taking up international issues the WSL points out not only the obligation of British workers to support the Irish liberation struggle and revolutionary struggles such as those in Iran and Southern Africa, but also the necessity for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International as the organising centre of the world party of socialist revolution.

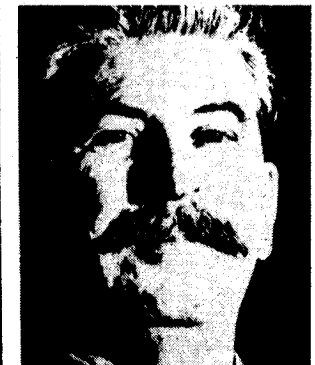
The WSL is not the biggest movement on the left in Britain nor is it the easiest to be a member of. But in its approach to both theory and practice it is

the only really serious revolutionary movement.

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WHY NOT JOIN US? Fill in the form below for more details, or approach your local branch, who will gladly supply more information about our programme, policies, and perspectives.

'Communists' Against Revolution



The key book for understanding post-war Stalinism. 166pp, £1.75 plus 20p post and packing from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

Mass meeting throws out pay plan

A mass meeting at Swan Hunter's Tyneside shipyards last week followed Govan shipbuilders in throwing out plans to replace the present pay structure with a three-grade system based on a single set of national negotiations.

At present there are 168 separate sets of negotiations covering trades in British Shipbuilders yards.

The new proposal involves minimum wage levels of only £80 for craftsmen, £70 for semi-skilled and £62 for unskilled.

But in order to introduce it Govan workers would be faced with a 2½ year standstill on their wages, and other shipyard workers with a Phase 4 increase of only 2%.

The reactionary scheme is backed to the hilt by leaders of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, by the employers and by the government.

It offers to workers the prospect of indefinite sacrifice in an all-out bid to make this crisis-hit industry profitable.

Meanwhile the compensation payments to the old owners, the bank interest charges, and the profits raked in by private suppliers continue to be guaranteed.

In rejecting the new pay structure, workers must also demand the books of British Shipbuilders are opened to elected committees of trade unionists in order to reveal the exploitation of the industry for private profit.

On this basis the fight in defence of jobs, wages and conditions can be seen to connect with the fight for the nationalisation, without compensation, under workers' management of the engineering industry as a whole.

MORE DETAILS

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OFFICIALS RIG LEYLAND

SELL-OUT VOTE

Careful joint work between British Leyland management and union officials has led to the latest decision to put the company's package of proposals to a ballot of members.

The package includes a 5% increase on basic rates back-dated to November 1—not the 17% suggested in the Tory press. Also included is the loss of 7,000 jobs through voluntary redundancy in addition to 5,000 being shed through "natural wastage".

The remaining workforce will be expected to do the additional work thus created as well as their own.

Bench marks

The third main point is the acceptance in principle of job evaluation and of a highly contentious grading structure which jobs a basic 60 "bench mark" places into five pay grades.

If all these elements are accepted, and every plant slots its workforce into the 60 "bench marks", then, and only then, will the "parity" payments be paid.

And management are also withholding until that time the payment of nationally-agreed increases in premium rates for overtime and night shifts.

This appalling deal was manoeuvred to the point of a ballot through a Leyland Cars National Joint Negotiating Committee meeting last Tuesday. In the vote at that meeting 12 convenors representing semi-skilled workers (the majority of the workforce) opposed the deal.

Full time officials

Six convenors from skilled sections voted in favour. But so did six full-time union officials—who do not even work in British Leyland!

And this bogus 12-12 "tied vote" was resolved by TGWU national secretary Grenville Hawley, who, as chairman, used his "casting vote" in favour of the deal!

This decision was then hastily put to the vote at a meeting of convenors last Thursday. The meeting was weighted heavily in favour of skilled sections (groups of as little as two or three skilled men in each plant get one "vote", just the same as representatives of thousands of semi-skilled workers).

Skilled sections benefit most

from Leyland's pay plan. Not surprisingly, therefore, this convenors' meeting approved the proposal to put the deal to a ballot with a recommendation to accept.

Significantly the first speaker to defend the deal in the convenors' meeting was Communist Party member Peter Nicholas. The Longbridge vote—also dominated by the Communist Party—was also thrown behind the company plan.

The decision by convenors to go for a ballot amounts to a decision to flout the outcome of the last ballot, which specifically agreed that plant level bargaining would continue this year.

National leaflet

Fighting this betrayal, the ad-hoc committee 'Levyland Stewards for the 1978 Review' has produced a national leaflet explaining the way the recommendation for a "yes" vote came about.

The leaflet explains the meaning of the company plan, calls for a "no" vote in the ballot and calls for preparations to fight the onslaught on jobs and

conditions that will flow from the 'parity' deal.

Though the company, union leaders and the press have now orchestrated their campaign for a 'yes' vote, the enforcement of such a vote still poses problems.

Productivity increases are already being resisted in some plants even before the 'parity' speed-up gets under way.

Triumph stewards at Speke are resisting plans for 800 redundancies, and at Cowley, where 1,300 jobs are scheduled for the axe, TGWU convenor Bob Fryer has promised to support any section fighting to defend manning levels.

Even Longbridge workers, denied any leadership, are likely to resist efforts to cut the workforce by 1,300 and add the extra work onto their existing jobs.

The grading structure, too, is likely to prove a source of angry resistance.



PHOTO: Dave Evans, IFL

Longbridge workers—will they accept 1,300 redundancies?

Already at the Cowley Body Plant mass meetings of all production workers are to take place on Tuesday to oppose the grading structure's attempt to split production workers into two grades.

The resolution to be put states that the Body Plant will only allow one production worker's job to be evaluated and that:

"In view of the accepted

responsibilities of Mobility of Labour by Production Workers within this plant, and no demarcation between jobs, all Production Workers must be in ONE GRADE, and that should be the top grade."

The 'Stewards for the 1978 Review' leaflet cites the example of the Body Plant and calls on other sections to fight the effects of the ballot should the company plan be carried.

Storm brews on UPW pay

Tom Jackson's winter break at Boumemouth is not going to turn out the ideal holiday of his dreams.

Whatever the weather outside, the atmosphere is certain to be stormy inside the UPW's Special Conference on Pay and Productivity.

After three years of slavish devotion to government wage control, the UPW leadership has finally been forced to fling caution to the winds, and recommend an 8% wage claim along with full consolidation, reduction of the working week, an increase in annual leave, a cost-of-living clause and various

fringe benefits.

The size of this package reflects fairly accurately the scale of the pressure building up within the Post Office from UPW members suffering from primitive working conditions and miserable pay rates.

But the Executive's recommendations have already been challenged by scores of demands, almost all demanding larger claims, and ugly talk of industrial action has already stung the ears of Tom Jackson and co.

Amendment

One amendment from the Oxford (PHG) Branch puts forward a 25% claim, alongside all the other sections of the Executive's claim, and provides for a realistic cost of living clause as opposed to the Executive's phony gesture.

The same branch has also called for the rejection of the proposals on productivity which have now been held back by the Executive.

LEEDS Trades Council has passed unanimously a call from the National Union of Sheet Metal Workers for the Labour government to stop supplying arms to Iran.

But the resolution lacked any call on the trade union movement to impose immediate blacking action to bring such supplies to a halt.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Jackson

Garners strike faces new threat

TGWU officials will attempt to use the half-hearted December 8 'Day of Action' called by the Greater London Association of Trades Councils as a pretext for withholding further support from the Garners strike.

This became clear last Tuesday in a meeting between the strike committee and Regional officials Staden and Shorter.

They declared that the Day of Action would be a "test" of whether further support should be forthcoming.

Open threat

Since these bureaucrats have been distinguished up to now by their blank refusal to mobilise support on the picket lines or release even the financial support that has been allocated to the strike, this amounts to an open threat to knife the strike.

While stating that they will regard the turn-out on December 8 as a measure of the strength of the strike, the officials have predictably lifted not a finger to mobilise support for the Day of Action.

They have reportedly "informed" TGWU branches in the 500,000-strong Region.

Police stations

But at the same time Shorter, with catering officer Abrahams, were visiting police stations last week—no doubt reaffirming their treacherous agreement to limit picket lines to six strong.

To help enforce this arbitrary limit, Shorter and Staden are insisting that contingents of supporters should first report to them at strike HQ, to be directed by them to appropriate restaurants.

The largest possible turn-out on Friday is therefore essential to protect the strike from further bureaucratic sabotage as its first anniversary approaches.

The announcement of the TGWU victory of the marathon

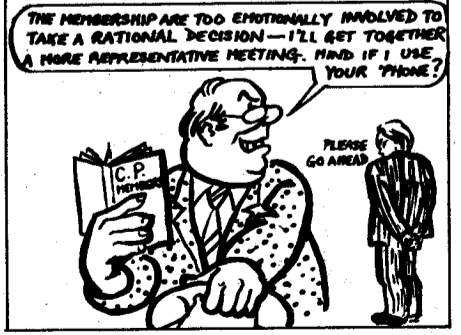
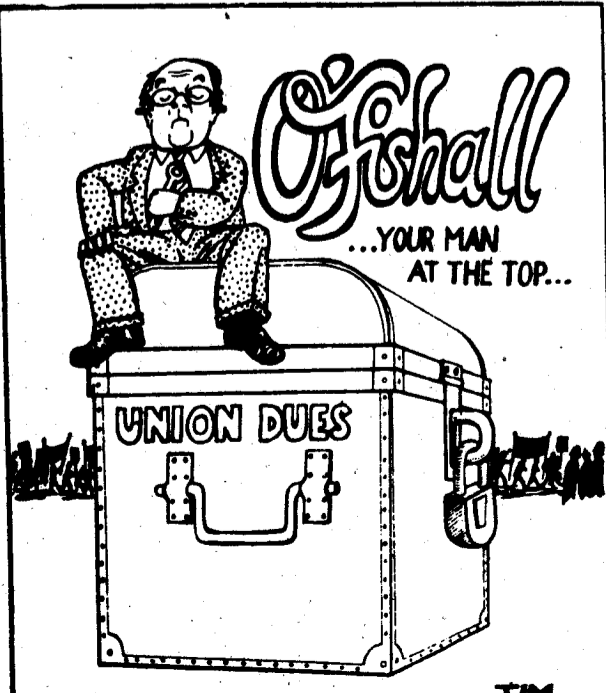
dispute at Sandersons shows that the length of the Garners strike does not mean in any way that the case is hopeless.

It could have been won long ago if the strike committee's policies of mass picketing, full secondary blacking of Garners' suppliers and a Regional levy to sustain the strikers had been implemented.

The present strike committee campaign for a national TGWU delegate conference to be called to discuss these demands therefore point the way forward from Friday's Day of Action to the victory that could so easily be won in this dispute.

PUBLIC HEALTH inspectors have now closed the canteen at Leeds main local government office after GMWU members refused to cross the social workers' picket lines to clear rubbish.

Similar support from postal workers has also led to a blacking of mail into the office, bringing long delays in the granting of planning permission.



SOCIALIST PRESS

NEW BACKING FOR BAKERS' PAY FIGHT

As TGWU and GMWU leaders gave the long awaited instruction to their members not to cross bakers' picket lines, the five week Bakers Union strike seems poised on the verge of total victory.

But the TGWU has stopped short of full-scale blacking of flour and grain supplies—which has not been requested by Bakers Union leaders.

About 20 independent companies and the Co-op have already broken ranks and settled with the union which has stood out for a £10, 26% pay increase.

Only the two giant bread monopolies, Rank Hovis McDougall and Allied Bakeries, now stand firmly against these pay demands—offering a miserable 11% deal which includes vicious productivity strings that would mean wholesale speed-up and job loss.

The continued supplies of bread in the shops is being used as a propaganda weapon against the strike but is no real consolation to employers, who have seen their usual 70% market share cut to 40% by the effects of the strike, as management scabs—many of them in ASTMS and other unions—sweat to maintain 50% production.

Hit monopolies

Bakers Union president Terry O'Neill pointed out last week that the union was quite happy for independent bakeries to increase their output to meet demand during the strike—since this hits the two main monopolies without hitting the housewife.

But the TGWU and GMWU decisions to support the strike must now be built upon to tighten the noose around those RHM and Allied Bakeries plants which are still producing bread. Continuing violence outside

bakeries as police and scabs attack picket lines shows that the employers are increasingly desperate and that victory is still not yet assured.

Strike committees

In many areas strikers have established a high level of organisation—while in some towns, such as Oxford, serious picketing is only just beginning, and exclusive reliance has been placed on information and policies sent out by full time union officials.

It is essential that strike committees be elected in each bakery to ensure a continuity of picketing, so that the official support from other unions can be maximised, and the bread monopolies forced to concede.

Such committees, by putting the control of the struggle into the hands of the workers themselves strengthen the strike and act to guard against any possible

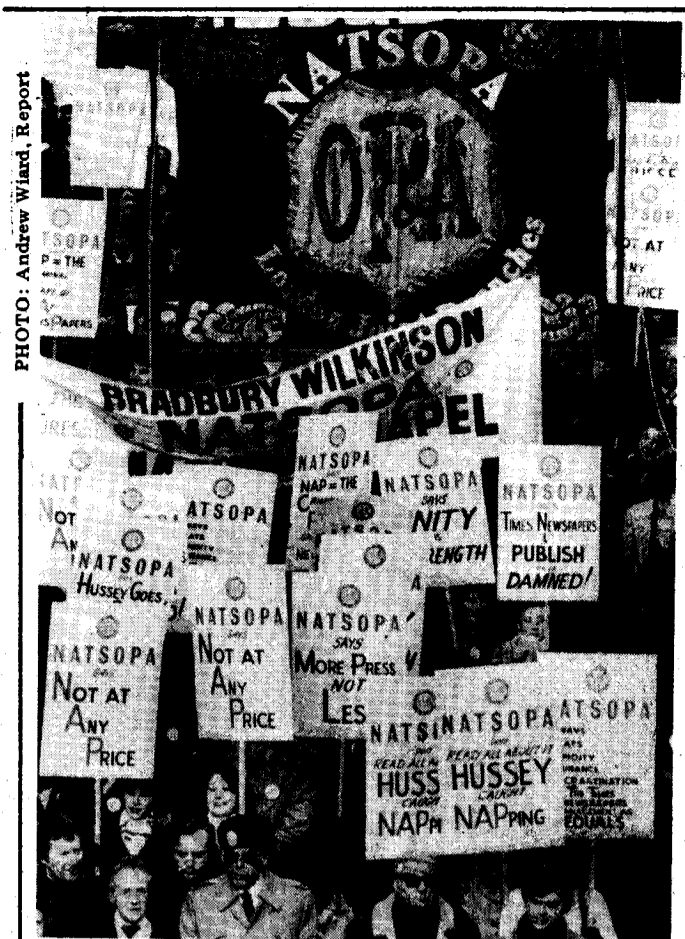
retreat on the wage demands or productivity sell-outs by the union leaders.

The prospect of a pay strike by tanker drivers in four of the five major oil monopolies grew last week when Shell and Esso drivers' stewards voted to recommend a stoppage from 2 January if the present 5% pay offer is not improved.

The recommendation will be put to drivers in a ballot, and conferences of stewards from BP and Texaco will be held this week.

The drivers' claim includes an increase in basic pay from £75 to £90

But the tanker drivers must beware of TGWU national secretary Ashwell who last year ensured that they were held back from action on their claim until after the firemen's strike had ended.



NATSOPA workers march against the closure

OCCUPY THE TIMES

The final issue of the Times before closure last week carried a small ad tucked away in the personal column of the back page. It read: "Goodbye Dear Times'—We're sorry to see you go and hope you return soon with a more enlightened management". It was signed 'Times Employees'.

That wish and a prayer reflects almost exactly the level of opposition amongst the unions at the Times.

The silence on the crucial question of the occupation of the building and the production of a paper under the management of the workers, has been deafening.

No policy, apart from waiting and hoping, has been put forward.

Instead the National Graphical Association, the one union to refuse to negotiate under the threat of closure, has begun to give unmistakable signs of a sell-out.

Welcomed

Joe Wade, General Secretary of the NGA, welcomed the two week reprieve as an indication that talks might be possible.

In fact—as the Observer revealed on Sunday—Wade has already been up to his neck and beyond in an attempt to avoid confrontation with the Times management in secret talks unknown to his members.

The Times management is demanding two major defeats from the unions. The first is over a new disputes procedure which seeks to tie union chapels hand and foot.

The significance of any paper agreements on this was severely reduced when the management backed down on the major penalty clause—which would stop all pay within 24 hours of unofficial action taking place.

But the accusations of disruption are being used as the spearhead for the major Times attack—the attack on jobs. Many of the unofficial disputes have been provoked by management to this end.

So far only 17 out of 65 chapels at the papers have agreed to the manning clauses and those 17 do not include a single chapel which is affected in any major way.

The Times looks certain to win agreement from union leaders on the introduction of new technology and the removal of up to 10% of their workforce.

What is still an open question is whether the unions will capitulate on the question of 'single stroke keyboarding'—meaning the removal of NGA jobs and the taking over of their work by journalists and advertising staff.

This single proposal will reduce NGA jobs in some chapels by almost 60% and increases the total amount of jobs to be lost to about a quarter of the workforce.

The reason why the NGA have refused to agree to this is that the Times management are explicitly acting as a spearhead for the rest of Fleet Street; the NGA as a major production unit could vanish.

The Times ran into opposition because it was asking the NGA bureaucracy to agree to the removal of its own power base.

Even over direct input the NGA bureaucracy came close to agreement with the management.

At secret negotiations weeks ago the NGA bureaucracy agreed to direct inputting for about 12% of all copy, allowing advertising staff to feed ads straight into the computer.

With leaders prepared to sell jobs at secret negotiations the workers at the Times cannot allow their futures out of their control for even a minute.

This is what makes absolutely critical the question of an occupation of the Times and the setting up of an occupation committee that cuts across the craft barriers between the unions and challenges management and union bureaucracies alike.

Business secrets

A labour movement paper must be produced and the business secrets of Fleet Street thrown open.

The International Thomson Organisation is expecting an after tax profit this year of £45 million, mostly from oil. All their interests must be nationalised without compensation under the management of the workforce.

Workers at the Times and Sunday Times must begin raising these demands now.

- *No secret talks!
- *No sellout on jobs!
- *Occupy the Times! Produce a labour movement paper!
- *New technology only under the control of the workers!
- *Nationalise the Times and Sunday Times under workers management.
- *No compensation for Lord Thomson.
- *Work sharing on full pay.

Journalists join wages battle

Provincial journalists all over the country responded in large numbers to the first all out national official strike which started on Monday.

About 80% of the 8,500 provincial NUJ members affecting 1,200 papers were out by the end of the first day.

Despite a wave of predictions in the press leading up to the strike that it would have a half-hearted response the NUJ members have given massive backing to the claim for £20 across the board, a 35 hour week and an extra week's holiday.

The Press Association agency—whose copy is wired to all provincial dailies—voted 86-76 to refuse a union instruction to come out in support.

This was despite the Executive's decision to give them £50 strike pay a week each. Provincial journalists will receive nothing.

National Executive member, Harold Pearson, foreign desk editor at the PA, resigned from the Executive of the NUJ as soon as it voted 14-7 to call the strike.

In May 1977 he led his members across a picket line at PA during a one-day national strike.

The 76 in favour of obeying

FUND

The November Fund closed £47.38 over the top of our £600 target—a welcome development which could stand repeating this month.

With Christmas festivities likely to demand much of the financial resources of our readers and supporters at the end of the month we are eager to raise the December fund as quickly as possible.

All donations should be sent to: Socialist Press Monthly Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

the call at PA immediately began picketing their scab colleagues.

Journalists from all over the country were expected to join them.

The only other major rejection came at the Birmingham Post where members voted overwhelmingly to continue working. Again pickets were set up.

The strikers must now prepare for a hard and possibly long battle.

The union bureaucracy called the strike under severe pressure from below and will call it off at the first sign of weakness.

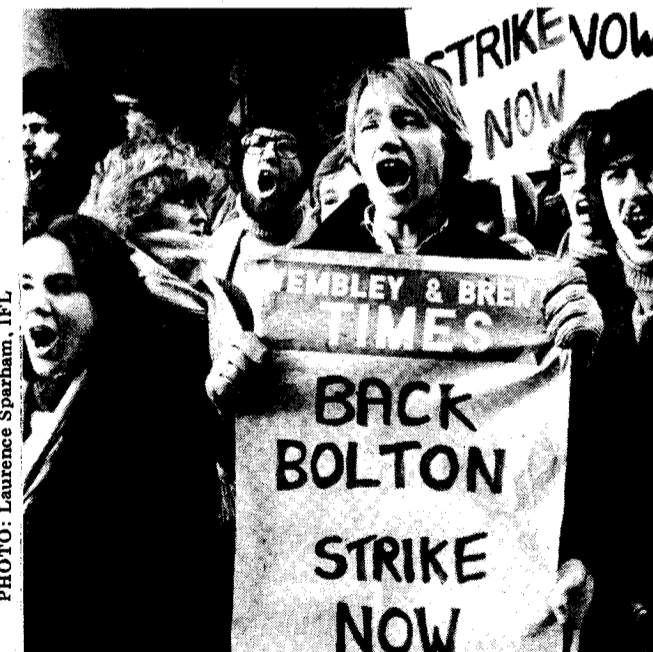
Optimistic comments about a "short, sharp strike" from General Secretary Ken Ashton do nothing to prepare for the battle.

His letters to general secretaries appealing for 'support' incredibly asked no more than that their members did their "normal work".

Chapels must demand that any offer be rejected short of the claim and that power to recommend acceptance lie only with a recall meeting of Chapel FoCs.

Printers must come out alongside this strike on their own claims against the 5%.

No sell-out!



NUJ members picket their Executive calling for strike action

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Saturday December 9 from 12.00—3.00p.m. at Cowley Community Centre

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