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CHRYSLER, INNOCENTI ... DEFEND ALL JOBS OCCUPY AND UNITE!

INSIDE

Inside this edition of 'Socialist Press' are articles on:
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Our next edition will appear on Wednesday, 31st December.

Whatever short-term arrangements are cobbled together to postpone an all-out fight between employers and unions, one thing is certain: the threats to close down Chrysler car production in Britain and Leyland's closure of the Milan Innocenti factory are the opening shots in a new round of international attacks on jobs and wages in the car industry.

The world-wide recession has brought a slump in demand for cars which has sealed the coffin on the 'boom' years in which simple trade union militancy could drive up wages and maintain or improve conditions. The defence of jobs is now the most political of questions.

The cut-throat fight between the monopolies for an increased share of a declining car market forces them on to the offensive - demanding unpaid speed-up, redundancies and 'rationalisation' of production in the form of plant closures. This rationalisation, because the crisis is a world crisis, takes place on an international level. This demands new measures to fight it effectively and defend jobs.

CLOSURE

British Leyland's closure of the Innocenti factory (which also threatens jobs in Britain) is one part of its all-out drive for rationalisation and speed-up centred on the Ryder Plan in Britain.

The closure follows a series of rejected ultimatums to the workforce that they accept a 33% redundancy with a simultaneous massive speed-up. Leyland's withdrawal is also in line with its recent slashing of its Australian workforce, and the closure of its Spanish operations.

In Milan the closure was immediately answered by the full-scale occupation of the plant, and a massive one-day general strike throughout the Milan area called by the Italian Metal Workers' Union - but beyond appeals to other capitalists to buy the factory, and nationalist speeches against "foreign capital" the union leaders offered no perspective for a fight.

CHRYSLER

In Britain likewise the proposal to shut down Chrysler production is a part of a programme of crisis measures being taken to preserve the US-owned multinational. The open threat to 25,000 Chrysler workers, along with thousands of others in related jobs, has caused dismay and confusion among convenors and Labour MPs.

While Stoke convenor Bob Morris talks of occupation in the case of closure, this is to cover his complete lack of policy to fight redundancy, which he is clearly willing to accept. As he said: "Of course we recognise that many jobs will have to go."

At the same time, Pat Fox, convenor at Ryton, while admitting

occupation, 'negotiated' for the plant to shut for the whole of December, and allowed the workforce to leave the plant with only slender prospects that many (if any) of them will work there again.

Chrysler and Innocenti thus highlight the central need for a programme to fight the attacks of the employers and defend all the jobs in the motor industry. No problems can be solved in the existing system of ownership.

At Innocenti, there is talk of Fiat buying the factory: in Britain the Labour government seems certain to try to stagger the closures by providing a limited subsidy for what the *Financial Times* calls "a massively scaled-down Chrysler operation."

But in the dwindling market for cars (in Britain 19% down on last year), with huge factories working

ers to open the books to elected union committees is not aimed, therefore, at 'pressuring' Chrysler or Leyland to maintain overseas investments, but to show clearly to the international workers' movement the urgent need to take car production out of the hands of the private profiteers, into the hands of the working class, without compensation.

NATIONALISATION

Our demand of nationalisation in defence of jobs is therefore quite different from the various confused reformist calls for 'nationalisation' made in relation to Chrysler, which simply envisage the firm being made profitable (by speed-up, redundancies and closures) under state ownership - as at Alfred Herbert's in Coventry, where 1,200 workers have been sacked after the state takeover.

The demand must be linked to the fight for workers' management, and the defence of all jobs through work-sharing on full pay.

What steps must flow from the lessons of Chrysler and Innocenti? Firstly, since the attack crosses



Italian car-workers demonstrate against short-time working.

way below capacity, the sights of all the employers are set on reducing the number of plants, and focussing production on well-equipped, high exploitation factories. This is the gist of the Ryder plan.

Workers have no interest in propping up Chrysler or Innocenti. Both are part of monopolies which function solely in the interests of the capitalist class.

So it is vital that workers learn the inner workings of the car industry - its finances, stock-order, turnover, its relationship to the suppliers, to the banks and to the state. Because only with such knowledge can workers prepare to manage a planned, nationalised car industry.

national frontiers, workers must also organise internationally to fight the multinationals.

Stewards from the whole Chrysler corporation must discuss joint class action to force the employers to open the books and reveal the real state of affairs. (Some of the manipulation taking place is revealed in our article, page 5).

The British Leyland Combine Shop Stewards should convene a national meeting of stewards and invite delegates from the Innocenti occupation committee to speak and call for support.

Such demands

SPAIN

On Sunday December 7th demonstrations gathered in several cities in Spain to demand a complete amnesty for political prisoners. Close to Madrid's Cavabanchel prison, as elsewhere, the demonstrating workers were dispersed by the police with their customary brutality.

Large numbers were injured in baton charges and by charges of mounted police. Over 200 people were arrested, 100 of whom were detained.

REARRESTED

Earlier in the day Marcelino Camacho, the Labour Commission

leader released with great publicity a week earlier in Juan Carlos' 'amnesty' was rearrested, along with other former prisoners.

These new acts of savage repression follow similar treatment given to a demonstration outside the Cavabanchel jail on November 27th and the police murder of a militant of Euzkadi (Basque) nationalist movement ETA in the same week.

These are the first fruits of the "more just society" which King Juan Carlos has promised! They prove that Franco's fascist successors, for all their soothing talk, are prepared to maintain a level of repression in no way less vicious than that of their old master.

PORTUGAL

SETBACK TO THE REVOLUTION

The suppression of the fabricated so-called "left-wing coup attempt" in Lisbon on 25th November has resulted in a whole series of anti-democratic and anti-working class measures by the Portuguese military regime and its Sixth Provisional Government.

The events of the alleged coup must of necessity be obscure from this distance, but there can be no doubt that a series of provocative military moves were arranged by the right wing to force out into the open all sections of left-wing soldiers.

NO CP SUPPORT

Though the military government and the Armed Forces Movement claimed that a possible coup was being planned, in fact the paratroops and light artillery soldiers who mobilised to defend their gains did not receive the support of the Stalinists of the Communist Party, thus remaining isolated from the working class. Forced out on a limb, the movement could then be smashed and defeated.

Despite some reports to the contrary, the Stalinists decisively separated themselves from these events. As *Le Monde* put it, soon afterwards, the "moderation" of the CP was the most conspicuous aspect of the events.

The whole situation was there-

AFM leadership, and the refusal of the CP to defend the gains of the soldiers and workers together with the complete confusion and unpreparedness of the centrist groups.

COMPLAINING

The PRP (the group with strong links with the British International Socialists), who claimed to be running the so-called "revolutionary accord" established in August, now complain loudly that the failure of the mobilisation was brought about by the pro-Stalinist sections of the military. But how could the left-wing officers and soldiers have found political leadership from a Stalinist party which had tied itself hand and foot to the capitalist state, and which had a minister in the government?

It is precisely the inability of any tendency in Portugal to build a movement based on a clear understanding of the treachery of Stalinism and reformism which has left the workers, soldiers and peasants leaderless in the face of organised attempts by the right wing to reassert control over the army and the state itself.

REPRESSION

Indeed, since these provocations have been defeated there has been a continual round of repression. There was a curfew in Lisbon on 26th November which lasted to 2nd December. All wage negotiations have been suspended for a year -

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ANGOLA INVADERS PUSHED BACK

Over the last week the army of the Peoples Republic of Angola, the MPLA, has reversed the military situation and scored a number of successes over the invading armies of South African mercenaries and US financed and equipped FNLA and Unita forces.

On the northern front a big defeat has been inflicted on the FNLA at the town of Caxito 30 miles from Luanda, the capital. The recapture of Caxito involved the capture of vast supplies of weaponry of United States and Belgian origin.

CAPTURED

Large amounts of US military hardware were also captured in advances in the south involving the recapture of Cangumbe a town situated on the vital Benguela railway which stretches across Angola from the coast to Zambia and is a vital economic and military means of communication.

The situation in the South of Angola now is that the northward advance of the South African invading mercenary force of Panhard armoured cars has been stemmed, and 8 vehicles captured. This has

been due to a combination of the onset of the rainy season, and to the Soviet supplied 122mm rockets and heavy artillery now in the possession of MPLA forces.

SKILL

Reporters who gained access to the area noted that whereas the 'FNLA' armoured force was entirely manned by Whites, either Portuguese or South African, the MPLA artillery was fired and directed by MPLA soldiers, evidence of the superior level of military skill and organisation of the MPLA.

The superior military organisation of MPLA is a reflection of its political strength among the workers and peasants. Behind the lines intensive training is underway by local popular militia forces. Meanwhile former Portuguese-owned farms are being organised into disciplined agricultural communes.

This contrasts sharply with the reports from refugees of the looting and burning and cold blooded shooting of unarmed civilians by the FNLA invaders. The FNLA continue also to lie and attempt a crude cover up of their dependence on US imperialism and South African military assistance both regular and mercenary.

At a meeting of Christian Demo-

cratic parties in Rome last Tuesday the FNLA representatives denied all connection between themselves and the South African military force 'protecting' the Calueque dam in the Southern Angolan border region with Namibia (South West Africa). The lie was given to this statement by a large picture in Saturdays *Times* of Major General Dutton of the South African Army conversing with the local FNLA commandant, a certain Portuguese 'Lt. Paulo'.

The official South African line is that military occupation of this area of Angola was undertaken to 'protect' irrigation in the Ovamboland area of Namibia and was at the 'request' of the tribal leaders of that area.

As the *Times* was forced to comment on Saturday "It is strange that a group of tribal leaders in Ovamboland can call on the South African government to occupy territory belonging to a third country."

At least the FNLA bandits and looters can still rely on some measure of South African support. As the military situation has changed their erstwhile Chinese-Stalinist supporters have abandoned them!

"INTERFERENCE"

Meanwhile the United States continues to make bellicose statements against Soviet 'interference' (ie. military aid to the government of Angola) while itself continuing

clandestine arms shipments through Zaire. Over the last fortnight both Kissinger and Ford have warned of the danger to East West detente of continued Soviet support for MPLA.

The Moscow Stalinists calculate however that a speedy MPLA victory will bring forward a government in Africa sympathetic to the USSR and at the same time Ford and Kissinger will cool down, realising that the MPLA in no sense threatens to jeopardise Western economic interests in what is one of the richest countries in Africa in terms of Oil and mineral deposits.

The MPLA has already shown this in the independence speech by Neto, president of MPLA, welcoming foreign investors. Meanwhile MPLA has already established a *modus vivendi* with the two great multinationals operating in Angola; Gulf Oil in Cabinda and Diamang in Eastern Angola. Between them these two companies handle 86 per cent of Angola's foreign exchange earnings and employ the bulk of Angola's working class.

NATIONALISATION

The nationalisation of these concerns is therefore the highest priority in any move towards a socialist economic plan in Angola. Yet in fact the opposite has occurred. In the case of Diamang the MPLA has even taken over itself the functions of the Old Portuguese company security police!

The regime is entirely unchanged, meanwhile there are discussions afoot concerning the MPLA government taking a majority shareholding in the diamond concern. This will in no way bring the industry under the control of the

TURKEY

State prosecuting authorities are demanding the death sentence on sixteen alleged supporters of the illegal 'Peasants and Workers Liberation Army', together with sentences of up to fifteen years imprisonment on thirty-eight others.

Their mass trial - which has been proceeding since September 1973 - takes place before a military court in Istanbul, given these savage powers under the dictatorial state of emergency in the capital.

Those on trial are accused of "armed operations aimed at overthrowing the constitutional order in force in the country", both in Istanbul and in areas of Anatolia, in the east of the country.

Last week more than a hundred people were arrested in Istanbul following clashes between students and police during the funeral of a student murdered by right-wingers. At least twenty three students were wounded when police attacked the funeral procession.

workers and peasants of Angola.

It will have the opposite effect of tying government revenue to the pressures of the world capitalist crisis.

Only the outright nationalisation of the diamond and oil deposits without compensation will allow the defence of a government based on the working class and the peasantry to succeed.

Cambodia with Peking reflects the fact that 'socialism in one country' is an immediate economic impossibility in these relatively small, underdeveloped states, mutilated by decades of revolutionary war.

The pro-Moscow orientation of the Hanoi and Saigon leaderships has led to sharp exchanges with China, centring on the possession of islands in the South China Sea (the area of ocean fringed by the south coast of China and the long eastern seaboard of Vietnam).

Seized

As the US puppet regime in South Vietnam crumbled last January, China seized the Paracel Islands, claiming them as historically part of China. Hanoi mildly protested, but could do little. But as victory in the south approached the North Vietnamese navy occupied the Spratly Islands, further south, also claimed by China.

And at the beginning of December a sharp editorial in Peking's *People's Daily* declared that "We allow no-one, whatever the excuses, to invade and occupy our territory".

Though ostensibly concerned with the Paracels, the article was clearly directed at Vietnamese control of the Spratlys, which Peking fears will become a Soviet military base off their southern flank.

Neither of the groups of islands is of any economic importance. But the animosity between Soviet and Chinese Stalinism, and their competition for a favoured relationship with US imperialism, make them the source of grave splits in the defence against imperialism in South East Asia.

tions to resolve these contradictions.

RESIST

At the same time socialists in the labour movement of the capitalist countries must resist all attempts to exploit the disastrous Soviet harvest for the economic and political profit of imperialism. That means fighting for the export of grain to the Soviet Union at non-extortionate prices and free of secret and reactionary political conditions.

In addition all damaging effects of the harvest disaster in the standards of living of workers in all countries must be combatted.

That means a campaign in the labour movement for workers' control of government food stocks, the expropriation of the food monopolies and a sliding scale of wages to protect workers against any rise in

INDOCHINA VICTORIES CONSOLIDATE

The abolition of the monarchy in Laos - together with the accelerated plans for the reunification of Vietnam announced last month - marks the political consolidation of the regimes in Indochina following the victories of the liberation forces in May.

With the abdication of King Savang Vatthana on December 3rd the shadow of the Laotian royal state - which had existed in one form or another since 1353 - was laid to rest, and this brought to an end also the polite fiction of a coalition of 'national unity' between royalists and the Peoples Revolutionary Party (ie the Communist Party).

The Pathet Lao and Communist Party leadership have thus abandoned the promise, in their 1964 programme, to 'respect and preserve the throne'.

Forced

But this much delayed step is one that has been forced reluctantly on them, mainly by the continued



Ousted puppet Lon Nol flees Cambodia to exile.

reactionary intrigues of various members of the numerous royal family and entourage, and by the provocations and hostility of the pro-imperialist Pramoj government in neighbouring Thailand.

The Thai government, while willingly receiving right-wing refugees and their property, has effectively sealed off the border along the Mekong river (which forms the southern part of the Thai-Laotian frontier) thus creating severe difficulties in supplying Laos, especially

with fuel and some foodstuffs.

Pressure

This pressure from the forces of the counter-revolution has forced a basic shake-up in the government. Former 'neutralist' Premier Prince Souvanna Phouma - whose son fled to Thailand at the end of November - is relegated to a purely honorific role as 'counsellor'; so is the abdicated king.

The new 'People's Republic

Betrayal

But their basic source lies in the division and betrayal of the world revolution by the Stalinist governments of the major workers states - the Soviet Union and China.

The alignments of Laos and Vietnam with Moscow, and of

RUSSIAN GRAIN DISASTER

On December 3rd Grigori Vashchenko inadvertently startled the world.

Vashchenko, chairman of the Planning and Budgetary Commission of the Supreme Soviet, was attempting to conceal the size of the 1975 harvest and to prove the success of Soviet agriculture by announcing that the average Soviet grain harvest of the last five years was 8% higher than in the previous five years.

Unfortunately for him, simple arithmetic is the enemy of bureaucratic concealment: since the size of the previous harvests is known, it is possible to calculate from the average that the 1975 crop was 137.2 million metric tons.

This is 30% below last year's harvest, 36% below this year's plan, and the lowest in the all-time record.

est harvest since 1965 and it is a disaster.

The Soviet bureaucracy blames last summer's drought. It certainly contributed; but so did the bureaucratic organisation of agriculture which has for decades held back the country's huge potential for food production.

The USSR now needs 60 million tons of grain. At current world prices this would cost about 1.5 billion dollars to supply normal consumption. So far, deals have been made with Argentina, Canada, Australia and the US to buy 15 million tons.

If the USSR attempted to buy the other 45 millions on the open market the world-wide effect on food prices and the cost of living would be enormous.

The alternative to the open

US government which controls a surplus over internal and export needs of 100 million tons from this year's gigantic harvest and a further 47 million tons of stocks.

The US, therefore, could easily supply Soviet needs but would undoubtedly try to secure a high political price.

Ford's government is threatening to withhold grain exports already contracted for unless the Soviet Union pays shipping rates 60% above the world price (though the Soviet bureaucracy accepted this price when the deal was made).

REACTIONARY

The US longshoremen's union have taken the reactionary position in support of US capitalists that they will black supplies to the

higher price. Much more serious would be an effort by the US government to take advantage of the new situation to impose such conditions on new sales as an end to arms supplies to the MPLA in Angola.

STALINISM

Few events could make clearer the disastrous consequences of nearly 50 years of Stalinist "socialism in one country".

The Soviet bureaucracy has made the victorious Russian workers of 1917 into hostages of imperialism. To maintain its usurped power, the bureaucracy must either make more concessions to imperialism or reduce the living standards of and increase its repression of the Soviet workers.

Only the political overthrow of that bureaucracy by the Soviet workers class can ensure the

SPAIN: CP & SP HOLD BACK FIGHT

The Spanish King Juan Carlos, only two weeks crowned, is already having a troubled reign. His opening moves have produced public criticism from all sides, including both hard line and soft line members of the fascist regime.

This reflects not so much his tactical ineptitude as the real political contradictions which face the inheritors of Franco's dictatorship.

The far right is critical of the 'amnesty' under which Marcelino Camacho and other Workers' Commission leaders have been released from jail. Despite their objections, the amnesty is derisory: it reduces sentences by three years only, and excludes 'terrorists', a category which can be defined to include members of the Communist and Socialist Parties.

The more 'moderate' sections of the regime and the semi-clandestine parties of the right, like the Christian Democrats, have criticised Juan Carlos' appointment of ultra-rightist economics professor Fernandez Iranda, the man whom Franco appointed as the King's political 'tutor', to the powerful office of President of the Cortes (Spain's caricature parliament).

Juan Carlos has also retained Franco's trusted servant Arias Navarro as Prime Minister. Arias' political prestige, however, like that of Juan Carlos, is suffering a major setback as a result of the agreement with Morocco over Spanish Sahara.

The sordid deal of the far-right of the regime with King Hassan, designed largely to outflank the Saharan liberation movement and its Algerian supporters, has led to the complete withdrawal of the Spanish occupying army as Moroccan forces move in, reportedly massacring Saharan nationalists.

All details of the deal are still censored from the Spanish press and the last issue of the wide circulation weekly *Cambio 16* was seized because it contained an interview with President Boumediene of Algeria.

Juan Carlos' first two weeks of rule have sharpened differences in the regime which Franco's ruthless control had managed to contain. The differences however, all come from a shared preoccupation - hatred and fear of the working class. The differences are about how its strength can be kept in check.

The so-called moderates of the regime are those who realise that

their greatest potential allies in this endeavour will be the leaders of the Stalinist and reformist parties.

Any concessions the regime makes are designed to assist these leaderships to maintain control of the working class through the illusion that the problems facing the working class can be overcome through the "democratic transformation" of Francoism.

This will not be an easy task when the mass of the Spanish people are showing their growing impatience with any compromise with fascism and the right.



Carrillo

This determination forces the leaders of Spanish Stalinism and reformism into constant shifts of position as they manoeuvre to remain at the head of a rising mass movement.

Both the Communist Party (CPE) and the Workers Socialist Party (PSOE) have condemned the 'amnesty', the CPE calling it a 'scandalous fraud' and rejecting Juan Carlos' call for a political truce.

Words

But such apparently tough words must be seen in conjunction with the consistently right-wing line of the CPE: it calls for a provisional coalition government of national unity (including the left, centre and right); its General Secretary, Santiago Carrillo, announced on November 29th. that the party had made a proposal that Don Juan, Juan Carlos' father, should become regent of Spain (this was withdrawn only when Don Juan rejected it); the CPE has attracted into the ranks of its popular front organisation the Demo-

cratic Junta (JD) so-called 'liberal' monarchists and numerous individual 'democrats' of the bourgeoisie; and in its campaign for a real amnesty it has put more emphasis on petitions signed by 'respectable' professionals than on mobilising the fighting strength of the working class, though the demonstration of 2000 outside Madrid's Carabanchel jail was organised by the JD.

(The 22 people arrested after police brutally attacked the demonstrators were released the next day; and on December 3rd. the seven CPE leaders arrested without charge on November 15th. were also released).

Shifts

There is no doubt that the incessant shifts of emphasis in the CP's line, between left-sounding words and calls for coalition with the right, partly reflect sharpening differences between the exiled leadership of the Party in Paris and Moscow and many Party members inside Spain.

The general strike in the Basque provinces (Euskadi) last June was bitterly opposed by the CPE under instructions from the exiled leadership. Its success in mobilising thousands of workers frightened the CPE into at least strong verbal support for the next general strike in August.

The return of the exiled leadership, which Carrillo has promised will be soon, is almost certain to bring major conflicts in the party to a head.

Growth

For some time virtually the entire leadership of the PSOE has been inside Spain, a fact which has aided the rapid growth of the party's membership in the past year, even though the PSOE remains small in relation to the CPE.

The PSOE has established its own popular front alliance, the Platform for Democratic Convergence (PCD), to which it has recruited small groups of right wing social democrats and a faction which split from the CPE in 1968.

The PSOE has also reconstituted the General Union of Workers (UGT) as an alternative pole in the workers' movement to the Workers' Commissions in which the CPE has played a leading role. Both the Commissions and the UGT have put up candidates and won substantial gains in the elections within the legal corporatist labour organisations.

Both the CPE and the PSOE ar-

gue that the restoration of bourgeois democracy, which they put forward as the primary task, cannot come about through the continuity and liberalisation of the present regime but only from a 'rupture' with it.

Revealed

Yet the CPE reveals its abject class collaborationist position by making this not a matter of principle but purely a matter of pragmatic judgement.

"Many Spaniards", a CPE statement said last week, "in the layers of the opposition and the more moderate sections of the regime have built great hopes on liberalisation. We would like them to be right. But we think they are wrong and that it is not possible."

On October 30th., after much recrimination, the two democratic fronts (the JD and the PCD) signed a joint declaration. It did not at that time include the CPE's demand for a broad coalition.

But a joint communique of this 'common left front' issued on November 20th. does contain this call; it also demands the release of all political prisoners, the right of all exiles to return to Spain, an end to the intensified repression and the more stringent wage control laws introduced on November 14th; and it ends with a demand for a constituent assembly to organise a constitutional referendum.

'Democrats'

Significantly but not surprisingly, it does not call for socialism or for anything which would offend the bourgeois 'democrats' with whom both the CPE and the PSOE are so anxious to ally themselves.

Already it appears that the demand for a 'national' coalition coincides with the policy of sections of the regime. The newspaper of the corporatist labour organisations, *Pueblo* (People), called last week for a coalition of the regime with Liberals, Christian Democrats, Social Democrats and sections of the PSOE - a less broad coalition than that proposed by the CPE and PSOE, but the same reactionary principle of national government.

Independence

The working class must fight for its independence against this unprincipled opportunism and class collaborationism of the democratic fronts.

FRANCE

DEMO DEFENDS CONSCRIPTS

A demonstration of 50,000 led by Communist and Socialist party chiefs marched through the streets of Paris against the persecution of conscript soldiers and trade unionists for attempting to organise rank and file committees, and to defend trade union and political rights of the forces. (See report in Socialist Press of November 26th)

The Gaullist regime has set up a special "court of state security" to deal with 'dissaffection' in the armed forces, and among those facing serious charges are not only sixteen soldiers singled-out as 'ring-leaders', but active trade unionists who have tried to organise within the army.

Michel Bourre, secretary of the CFDT (the reformist-led trade union federation) in the Gironde was flown to Paris under arrest last week, to be charged before the 'state security' court. His 'crime' was to help in the printing of a paper 'Soldiers in Struggle', by rank and file airmen at the Cazaux air force base.

ALARMED

What has reportedly alarmed the officer corps is that these airmen, nine of whom have been arrested for attempting to organise a trade union section - were circulating clear class positions against the capitalist army:

"Our rifles defend the boss and are the guarantee of those who are producing the crisis and keeping up unemployment... When the hour comes, we shall know to turn them against those who humiliate and oppress us."

The Stalinist and reformist leaders have been forced, by the spreading agitation in the ranks and the mass anger at the government's arrest, to take part in demonstrations against the repressions.

But they continue to defend the state's right to discipline the bodies of armed men - only exhorting them to do so in a more "humane" way, more "appropriate to the last quarter of the twentieth century".

While Socialist Party leader Francois Mitterand - a lawyer demagogically offers to defend a person the civilian accused of offences against 'state security' a statement last week from a top Socialist Party functionary denied they had "anything in common with those who think the overthrow of capitalism passes through the dismantling of the bourgeois army", and called for measures to 'reinforce the bonds between the people of France and her army'. This shameful social-patriotism plays right into the hands of the officer corps and their twins in the state apparatus. The wave of repression now under way shows unmistakably the need to disband the capitalist standing army.

WHAT IS THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

While these practical interventions have developed the League's grasp of Trotsky's Programme there has been a consistent drive to deepen and enrich the movement's understanding of the history and the present crisis of the Fourth International.

initiative towards its reconstruction.

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

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

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ULSTER UNIONISM IN CRISIS

by Joe Quigley

Abetted by a section of the British ruling class the bourgeoisie of Belfast led the landowners and the proletariat working class in aborting the Liberal government's attempt at imposing a neo-colonial policy upon the whole of Ireland. Having dismembered Ireland the Ulster unionists had then to dismember Ulster itself.

By the racist criteria upon which the Orange state was founded the counties of Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan had too large a nationalist population to be easily contained. Thomas Moles, the Unionist MP for Belfast Ormean, put the position to the protesting protestants of the border counties with brutal frankness when he said: "In a sinking ship with life boats sufficient for only two thirds of the ships company were all to condemn themselves to death because not all could be saved?"

Within the six county coalition of sectarian surgery the unionist leaders addressed themselves enthusiastically to the task of creating

gaining 3 and independent unionists winning 4.

Determined to stop the rot, Prime Minister Craig revealed an unsuspected capacity for irony by choosing July 12th, 1927, the day protestants celebrate the securing of their political freedom, to announce that he had abolished their proportional method of representation.

"STRAIGHT"

Instead, the single, 'straight', non-transferable vote would keep the simple issue of partition before the electorate. As Prime Minister Craig explained:

"We in Ulster are and ought to be a happy community. Adversity has taught us the value of unity. Unity has brought us to our present state of peace and contentment. Mr. Devlin and his party (the Nationalist Party) are the natural opposition. Why then should any loyalist constituency add strength to it and weaken the influence of my colleagues and myself."

By the 1929 general election the new voting method allowed

get a definite national policy decided on in favour of industrial and agricultural protection and an executive in office prepared to enforce that policy".

No less was it recognised in the North East that foreign capital had to be wooed to the Province. A Government sponsored report suppressed for two years because of its pessimism stated in 1957 that:

- i) basic cause of export of capital from Northern Ireland was low expectation of profit from domestic investment.
- ii) greater scarcity than in Great Britain for profitable openings for new and enlarged undertakings.
- iii) Narrow economic base placed a question mark against the long term viability of the Province.
- iv) constitutional status of the Province was uncertain.

PINPOINTED

This investigation (carried out for the unionist government a good ten years before a single Civil Rights banner was unfurled in the Province), pinpointed quite clearly the relationship between the sectarian structure of the six-county statelet and the economic survival of the area.

But if the bourgeoisie in Dublin and Belfast saw their future prosperity in exactly the same way, as dependant upon their capacity to create the conditions that would attract foreign investment then the original 'rationality' for a partitioned Ireland no longer existed. And Britain's changing relationship to the South and the North made her more than anxious to promote the marriage of these two satellites.

Not only was the South providing a significant percentage of England's food, but England's declining capital was finding limited but profitable markets in the Republic. As the profitability of British capital declined, the urge to off load the burden of subsidising welfare, social security, industry and defence in the North became pressingly urgent.

By uniting Ireland from above Britain hopes to relieve herself of some of this burden while the Republic looking as much to Europe as to Britain for her markets has revealed a remarkable disinclination to reclaim such a turbulent part of her national territory.

A reforming group in the Northern Ireland cabinet emerged under O'Neills leadership to bring about the necessary changes. The composition of this group is significant. It comprised politicians who were in the future to violently oppose one another. It numbered Brian Faulkner, William Craig, Roy Bradford, Robin Baillie and Terence O'Neill himself.

OPPORTUNITY

What O'Neill was to describe as the "opportunity state" inaugurated an era of indicative planning, the coordination of industry, housing, and roads. The attempt to create a centralised infrastructure congenial to foreign investment was accelerated when O'Neill became Prime Minister in 1963. It went entirely against the grain of the localised political structure of the sectarian state.

This structure of patronage which tied the protestant working class to Ulster unionism by allocating jobs as a reward for 'loyalty', was so powerful in Ulster because of the nature of Ulster capital, small, local family labour intensive units. But the new capital that was entering the Province (while Ulster capital declined) was export orientated and capital intensive.

Being so much more productive than local capital it had much less incentive to utilise sectarian divisions in its employment policy.

industry continued to fall. 206,000 in 1950, it had fallen to 166,000 by 1973.

The first visible signs of the tensions that were gathering within unionism came to the surface in 1962. In February an unemployed demonstration demanding the right to work marched on Stormont while in the May elections of that year the unionists lost two seats to left nationalists, Gormley and Fitt.

As unemployment rose in this period so too did its companion sectarianism. At the fifty year commemoration of the signing of the 1912 Covenant in October, protestant workers marked the occasion with the first serious sectarian rioting in twenty years.

Against this background Paisley raised the cry that O'Neill was "betraying unionism". And Paisley on this question was essentially

hostility to the 'fur coated' brigade that ran official unionism.

On occasions this took him and his one-time mentor Desmond Boal close to republicanism as sixty years earlier it had taken Sloan and Crawford.

While Paisley's grip on the loyalist forces tightened bourgeois representatives like Craig who had tried to retain credibility with the protestant masses by distancing themselves from their Unionist colleagues, were obliged to show their hand. For imperialism the importance of Craig's challenge to Paisley lay in the fact that Craig appeared to have substantial loyalist troops to throw against Paisley.

Glenn Barr as a spokesman for the protestant labour aristocracy was on the Ulster Workers Council as well as being a member of the UDA. George Green was the leader



Paisley and Bunting: anti-working class agitation

right - for what the unionist bourgeoisie was trying to do was to structure a new relationship with imperialism while abandoning its petty-bourgeois and proletarian allies to the cold winds of the world economy.

While Paisley was marshalling his followers under seventeenth century flags it was twentieth century conditions that were driving them to his banners.

By exciting hopes of reforms that he could not realise O'Neill inspired a civil rights movement from a nationalist population that was no longer prepared to passively accept its status as a sub-caste in a racist state. Its demands when carried on to the streets further convinced the Protestants that Paisley knew what he was talking about.

Seeing their mass base deserting them the unionist leaders one by one abandoned their leader O'Neill. But the repudiation of O'Neill was in no way an abandonment of his politics. With Ulster capital visibly disappearing in front of their eyes the Unionist bourgeoisie could have no future unless they could turn themselves into a junior partner of imperialist interests operating in the Province.

They knew this quite well, but its consequence, a rupture with the mass base, their bulwark against nationalism, was too fearsome to contemplate.

Thus a process was set in motion whereby a unionist leader was brought down by forces inside unionism's own ranks. But having brought down their leader they have no alternative but to promote another leader pursuing the same policies who has nothing more to do than await the same fate. Thus O'Neill is toppled by Faulkner who is toppled by Craig who is brought down by the very forces he mobilised against Faulkner.

SPLIT

The most recent split in the unionist ranks between Paisley and Craig is explained by the bourgeois philistines as one between a clerical bigot and a contrite extremist won to "moderation". But why the one should repent while the other remains, obdurate is a secret sealed with seven seals to such idealist philosophers. For materialists the difference was one between a bourgeois who could accommodate to imperialism and a petty-bourgeois who could not.

Basing himself upon the protestant shipyard workers of Belfast and the petty shopkeepers who

of the notorious disbanded B Specials. Yet no sooner had these leaders spoken than the same class divisions revealed themselves within these organisations too. The UWC leadership was purged of all Craig supporters, Green complained that his Association was being taken over by Paisleyites while the UDA came down on the side of Paisley.

Further, Craig's own party split with his deputy Ernest Baird abandoning him. As Paisley's party demanded the expulsion of Craig and his Vanguard co-thinkers from the Ulster Unionist Council the third party of the council, the Official Unionists within which lurk bourgeois sympathisers of Craig like John Taylor, attempted to paper over the split by abstaining from the vote.

Yet again the class antagonisms came out and three official Unionists, Heshlip, Sheena Conn and Jean Coulter, all petty-bourgeois who had only entered politics since the recent troubles began, defied their party and voted with Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party for the motion that expelled Craig, and his Vanguard supporters from the UUC.

The middle class protestants of Ulster have been quite unable in their eleventh hour to provide any leader to challenge this lower class radical. A brilliant agitator and superb tactician Ian Paisley is a truly tragic figure, like the Protestant farmer Edward Mitchell who defeated the future Prime Minister James Craig in the North Fermanagh election of 1903 on the platform of "the peoples' cause versus the landlord wolves" Paisley stands in and continues the protestant radical tradition, emasculated and blighted by its racist vision.

The entire logic of the Paisleyite movement for maintaining the protestant ascendancy has led them nearer and nearer to directly challenging for state power. Yet the British Army and the Tory Party (locally, if unofficially, represented by Enoch Powell) dare not contemplate such populist forces holding the reins of government in their hands.

Thus in Ireland the crisis of political leadership is one which engulfs the political struggles of both the working class and capitalist class alike. As the economic crisis continues to worsen throughout the UK everyone of these tensions in Northern Ireland politics is massively intensified.

Our historical analysis of some of the main features of this crisis is therefore a starting point for further articles on the struggle to build independent working class leadership needed to fight for the fundamental demands of complete



Protestants and Police make preparations against Civil Rights marchers

what Prime Minister Sir James Craig called "a protestant state for a protestant people."

This required the drastic redrawing of local government boundaries to convert areas with nationalist majorities into loyalist strongholds and a protestant-only militia, the 'B-specials' whose reputation for sectarian violence acquired in the first year of their existence, they lost only when they were abolished in 1969.

PURPOSE

The entire purpose of a parliament at Stormont for what was supposed to be an integral part of the United Kingdom was well illustrated by the disclosure of the Minister for Agriculture in 1927 that:

"I have 109 officials and as far as I know there are four Catholics, three of whom were civil servants handed over to me before I began."

With the state secure and the consequent threat to the union receding, the class antagonism within unionism more easily came to the surface. In 1921 P. J. Woods stood as an independent unionist against the "clique" that ran Ulster and took a safe seat from the Unionists.

Although opposition within unionism was crippled by its defence of the union, the disenchantment expressed of lower class

the unionists to recapture five of the seats they had lost in 1925. But while loyalist leaders were busy making their parliamentary fortress impregnable (at least against ballot box battalions) developments in the world economy were undermining the entire foundations of Ulster capital.

The industries of linen and shipbuilding upon which Belfast prosperity actually rested (although it should not be overlooked that up to 1926 agriculture was the largest single employer of labour) were in decline from the time that the Northern Ireland state was created. While 226.4 million square yards of linen were woven in 1912 by 1961 this had fallen to 59.8 million square yards. Shipbuilding too declined with the recession in world trade.

So while the economy in the South of Ireland slowly stagnated behind tariff walls Ulster capital was carried through the inter war years on the crutches of British subsidies. At more or less the same time, the bourgeoisie of Dublin in 1958 and Belfast in 1957 were obliged to acknowledge that their attempts to develop their own capitals had failed.

OPEN

Sean Leamass who formally declared his 'Free State' to be open for foreign profit-makers in 1958 had appropriately enough been the

CHRYSLER COOKS THE BOOKS



Chrysler workers on lobby of Parliament against unemployment, November 26th

When an employer conducts a campaign throughout the press stressing how bankrupt he is, it is time to watch out. The ground is being cleared for an all-out attack on jobs, conditions and wages.

This is clearly the case with the Chrysler crisis. But Chrysler is not simply a British question, but part of the world motor industry. The crisis shows the crucial importance of the fight to end business secrets and expose capitalist manipulation.

An indication of the international impact of the Chrysler closure threat was the joint meeting last month of shop stewards representing Ford workers in West Germany, France and Britain, held in Germany.

Though there was no intention to prepare immediate joint demands against Ford, a statement was issued expressing solidarity with the workers of Chrysler UK threatened with the sack. The statement recognises that at stake are the jobs of 25,000 Chrysler and 30,000 working for dealers, as well as those working for suppliers.

WORST HIT

Apparently the worst hit of the multi-national car giants in the international capitalist crisis, Chrysler's losses are still mounting up, even while both General Motors and Ford have recently reported increased earnings.

The Ford stewards meeting highlights the need for the working class to fight Chrysler's threat to close down its UK subsidiary on an international basis.

The US-owned Chrysler Corporation has subsidiaries all around the world: South Africa, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Britain, Canada, Columbia, France, Peru, Spain, Turkey, Mexico. It also has a 15% stake in the Japanese Mitsubishi Motor Corporation.

Yet, since every capitalist country is affected by the international crisis of capitalism, it was astonishing to hear the claim of a Chrysler spokesman at the beginning of last month, that "Chrysler UK is the Chrysler Corporation's only major foreign subsidiary not making a profit".

Corporation's other companies outside the US. Except for Chrysler in Argentina where inflation runs at three figure levels, the other foreign subsidiaries besides Chrysler UK were, he claimed, "basically in good shape".

Chrysler's claim is that they have lost about £65 million since 1964 on its UK operations, having recorded losses in seven of the last eleven years. Losses are said to have been £17m in 1974, and £16m in the first six months of 1975 alone.

It seems plain, if we accept Chrysler's figures, that practically all the international division's losses of the past 9 months are to be attributed to the British subsidiary.

INJECTIONS

These enormous losses have been accompanied, since 1964, by cash injections into Chrysler UK by the US parent company - estimated at well over £50m.

In spite of these continuing "losses", the present threat to close down in the UK runs counter to assurances given to the British government over the last few years, and repeated earlier this year in a letter to Wedgwood-Benn - who was Industry Secretary at the time.

This letter talked of "making every possible management effort" to remain a "strong competitor in the British market".

For a company whose share of the British market had declined from 12.3% in 1967 to 4.2% in September of this year, this sounds a hollow promise. But in fact the plan to wind down UK operations seems to have begun two years ago, as key personnel, including senior executives, were moved to France.

Hand-in-hand with this run-down Chrysler seems to have had a two-pronged plan to squeeze more profits from the working class in Britain.

PARTICIPATION

First, "participation" committees were to be set up, to use the influence of convenors and stewards in the effort to introduce rationalisation, speed-up and redundancies. £100 'bonuses' were offered to workers in their frantic drive to win acceptance of this scheme.

of the UK subsidiary would not be allowed to improve until a "meaningful way" had been found to tie trade union leaders in with management so as to ensure speed-up along with uninterrupted production.

Today the real implications of "participation" with capitalist management have been brutally exposed at Chrysler UK.

The second part of Chrysler's plan was to get financial support from the government - paid for through workers' tax payments - via Wedgwood-Benn's Industry Department.

UNSTUCK

This has now come unstuck because of the increasing seriousness of British capitalism's crisis. Weaker sections of industry can no longer be propped up by the state, and are being closed down.

Wilson's replacement of Wedgwood-Benn by Eric Varley at the DoI marked the government's change of policy - dictated by the miserable laws of capitalist crisis.

Finance for Industry, a consortium of private banks, turned down a request by Chrysler UK for a £35m loan - apparently because of the subsidiary's poor credit-worthiness.

But there is every reason to think that Chrysler's own figures have been specially framed to force the closure in the UK and the streamlining and concentration of production elsewhere.

Detailed figures of losses from Chrysler UK are the only ones available for Chrysler's whole international operations. A Chrysler spokesman announced that detailed earnings figures for the other subsidiaries were unavailable.

"We never break out these numbers. The only numbers we break out are for the companies which report their numbers to the country they operate in, and it turns out that Chrysler UK is the only one doing that regularly."

This strange coincidence - losses occurring only where figures of earnings must be publicly revealed - suggest that Chrysler may be deliberately arranging for its international division's accounting losses to be concentrated in Chrysler UK.

The possibility of manipulating what are called "transfer prices" is one which has arisen more and more widely with the increased importance of multinational firms.

As well as this intra-corporate trade in goods, there is the provision of services such as, for example, the provision of research and development results, rentals of equipment, administration, and loans.

The price at which these goods and services are transferred between subsidiaries of the same multinational will not be the same as the price which would be fixed if they were independent firms. The transfer prices will be fixed in the interests of the profitability of the group as a whole.

Markets are thus rigged on a vast scale to produce paper profits and losses, and to open the way to sackings, as well as such things as tax avoidance and speculation on the foreign exchanges.

How this sort of thing works in practice can be seen from an investigation carried out by the Labour Research Department at the end of June, headed: *Chrysler UK: artificial losses through manipulated pricing.*

Pointing out that Chrysler UK's apparently poor profitability had often been used as an argument against wage claims, the LRD showed that Chrysler's claimed trading profit per vehicle was around half that of its nearest rivals.

LOW WAGES

This is nothing to do with exorbitant wage claims at Chrysler - indeed their wage payments per

and only £2 per week higher than Vauxhalls.

Trading Profit per Vehicle Sold

	1972	1973	1974
Chrysler UK	30	35	-21
BL	74	88	60
Vauxhall	63	68	na
Ford	132	159	103

(Source: annual reports)

Nor is Chrysler's productivity in terms of vehicles produced per employee lower than its competitors.

But there is a very sharp discrepancy when the average price per vehicle exported is examined.

Thus Chrysler's price per vehicle exported in 1973 was around £400 less than the price British Leyland was charging, and by 1974 this had increased to £600.

Price per Vehicle Exported

	1972	1973	1974
Chrysler UK	593	621	629
BL	817	1050	1248
Vauxhall	1064	1184	n.a.
Ford	1493	1801	2035

(Source: Annual reports and SMMT figures for production and new registrations)

Of course there are difficulties in comparing the figures which include export of engines and vehicles in kit form. (Both BL and Chrysler export large numbers of vehicles in this way). But it is highly questionable whether these factors could account for the whole of the difference.

This is particularly mysterious within the UK, when the average price of vehicles from all manufacturers is so similar. For example, in 1974 the average prices in the UK were Chrysler £1,620, BL £1,750 and Ford £1,550.

The US Chrysler Corporation would gain nothing from these low export prices if overseas sales went outside the company. But in almost all export markets Chrysler UK's sales go in the first instance to other subsidiaries of the Chrysler Corporation itself.

SUBSIDIARY

Since 1968, Chrysler International SA, a subsidiary registered in Switzerland has handled the marketing of UK products in 140 countries. This company has not, despite an apparent legal requirement to do so, filed any accounts for inspection since 1969.

But in that year it showed a trading profit of around £12m, (twice that of Chrysler UK!). And in Switzerland taxes on profits are only 10%!

In the last three years alone Chrysler UK has exported some 390,000 vehicles. If each of these had been sold at even 80% of the average figure for BL exports, rather than the actual figure, Chrysler UK would have been £93m better off.

Chrysler attempted to reply to the Labour Research Department in July 1975. In its reply, Chrysler denied that the Swiss Chrysler International S.A. handles its exports, claiming that nearly 80% of the company's exports are handled by Chrysler U.K. Exports Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of Chrysler U.K.

Yet Chrysler U.K. Exports was only set up as recently as 28th. June 1974, and in the first six months of operation had total expenses of only £85,000! It seems virtually impossible that 80% of the company's exports of £98 million could be handled for such

administrative and handling cost of less than £2 each!

So what exactly is the role of Chrysler U.K. Exports, and who handled the sale of Chrysler's cars overseas before 28th. June 1974?

'BRITISH'

The other 20% of exports, according to Chrysler's statement:

"do not go through Chrysler International S.A., but are handled by Chrysler Overseas Trading Company Ltd., (COTC), another British company."

But it turns out that COTC is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Swiss Chrysler International S.A.!

In 1974 COTC handled £52 million of exports without any fixed assets apart from a £100,000 leasehold.

Once again the role of this company is shadowy. Why is it a subsidiary of a Swiss company rather than of Chrysler U.K.? And what are its dealings with the Swiss company which has filed no accounts since 1969?

'MISLEADING'

Chrysler also claimed that the figures on export prices given above are "misleading". But Chrysler has the figures which could prove their case, if they are right. Why are they kept secret? And why won't the trade union leaders, who have continuously refused to give any lead to Chrysler workers, demand the full account books of Chrysler International be made available to trade union committees?

Occupation of Chrysler plants is already being discussed as a reply to the close down threat. But while the Labour government has secret talks with Riccardo, it suppresses the "Think Tank" report on the motor industry - prepared by McKinsey & Company, the American business consultants, at a fee of £160,000.

This report is said to point out that the world's "over-capacity" will worsen in the next few years with South Korea, Persia, Spain, the Soviet Union and East European countries bringing new factories into operation.

FACTS

No meaningful negotiations can be entered into by the unions involved in Chrysler until the facts are known. The first demand must be that Chrysler must open its books for inspection by elected trade union committees. Only in this way will it be possible to see what the situation really is.

But effectively to force Chrysler to open its books is an international question, since the "books" (in so far as they are kept!) are extremely partial.

The call must go out therefore to all trade unionists throughout the international combine: Force Chrysler to open the books! In revealing the details of the manipulation and the real state of the British subsidiary, and assisting the fight against sackings here, Chrysler workers in other countries can also see what could be lined up for them, and prepare to fight every management attack.

The exposure of the accounts is only the first step however towards the fight for the complete nationalisation of Chrysler U.K., not along the lines of previous reformist nationalisation with a view to mass redundancies and speed-up, but under elected trade union committees of workers management.

STEWARDS

To this end, Chrysler stewards must call a joint meeting with British Leyland and other motor industry stewards, together with stewards from the components industry, to begin a coordinated fight for a planned socialist production of cars within a nationalised automotive industry.

And to such a conference must be invited delegates from the international subsidiaries of the motor industry multinationals. A joint coordinated international fight on the demands of the Transitional Programme is now the only sure defence of jobs and conditions in any car factory.

by Danny McIntosh

NON-POLITICAL 'VOICE'

A Report from the Womens Voice Rally In Manchester, November 29th by Julia Kellett

'Women's Voice' (an International Socialist publication), held a rally in Manchester attended by 600 women, on November 29th. 'Socialist Worker' claims that the Rally was one of the "most articulate expressions of revolutionary feminism in Britain since the 1920's" and that it "came to grips with the desperate crisis affecting working women all over the country."

In fact the Rally failed to give those women who came any principled programmatic perspective to fight on.

The rally was run as a forum to exchange 'experiences' from local Women's Voice groups to learn from their involvement in the abortion campaign, from their opposition to the cuts in nursery and education spending, in the health service and to launch a campaign for the right to work.

There were no signs of a perspective being hammered out to take working women forward. The message from the platform, and taken up by speaker after speaker, was simply that working class women should place no reliance on the Labour government, women MPs, or the trade union leaders to defend them from the attacks of capitalism.

Speeches described how the TUC sold out struggles of working women at Ladbroke and Yarnolds and how it consistently ignores the specific discrimination women face. In short, the rally described from a point of first hand experience the humiliation and degradation women suffer in class society, and how they are the first to be singled out to bear the brunt of the capitalist crisis. But having got this far,

the rally got no further.

For all IS left rhetoric about the need to "build amongst women workers", they ignore, just as the bourgeois feminists do in the women's liberation movement, the question of developing a principled leadership in the working class based on a working class programme.

DIVERSION

The only practical proposals put forward, apart from continuing the present campaigns on women's issues, was a diversionary call to recruit women into the IS 'Right to Work' Committees.

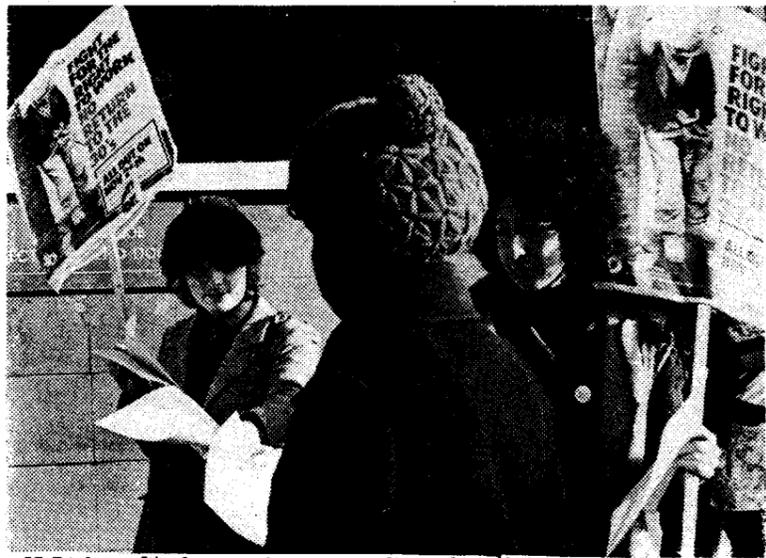
The IS "programme" for these committees is a hodge podge of minimum demands for a 35 hour week, overtime ban, and £6 now! In other words accept a wage cut! These demands could be advanced by any reformist who refuse to

fight for work-sharing on full pay and defend the independent interests of the working class by fighting the pay laws. Even the TUC leaders could support them!

This orientation completely side-steps any struggle within the organisations of the working class. Instead of placing demands on the union leaders to expose them to the mass of workers in a fight for leadership, the IS organisationally seeks to "bypass" the bureaucracy and leaves unchallenged their positions of authority in the working class.

Instead of demanding that the 'lefts' in the Labour Party take up a struggle to remove Wilson and the right-wing, IS ignores the 'lefts' and allows them the possibility of heading off the workers' movement.

The IS minimum programme and calls to oppose everything under the sun (except workers' participation!) is not a revolution-



IS Right to Work campaign - stunts divert from fight in unions

ary perspective to liberate women.

We reprint here sections of a recent leaflet put out by the WSL which takes up politically the inadequacies of the National Abortion Campaign (NAC) and shows how democratic demands like the right to free abortion and equal pay (demands of the women's liberation movement) can only be fought for as part of the struggles of the working class around a programme of transitional demands.

The crisis of leadership hits hard at working class women - isolated in the family, working in small sweated factories, and ignored by the union and Labour leaders.

Women will not be defended from these attacks without a struggle for an alternative leadership and programme within the working class.

"In Britain, in the face of the TUC's refusal to fight for abortion on demand, the NAC leadership now leads a struggle against the re-appointment of the Select Committee which followed the fall of the James White Bill.

To separate the abortion issue, as does the NAC, from other attacks on the working class is to turn the movement on abortion into a pressure group, lobbying MPs in Parliament.

By restricting the struggle for women's equality solely to a campaign to oppose reactionary legislation it spreads the illusion that there can be an end to the oppression of working class women within capitalism.

We fight for free abortion on demand because women should have the sole right to decide whether or not they have children.

But a legal right to abortion will not give a woman any social choice about her future. A legal right can never be a social freedom in class society.

The struggle for women's rights is inseparable from the struggles of the working class. The NAC leadership cannot lead a consistent struggle for women's equality by confining itself to the single issue of abortion.

Free abortion on demand can only be gained as part of the fight to defend the National Health Service.

Equal pay for equal work can only be achieved as part of the struggle to defend working class standards of living through a sliding scale of wages - point for point increases based on a working class cost of living index, drawn up by committees involving trade unionists and housewives.

The increase in unemployment amongst women is severer than that of any other section of the working class - registered female unemployment rose by 121% over last year. The demand for the right of women to work has to be advanced as part of a programme to defend all jobs.

The WSL demands that the books of all firms which threaten short time working or redundancies be opened to inspection by trade union committees; and on the basis of the information revealed, the case for nationalisation under workers' management advanced. The government has to be forced to provide state contracts to keep the firms running.

The call for all available work to be shared out amongst the existing work force must be taken up under the control of trade union committees.

Women have to be prepared to fight in the unions against the bureaucracy for equal job opportunities, maternity leave, nursery facilities. The WSL calls for all the unemployed to be organised in trade unions.

Fight for the unity of the employed and unemployed! Force the trade union leadership to mobilise the strength of the working class to fight for the special needs of women!

It is only in the context of an overall programme that it means anything to struggle for women's equality. Today only a revolutionary leadership can advance and fight for such a programme.

REVIEW

Whigs and Hunters. The Origins of the Black Act

by E P Thompson, published by Allen Lane @ £6.50

Reviewed by JOHN DOHERTY

It is always a pleasure to read a new work by E P Thompson, characterised as it is by astonishing scholarship, a gripping and poetic prose style, and a passionate commitment to the cause of the poor and downtrodden.

This new book, while at first it seems to deal with an obscure topic in legal history, nevertheless casts many shafts of light on the nature of class oppression in early capitalist society.

However much Thompson tells us that is useful and interesting, however well he says it, it must be said that this new work represents a further step away from Marxism by one who was in his day a founder of the anti-Stalinist New Left, and more and more makes statements that tie his implicit idealism to a quite explicit defence of reformism. Despite appearances, alas, this is not Marxism.

It is not easy to outline briefly the main topics covered in this book. The 'Black Act' of the title was passed in 1723, and contained more capital offences than any other legislation in British legal history.

Under its stipulations people could be, and were, sent to the gallows for disguising themselves to undertake poaching of virtually any kind, not just of royal deer, which the Act was first of all aimed at, but also of rabbits, fish and even wood.

This legislation was passed after a series of attacks on royal deer and those who tried to protect them in the royal forest areas of Hampshire and Berkshire. The poachers "blacked" their faces, either to hunt game in the first place, or

jailers.

The poachers were often comparatively wealthy men, with some amount of landholdings, and with virtually unanimous support in their local community, as against the royal forest authorities, the magistrates, and the bishops and other landlords.

FOREST PEOPLE

Thompson describes something of the 'forest people', small groups who lived on the edge of land held by the crown, and whose livelihood was regulated by a complex network of semi-feudal 'customary rights'. Though they were not a large proportion of the population, their story is of general significance, typical of the conflicts between many sections of the rural poor, and the pre-industrial squirearchy, who were determined to claim their "rights" to what had previously been considered their property in order to accumulate wealth.

This was very much part of the general process whereby the capital accumulation necessary for industrialisation actually took place. The destruction of common rights through the more well-known process of enforced enclosure was the form this took through most of the countryside.

A century later, it was Marx's consideration of the debates on the theft of wood in the Rhine Provincial Assembly that led him to see laws as an expression of something other than 'the spirit of the age', and to come to the defence of the 'customary right' of the poor.

BREAKDOWN

Thompson consciously echoes this, in showing how the forest laws in Britain, and the struggle

down of the customary rights of the poor to pasturage, wood supplies, some meat, and other essential means to livelihood. Thus he says:

"The rights and claims of the poor, if inquired into at all, received . . . perfunctory compensation smeared over with condescension and poisoned with charity. Very often they were simply redefined as crimes: poaching, wood theft, trespass".

The 'Blacks' of 1722-3 were in some cases executed, though a number of them escaped and were never heard of again. Their activities were not a major item in the press of the time, but the campaign against them left a penal code which was vicious, ferocious and murderous during more than a century.

What Thompson calls "this astonishing example of legislative overkill", was passed not because of great publicity against the 'blacks'. The ferocity of the Act of 1723 was partly accidental but must also be explained as a reflection of the political and social tensions of the early period of the Hanoverian monarchs.

BRUTAL

In 1723, the ruling groups felt in no way secure in their position. If this was a time usually portrayed in the history books as one of peace and comparative prosperity it was under the surface a brutal and violent one.

The 'blacks' represented a challenge to authority, which if not important in itself might nevertheless be seen as part of a combination of Jacobites, criminals, and the rural poor.

The 1715 effort to restore the Stuart dynasty had been defeated but there was still continual talk of real and imagined plots to the same end.

Thompson describes the political system of the period as akin to a 'banana republic', and it must be said that there is something in this description. The power of the Whig oligarchy, and those like Walpole who established it, was based on the open use of the characteristic political methods of an unchallenged bourgeoisie.

Francis Atterbury, the Jacobite Bishop of Rochester, did not exaggerate when he said that Walpole's "whole administration is built on corruption and bribery, which he

than any of his worst predecessors ever did".

The running of the royal forests was a typical example of how such corruption could be exercised. Those who challenged the power of the landlords on the edge of the forests were not simply against the social system, but they were also against its political organisation.

ATTACK

Thompson concludes by attacking conservative historians of the period of the type of J H Plumb and Namier, who emphasised its stability and peacefulness. "The Hanoverian Whigs were", he says, "a hard lot of men. And they remind us that stability, no less than revolution, may have its own kind of terror".

At this point, after saying he might have been "wise to end here", Thompson goes on to write a concluding section of over ten pages which tells us something of the latest staging post in his political and ideological itinerary - the one time Marxist rebel of the 1950's.

There is, he says, a "highly schematic Marxism", which would say that since law is "part of the superstructure", it has no interest in itself.

Supporters of this somewhat arid doctrine says Thompson might argue that since "law is no more than a mystifying and pompous way in which class power is registered and executed, then we need not waste our labour in studying its history and forms".

But what Red Herring Marxist is there who would support such a view of this? Perhaps Thompson is remembering the mechanical doctrines of the Stalinist CP of his youth. But what serious Marxist is there in 1975 who would deny that the law developed in the seventeenth century to oppose the arbitrary power of the monarchy on behalf of the bourgeoisie might in future generations be turned in part against the bourgeoisie itself?

SOFTEN

And who would deny that in so turnign (as with protection for trade union rights, for instance), that law serves still to soften the collision between opposed classes within the state, and thus preserve the stability of the ruling class? "Rights", once conceded, are delineated and encircled by a framework

way to prevent a threat to the social order. But they do represent a new starting point in the struggle to overthrow that order and such rights (other examples are free speech, habeas corpus, the right to free assembly) are the first to come under attack from the ruling class when it feels threatened in its domination.

But why has Thompson felt it necessary to assert his view with so much passion? Because of the conclusion he wants to draw that: "the regulation and reconciliation of conflicts through the rule of law . . . seems to me a cultural achievement of universal significance".

So there we have it. All this is despite the fact that he has shown in some detail "a political oligarchy inventing callous and repressive laws to serve its own interests". Yet he has found the "reconciliation", the lack of conflict, even by the bourgeoisie, to be a desirable universal human goal.

Surely in 1975 this lines up Thompson with Plumb, Namier and the rest in his concern for some ideal "reconciliation of interests rather than their own resolutions through conflict? Is this not the view of our own reformists, our own Tories and capitalists?"

DEGENERATION

This political degeneration goes alongside a lurch towards subjectivism. We are presented in this concluding section of the book with a picture of Thompson himself:

"I sit here in my study, at the age of fifty, the desk and the floor piled high with five years of notes, xeroxes, rejected drafts, the clocks once again moving into the small hours". In a harsh and cruel world "I stand on a very narrow ledge, watching the tides come up".

Here, the ultimate subjectivist seeks a road from his own tortured soul to the stormy shores of viable historiography.

But is he going to find the conflict, the contradiction that lies at the heart of things, the struggle that tears apart human society?

It seems he is going to concede to the bourgeoisie their power to regulate society. But they can do so no longer, Mr Thompson! What then can we conclude? How then

WRP ADMITS SUPPORT FOR RYDER

When we published the article in the last 'Socialist Press' exposing the unprincipled entry of the Workers Revolutionary Party into the British Leyland Ryder Committees - designed to break down shop floor resistance to speed-up, we found it hard to believe that the WRP could actually defend their class collaboration in public.

Amazingly they have now done so, both at the Workers Press 6th. Anniversary Rally on November 30th., and in Workers Press on Tuesday 2nd December in an article 'refuting' Socialist Press by Michael Banda.

In four-fifths of a page, Banda wriggles and squirms away from every question - blustering to cover up the position. After a long preamble he admits that the WRP are participating in Ryder - but questions our right to raise the matter!

This admission only came of course after Socialist Press had revealed it. Up until then not a single member of the WRP outside of the closed circles of the leadership and the member who entered Ryder knew of this change of policy on such a major issue. This would explain why our leaflets were taken away from members and non-members alike as they went into the door at the 6th. Anniversary meeting.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Where does the Workers Press editorial board stand on this question? You would assume from its statements that it is against Ryder. Apart from Banda's article defending Tom White for sitting on the Cowley Ryder Committee there has been no apparent change of line.

Previously, Workers Press correctly made it clear that: "One of the first tasks the union representatives will have is to participate in the mass redundancies required by the Company."

When the Ryder Report was published, Workers Press made the correct point that: "massive investment by government under a capitalist appointed board who will take a few tame senior stewards as hostages and declare that the era of industrial democracy has begun."

But now we find that the WRP's position is exactly the same as the opportunists of IS. From a reading of Socialist Worker you would conclude that the IS were opposed to entry into Ryder, but if you go to their meetings or read their 'rank and file' paper Leyland Worker you find that they are in favour of entering 'participation' committees.

NOT TOLD

When Banda, on behalf of WRP General Secretary Healy, admits now that the WRP leadership have carried out a major policy change on a question of principle without telling their members or readers, they again demonstrate the political degeneration of the WRP.

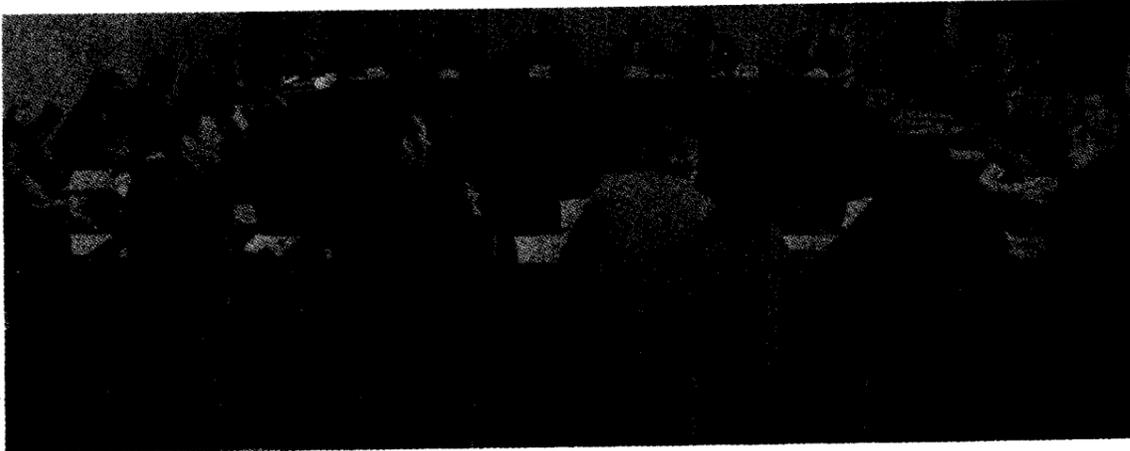
Banda's article attempts to avoid responsibility by making it seem a defence of what he calls "Brother White's action". But Socialist Press did not attack Tom White individually. We attacked the WRP of which White is a leading member.

We know that the decision to enter Ryder was taken by WRP General Secretary G. Healy personally and carried out by White.

Yet WRP policy statements have correctly said continuously that it is not possible to defend a single principle from within the Ryder committees.

"Not a single job or basic right in this giant combine can be saved without a bitter struggle against Ryder" (Workers Press, April 28th 1975). What kind of "bitter struggle" is White carrying out by joining in the plan?

Ryder is currently the spearhead of attacks on manning levels and agreements. The shadow of the participation committees stands



The inaugural meeting of the Assembly Plant Employee Participation Committee. Management and union representatives are seated alternately, seeking to abolish the independent trade union 'side'. Parsons is seated second from left between Geoff Whalen, Industrial Relations Director of Leyland Cars, and Mick Newman, Industrial Relations Manager of the Cowley Assembly Plant.

agreed manning levels on the tracks.

To claim (as Banda does) that the WRP are in the leadership of the struggle against speed-up in Cowley is ludicrous. You cannot fight speed-up by joining the management. In any case Tom White's only contribution (and he is the WRP's only member in any of the Cowley factories) each time management has attacked has been to warn that to fight the company would be an "adventure".

Banda says that: "In principle we [WRP] are totally opposed to the Ryder plan and are determined to smash it in Cowley and everywhere else."

He then goes on to put what must be one of the most opportunistic and unprincipled collection of reasons for entering such class collaboration ever advanced by an organisation calling itself Trotskyist. The centre-piece of his case is eight points; we will take up the six main ones:

1) "Brother White voted against participation at the shop stewards meeting"

This is true, but he did not fight it and it was Cy Blake, regarded by Healy as a sympathiser of the WRP, who, as chairman, rigged the agenda and allowed the Stalinists to swing the vote at the last minute with the argument that Ryder is a "step towards workers' control". (The WRP are backing Cy Blake in the current elections).

2) "He did not attend the meeting which was taking nominations because he was opposed to it."

3) "He was nominated in his absence by stewards of his section. He declined nomination"

This is not true. When interviewed by branch officials and asked to state acceptance or rejection - White accepted.

4) "The stewards from his section appealed to him to stand in order to represent their views and to defend their agreements"

CONFUSION

But how can you defend agreements by sitting on the very body which is set up for the sole purpose of attacking them? All you do is cause maximum confusion and give credibility to the Ryder committees (which were discredited in Cowley before they got off the ground).

Cde. Thornett was likewise nominated by stewards from his section, who advanced exactly the same arguments. In refusing nomination he argued that the most important question was to defend principle. As a result of his stand not a single member from his section cast a vote in the election for the Ryder committees.

5) "After a long discussion with the stewards he agreed to stand on these principled grounds"

So the "principled grounds" for sitting on Ryder is to forget what the committees are, abandon all principle, and agree to stand under 'pressure' from three shop stewards - two of whom are right-wingers openly opposed to revolutionary politics!

POLICY-MAKERS

Is Comrade Banda telling us that these three stewards decided WRP

Ryder?

We ask Banda and Healy: What about the mass of workers in the factory who demonstrated, by abstention from the ballot, their hostility to Ryder (under conditions where they had a ballot paper thrust into their hands by a foreman and a ballot box pushed under their noses by right-wing shop stewards)? Do they count for nothing against White's group of three stewards?

167 VOTES!

White polled 167 votes out of the 1328 in his constituency, giving him a stand-in position. The right-winger elected did little better with 248. The overwhelming majority of workers on White's own constituency are opposed to Ryder - yet the WRP opts for participation! Who do they claim to be educating?

Banda is caught on the mass abstention. He says: "You cannot fight capitalism with a chastity belt. The WRP participates in all struggles without surrendering our political and organisational independence"

But Ryder is participation in management, not in the struggles of the working class. The struggles now and the struggles to come will not be inside the committees but against them. In entering Ryder the WRP is not "staying with the working class", but by class collaboration crossing the class divide, ending up with the employers. That is the issue. Workers Press has said it many times.

Now Healy, in order to carry out unprincipled manoeuvres with certain individuals, because he has nothing else left in Cowley, turns his back on party policy and furtively changes his line. Banda's fury is that of a crook caught in the act.

But the WRP position goes much worse. In the language of all opportunists, Banda castigates the WSL as "sectarian" because we refuse to participate in class collaboration. He throws in the analogy of ultra-lefts who refuse to join the army if conscripted.

But no workers are "conscripted" into the Ryder committees! They volunteer for a "commissioned rank" in the management's offensive. White, in close consultation with the WRP, opted to join Ryder, and its scab committee.

ADVOCATE ENTRY?

Banda's argument of course suggests that the WRP should be advocating full entry into all Participation schemes in order supposedly to "stay with the masses". We await such a call by the Workers Press Editorial Board - or is there one rule for Tom White in Cowley, and another rule for every other WRP member in the country?

Banda tries to argue that entering management participation is comparable with Alan Thornett's agreement that SLL members should work under the Measured Day Work system.

But that was after a six week strike against MDW was knifed by the officials, who obtained a return to work on a bogus formula

But this is not the reality in Cowley where it is well known that the group most hated by Parsons is the WSL. Tom White in fact has developed all kinds of accommodation with Parsons which is shown by White's astounding inclusion in Parsons's recommended list of deputies for this week's elections in the plant.

SLATE

There are 26 nominations for 7 positions, from whom Parsons has selected 7 as the right wing slate - including, as can be seen from his circular we reproduce - Tom White.

The decision of Parsons, an extreme right wing anti-communist witch-hunter, to include White (though presumably without his knowledge) has caused divisions within the right wing. Parsons clearly wants a tame left to decorate his list. (In a similar way to that used by the right wing throughout the trade unions in using the Stalinists as a left face).

When Parsons argued this position within the extreme right wing grouping which publishes the leaflet in the plant ORMO-TU, "Organisation for Moderate Opinion", which has been the main voice of Parsons over the past two years, no agreement could be reached. Parsons stuck to White's inclusion and ORMO were unable to publish an election policy.

TESTIMONIAL

Parsons' testimonial to White makes the following points: "I firmly believe that such candidates will commit themselves to act, firmly, fairly and intelligently in the best interests of all our members, their union and industry. No one can benefit from a sagging industry, except of course those who have other motives."

We think that this development, together with the entry of the WRP into participation, requires some answers from Healy.

Why does Parsons decide to include White on his recommended list in an election so crucial to the right wing?

Is there not a link between Parsons' confidence that White will play a tame role as a full time deputy senior shop steward and White's entry into the Ryder participation scheme?

ment then forced MDW in by threatening each individual worker with the sack.

Working under a new payment system after such a struggle against it is quite different from entering the Ryder committees. In any case after MDW was forced in the mass of workers worked it. With Ryder the mass are against it.

Tom White's position at that time should also be mentioned. In a powerful demonstration of principle he held out alone in North Assembly against the company ultimatum and was removed from his job.

The next step would have been the sack, and a decision had to be correctly taken two days later for him to go back on his job.

There is no comparison here with entry into a management committee to sit with foremen and Industrial Engineers - and Healy well knows it. Healy must carry the political responsibility for having taken Tom White from a principled record to his present opportunist position.

PARSONS

Banda's reason for bringing in the MDW comparison and bending it to suit his argument is to link us with Parsons, who he says has developed an "undying hatred" for the WRP because Workers Press exposed the wining and dining at the Annesly Hotel in Coventry where the Ryder agreement was cooked up.

TRANSPORT & GENERAL WORKERS UNION DEPUTY SENIOR STEWARD ELECTIONS

Dear Members,

The forthcoming elections in our Union are seen as the most crucial elections in the history of British Leyland at Cowley.

Therefore may I be permitted to urge and recommend to you the membership, that the following candidates for the Office of Deputy Senior Stewards be considered.

I firmly believe that such candidates will commit themselves to act, firmly, fairly and intelligently in the best interests of all our members, their Union and Industry. No one can benefit from a sagging Industry, except of course those that have other motives.

There is a disease in this Factory in both Management and Union. It must be cured before we all go down with it. "most of you will know what I mean".

Yes, I BELIEVE A STRONG LEADERSHIP IS REQUIRED, A LEADERSHIP THAT WILL BUILD AND NOT DESTROY.

I hope that you the membership will have sufficient confidence in voting for the following 7 candidates:-

Brother Jim Benson	Paint Shop
Brother Mick Taylor	Body Shop
Brother Tony Glen	Body Rectification North
Brother Soutyabrook	C' Assembly
Brother Albert Paintin	'S' Inspection
Brother Tony Healy	'E' Paint
Brother Tom White	North Side Assembly

F Parsons
Senior Steward TGMU

HEALTH SERVICE: CASUALTY OF LABOUR'S BETRAYAL



ASTMS' Clive Jenkins - no move to nationalise doctors in fight for 40 hr week.

The wholesale closure of casualty departments of hospitals throughout the country is the clearest testament to the Labour leaders' determination to attack the National Health Service along with every other right of the working class.

The junior doctors have been forced into action by the reactionary pay laws imposed by the Wilson government, and by the complete refusal of the trade union leaders to come to their support in their fight for a 40-hour working week and reasonable payment for overtime.

TORIES

Indeed the fact that their whole action is led by Tories within the BMA and the JHDA is a testimony to the betrayal of trade unionism by Clive Jenkins and the ASTMS leadership, who for years have allowed junior doctors to work a basic 80-hour week under punishing conditions without at any point seriously fighting to build the Medical Practitioners Union, the doctors' section of ASTMS around a campaign to change these conditions.

As a result, the industrial action taken by junior doctors is confused, uncoordinated, and largely isolated from the Health Service trade unions - whose leaders in any event

long ago sold out any opposition to the government's pay laws.

It also takes place under leaders who seek to preserve private practice in medicine, while working class support would rally firmly round a clear call to defend the crumbling National Health Service against cuts and closures, ensuring maximum impact of the doctors' actions.

DIFFERENCE

Workers must be clear on the complete difference therefore between the consultants' recent decision to campaign for resignations from the NHS, and the present action of junior doctors. While the doctors must be fully supported in the fight to end Victorian conditions of work, the consultants who attempt to blackmail the government into providing profit-making pay-beds within NHS hospitals must be given notice to quit.

Their threat to resign the NHS *en bloc* is an empty one. Outside the structure of the Health Service they cease to be consultants, and become merely senior doctors seeking employment in the competitive and lucrative but restricted field of private practice.

If they prefer the prospect of personal profit to the possibility of working within a system which provides treatment for all, then they must be made to make way

for the many able junior doctors who would gladly take their place.

In addition the Labour movement must prepare a fight back against private practice. The 'Left' MPs who talk of socialism must immediately fight for legislation to outlaw private practice inside or outside NHS hospitals and nationalise existing private hospitals. It should be made an offence to extort money from the sick and infirm, and all recognition should be withdrawn from such 'doctors'.

MIKARDO

The fight for such an end to private practice is already national conference policy of ASTMS. Ian Mikardo, the 'left' ASTMS-sponsored MP and ASTMS Executive member, must lead this fight, along with the struggle for a £1,000 million injection of funds into the NHS, which is also ASTMS national policy.

At the same time, local cuts in service are mounting - in many cases deliberately confused with and covered over by the doctors' dispute. The most determined resistance to these cuts must be fought for through the NHS and other unions.

Resistance must centre first on forcing those supposedly 'public' bodies - the Regional and Area Health Authorities - to open up their books and their future plans for inspection by elected trade union committees.

Even scratching the surface of these plans reveals the enormous impact the cuts will have on health care. In Oxford on November 24th, a meeting of over 150 health service trade unionists was held, following publication by the local Joint Trade Union Committee of a synopsis of a management *Directive to All Budget Holders in the Oxford AHA* which detailed the management's method of attack on manning and conditions. The *Directive* admits the effects of its proposals on staff will be:

"either in reducing the level of take-home pay, changing their work-load, or working conditions, restrictive actions will sometimes need to be taken in arbitrary fashion."

It goes on to propose shedding labour through "normal wastage", reduction in overtime, freezing unfilled posts and restricting temporary staff. At the same time, other proposals for cuts include an embargo on all additional equipment, a 50% cut in advertising, a 50% cut in the training budget (at a teaching hospital!), a "review" of the demand on diagnostic services (pathological examinations) and in general to: "maintain and where possible increase levels of underspending."

At the meeting the Joint Trade Union Committee exposed a further management document, this time a far more detailed and lengthy list of 61 proposed cuts - centring largely on preventive medicine, but also threatening maternity wards, smaller accident units and the completion of such projects as a permanent dialysis unit.

RESPONSE

An enthusiastic response was given to those speakers who fought in the meeting for the WSL policy of fighting to force the books to be fully opened, and for national strike action in defence of the NHS around the demand for £1,000 million tied to a sliding scale of spending to defend the NHS against the impact of inflation.

The meeting clearly recognised the need for the trade unions to exercise control over the management within the hospitals if jobs, wages and conditions are to be defended, and also the need for unity of all workers in defence of the right to free health care.

The meeting further overwhelmingly backed a call by the Oxford and District Trades Council for a public meeting to begin a wide-scale fight against the cuts.

'CLEAR OFF!' VARLEY TELLS NVT

Last week, Varley, Minister for Industry, bluntly told the 1000 workers who have been occupying the NVT factory in Wolverhampton to call off their four month occupation because the factory could not be made 'viable'.

With this statement Varley washed his hands of any responsibility for the jobs destroyed by the Labour government.

CUT OFF

When the government cut off the loans it had been providing to prop up the profits of NVT, it refused to nationalise the 49% of the firm which was still held in private hands. Varley then advised managing director Poore to take whatever decisions were commercially necessary - ie. to close down and sell off the plant.

Varley is now giving Poore every assistance to salvage some profits from the closure. He is now discussing with management and trade union leaders a 'survival plan' for the Birmingham factory, a plan speed-up for a vastly reduced workforce.

Varley's policy is to destroy jobs to protect the profits of British capitalism.

The union leaders go along with this policy. While the T&GWU leaders make hypocritical noises about 'action on jobs' from the government, they refuse to fight for nationalisation and turn the struggle of NVT workers into the dead end of searching for a new employer to take over the factory.

MERIDEN

In the same way they, together with Benn, encouraged the Meriden workers' cooperative where wages

were cut and conditions destroyed to pay off loans to financiers - which is now also threatened by the collapse of NVT.

"DEPRESSING"

When Labour MPs like Renee Short say that Varley's decision is 'depressing and a great blow to the workers' they must be asked where they stand - will they fight for the removal of Varley, Wilson and the right wing? Will they call for the nationalisation of the whole industry under workers' management?

The first step in a fight for nationalisation must be the opening of the books of NVT and the holding company, Manganese Bronze, to show what has happened to the funds pumped into NVT and prepare the ground for nationalisation.

PORTUGAL, continued from page 1

will not get the 40% rise they so dramatically forced from the government last month.

Left-wing military figures, notably Otelo de Carvalho, former chief of the COPCON security force (now disbanded) and Lisbon commander, and Carlos Fabiao, Chief of Staff, have been replaced. Many more (for example, Dinis de Almeida, commander of the left-leaning Light Artillery Regiment) have been arrested.

NEWSPAPERS

The repressions have gone beyond the military. Newspapers have been closed down, and the main Lisbon dailies, which generally supported the line of the CP, have been 'nationalised' in order to bring back the former fascist journalists. Similar treatment has been given to the TV and radio stations, with Radio Renascenca being handed back to the Catholic Church.

Among the others arrested were a number of foreigners, and there were military raids on the offices of LUAR and other left-wing organisations.

All of these measures have been carried out by a much-strengthened right-wing government, which ended its 'strike' only to take up the cudgels against the working class under the demagogic slogan of "socialism and freedom" - main slogan of the Socialist Party.

This does not mean the Stalinists no longer play a key role. On the contrary, right-wing officer, Antunes, appeared on TV - even in the midst of these repressive measures - to say that the participation of the CP in the government was "more necessary than ever".

To show they accepted the the CP joined the reactionaries with an attack on "radical leftism" as the cause of the difficulties and

upheavals that had arisen. They also renewed the calls for the "battle of production" which they had abandoned in recent months.

There is no doubt that the Stalinist leaders will do all in their power to adapt to the right-wing policies of the AFM junta and play their role in containing and disciplining workers and rank and file soldiers - thus treacherously lending vital political support and credibility to the regime.

But these reactionary policies will only worsen the problems facing Portuguese workers. Inflation - at 27% per annum, and unemployment at 400,000 in a population of only 9 million can only be fought through mobilising the strength of the working class. The alliance of workers and left-wing soldiers must be developed and strengthened.

Significantly the paratroopers, when they finally surrendered on the 28th November said they would "go underground to work in the service of the revolution".

BREAK

A policy to expose the reactionary role of Stalinism and social democracy must be fought for in the Portuguese workers and soldiers movement. The demand must be to force the SP and the CP leaders to break from the Armed Forces Movement and the PPD, and form a workers' government.

The parties must also fight for a reversal of the recent anti-democratic measures and the restoration of workers' control of the mass papers, radio and television.

At the same time workers must consolidate and extend their organisations in the factories, localities, and in the barracks, as the only defence of the conditions of the Portuguese masses.

INNOCENTI, continued from page 1

preventing the employers from uprooting plant and equipment to start production elsewhere. Machinery and jigs from Chrysler UK and Innocenti must be blacked internationally.

Secondly, such links must not sacrifice any political clarity on the questions involved.

The defence of jobs at Chrysler means workers must demand that the 'left' MPs lead the fight to remove Wilson and Varley, who are plotting savage cuts in the workforce. Those 'lefts' such as Huck-Id who refuse to fight Wilson can be seen in their true colours. In the Innocenti fight, the nationalisation of the factory could only take place if the present Tory government is brought down. Thus the demand that the Communist Party and Socialist Party break from the government, and call general strike action, is vital.

Thirdly, none of these jobs struggles can be carried through without the most determined resistance at plant level to every management attack.

This fight will show in living colours the need for principled leadership based on the demands of the Transitional Programme.

LEYLAND'S SECRET

In June and July six senior executives of British Leyland went on a study tour to five Japanese motor companies.

Their report has so far been kept a secret. And, having obtained a copy, we can see why.

Japanese car workers, the report claims, clean and decorate their factories 'on a voluntary basis even outside working hours', wear their company uniforms with pride, have 'thought for the company rather than the individual', and show respect for seniority.

Of course, they are hard-headed realists too: "It is obvious, that similar conditions cannot be established in our company overnight, but we must make every effort to fulfil these conditions enjoyed by the Japanese by creating an atmosphere of deeper understanding and trust at all levels".

Exactly how this trust and understanding will develop to the point where Leyland's workers will welcome the intensification of their work, proudly accept redundancies, resign from their trade unions, elect Lord Stokes as president of the company union, and rush back to

without pay at the weekends, the report does not state in detail!

The group evidently believes, however, that the basic solutions to Leyland's problems must be philosophical:

"The members soon appreciated the part played by the teaching of Confucius in the formation of the deep-rooted attitude of the Japanese. These teachings are evident in a reverence for authority, the sovereign, the father and the elders. Certainly the family and the company are more important than an individual in his own estimation".

£500 FUND

The enthusiastic response from many quarters to our theoretical supplement 'Trotskyism Today' makes us anxious to produce it more regularly, and develop further the content of 'Socialist Press' itself.

To carry out such work means an increased drive to raise our £500 development fund. Increasingly, as other left groups lurch from crisis to crisis, 'Socialist Press' raises the only voice of Trotskyist principle in the workers' movement.

SEND A DONATION TO

PUBLIC MEETING

LIVERPOOL
Wednesday 17th December
8.00 pm
AUEW Hall
Mount Pleasant
Speaker: Alan Thornett
The Struggle for the
Transitional Programme
A Programme to Defend Jobs