



Militant International Review

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STREET FIGHTING IN LONDONDERRY *Front Cover:* defence of Rossville Street Barricade, Bogside. *Below:* Police charge being repulsed at same barricade.



Tories and Workers - the coming clash

by Ted Grant

Political perspectives in Britain cannot be understood except on the background of the development of world capitalism. In the last quarter century, in the main industrialised countries, there has been an expanded growth of the economy. The so-called undeveloped areas, formerly colonial or semi-colonial, have fallen behind; capitalism in the present epoch has aggravated the contradictions between the growth of the countries in the West, including Japan, and the much slower growth or even relative decline of the underdeveloped countries. This period has also seen a steady increase in power of the economy of the deformed worker-States, China and the Russian bloc.

Even though there has been a steady growth of the economy in the West, despite minor recessions or small slumps, the economy have been plagued with the illness of inflation. Continually rising prices, partly due to the enormous fictitious capital injected into the economy by arms production and other means, have bedevilled the economy.

In addition to arms, there has been the injection artificially into the world economy of dollars, without a backing in the balance of payments. At the same time, the enormous potential of world economy and the world division of labour has been shown, even if in a distorted form, by the expansion of the world economy. The increase of world trade, particularly between the industrial powers, has given an added impetus to the development of all the industrialised capitalist economies.

These factors interacting on one another, have given a boost to technology and invention, which in its turn has meant the development of new products and the intensive search for new resources of raw materials and minerals on all the continents. The discovery of such resources in turn has added to the expansion process.

The growth of the economy in its turn has meant an increased power for the working class in numbers and cohesion. The demand for an increased share of the enormous wealth they have been producing is a feature of all the capitalist countries in the West. The wages offensives in Western Europe, Japan and American, are an indication of this tendency. Thus the beginning of the revolution in France in May 1968 and the pre-revolutionary

situation in Italy are an indication that the growth of the economy by no means solves the problem for the ruling class of relations between the classes. The very explosive development of the economy with all its effects acts as a stimulus to class conflict.

NEW CLASS BATTLES

This epoch has been one of preparing for new clash battles on the part of a generation of workers, who have never experienced the defeats, and the pessimism induced by these defeats, in the interwar years.

British imperialism economically, diplomatically, militarily, has seen a slow decline in its world position in the last quarter century. Had it not been for the above mentioned factors of world economic growth and the world economic upswing, this would have resulted in a catastrophe. The British Empire has been slowly dissolving. The Commonwealth, from being a source of resources and tribute has become to some extent a burden on Britain. As a market, it has grown more slowly than the industrialised countries at any rate in the ex-colonial and colonial sections. The old Commonwealth has looked towards America rather than Britain, to a great extent, as an economic and military partner. Canada has become almost a province of the United States and New Zealand and Australia and South Africa show the same process at a slower pace. Thus the demands and burdens of the old Dominions and the New, begin to outweigh the connections of the past.

In the past, British capitalist, of course, always looked towards Europe, but always with the policy of the Balance of Power. This has now been shattered by history. Britain has been reduced to just one of the European middle powers, similar to France and West Germany, in contrast to the enormous continental super-powers of America and Russia. The perspective of the development of a mighty China and the colossal development economically of Japan, further accentuates the process of the reduction of British power in the world.

BRITAIN'S SLOW GROWTH

At the same time, of all the big powers, Britain's growth rate has been the lowest. This has meant a steady attrition of power in comparison with her rivals. Not only Japan, but West Germany, has outdistanced her, and France and Italy are rapidly catching up. The futile attempt to maintain British power by enormous arms expenditure has further drained the resources of British Imperialism in the last quarter century. Even so, this expenditure has been an expenditure in effect on scrap.

It is this changed position of British capitalism which has dictated as a last desperate throw to attempt to enter the EEC. Coming late, it is a delusion of British imperialism that they will solve their

problems thereby. It is a naked calculation in material gain that dictates the policies of all the Powers. As far as Britain is concerned, she has to balance up the loss and the gains of entering the EEC. On the one hand, for the great combines of chemicals, electronics, engineering, motor manufacturers, the market of nearly 60 million people in the British Islands (Eire is, in reality, an appendage), is too small. Consequently, they have to find a greater market if they are to expand at the maximum limit of their capacity. Britain has an advantage in scientific research and development, her expenditure alone being equal to two thirds of that of the six Common Market countries. It is in the development of these techniques that she lags behind. The ruling clique hopes that with the spur of the bigger single market enclosed in its own tariff walls, there will be an incentive to invest and thus a greater growth of the economy.

The disadvantages lie in the common agricultural policy which would abolish the advantage of generations of cheap food. In its turn, it will cut off markets in the old Dominions and the New. Deprived of the British markets for food, they in their turn would look elsewhere for the exchange of manufactured and capital goods, and this Britain would be deprived of certain markets. Thus whether they enter or not still remains in the balance.

The inevitable increase in prices of food and other necessities, which entry would mean, would stimulate even greater demands for wage increases on the part of the working class. Consequently, it would provoke an increasing mood of resistance on the part of the workers. On the other hand, the inflation continues in Britain as in other countries, with steady increases in prices, unabated. Thus, staying out of the Common Market cannot solve the problems of British imperialism, while entry on the other hand, though in the interests of the most modern sections of the monopolies, could not solve these problems either.

CONSERVATIVE VICTORY

The victory of the Conservatives in the General Election was a reaction to the Tory policies of the Labour Government; policies adopted under the direct pressure of Big Business in the City. The burdens of increasing taxes, while subsidising the investments of the entrepreneurs; the whittling away of some parts of the Welfare State, with increased prices for school meals and charges for medical prescriptions; the Prices and Incomes policy with its attempt to limit wages while profits were increased, were all indications of this capitulation to Big Business.

All this, plus the constant pre-occupation with the balance of payments syndrome, were all indications of the lack of vitality of British capitalism. While America with enormous production and power, can (of course temporarily) ignore her enormous deficits and still proceed financially and economically as the world's major power, Britain is immediately

affected because of her now puny weight, in comparison with the past, in world affairs. She is a lesser power and has dropped from third position to fifth in her industrial output and capacity. France is now within challenging distance.

This explains the feverish preoccupation with the balance of payments. The deficit in the balance of payments in its turn is caused by the competition in manufactured goods on Britain's home market, where despite the second highest tariffs in the world - America's are the highest - Britain is often defeated in price by her main rivals.

All these factors are a demonstration of the fact that Britain has been pushed down to the level of the lesser powers. It is on this background that developments after the General Election must be viewed. The Tory programme, leaving aside the demagoguery about prices, can be compressed into that of "dealing" with the Unions and lowering taxes on companies, corporations and the rich.

'DELIBERATE GOVERNMENT'

"The Banker", journal of finance capital, commenting in its July issue on the Conservative election victory, declared: "He (Heath) has been given a mandate to reverse the interventionist policies of the last six years, to restore incentives, at personal and commercial levels, and to instill greater competition through industry The failure of the economy, and particularly industry, to gear itself to a high-growth pattern. There are many strands to this: low investment, failure of industry to regroup, poor labour relations, a low savings ratio...."

This, of course, was the real meaning of the Tory programme. Coppers to the workers, millions to big business and the directors: a programme operated by the Tory Government in Australia in boom conditions. This provoked the first mass political protest strike on August 25th of 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ million Australian workers. Any attempt to carry through the Tory programme will provoke a storm within the Labour and T.U. Movement in Britain.

It is the reaction to this significant strike which probably resulted in the changed attitude of the Financial Times against a "Hard" attitude to the workers dealt with further on in this article. It is significant that not a word about this strike appeared in the popular press! It obviously aroused apprehension that the British workers might follow this example, when and if the Tories as they intended, introduced a similar budget.

The Tories came to power with a promise of a new style of government. Gone were to be the frantic scurrings of the Labour Government. Deliberate government would be the watchword. This government has reflected itself in inaction and 'deliberate' enjoyment of the part of the Prime Minister and his Cabinet. Deliberate government has meant deliberate nothing, as the

capitalist press has cautiously complained. In the lightmindedness and inaction of the bourgeois leaders are reflected the decay of capitalism itself. For fifty years, they have suffered one staggering reverse of fortune after another, in a monotonous and gloomy decline. The nitwit aristocrat Home is followed by the nitwit upstart Heath. The leaders of the bourgeoisie, in this period, reflect the impasse of the system.

The only sections of the programme of the Tories which are intended seriously, are those which intend to cut down on the expenditure of the nationalised industries. The Tories intended to hold down the price increases of the nationalised sector for the benefit in the main, of Big Business, the main consumers of transport, electricity, gas and fuel, giving only a marginal benefit to the individual consumer and housewife. Even in this, it is doubtful whether they can succeed in carrying it through to a conclusion. As far as the prices of general commodities are concerned, they have decided to do nothing. Thus, those housewives who were deceived into voting for the Tories on the issue of rising prices will be the hardest hit by the policies of the government. The defeat of the Labour Party in the election can be partially explained by the overweening confidence of the Labour leaders, who in statesmanlike fashion, hardly put forward any policies - let alone Socialist policies - in order to provoke the necessary enthusiasm and confidence of the rank and file. The defeat was more of a setback or a secondary defeat, rather than a debacle. It is due in the main to the apathy and abstention of the more politically backward layers.

In the General Election, the Conservatives gained 13,106,965 votes; Labour got 12,141,676 and the Liberals 2,109,218. The Welsh and Scottish Nationalists, C.P. and various freak candidates received a total of 900,473. The Conservative vote rose by 1,600,000 and Labour's fell by 900,000. There was a 72% turnout in comparison with a 75.9% turnout at the last election. Labour's vote fell in spite of the increased electorate and the fact that youth of 18 voted for the first time.

The organised workers are not at all demoralised by the political defeat. They have turned their attention to the industrial front and the struggle for higher wages and better conditions. This militant mood has already developed out of disillusionment with the policies of the Labour Government. The measures which the Tories have projected for the future can only strengthen this mood. The Jeremia of the Tories on the question of strikes will merely provoke even bigger strikes on the part of all sections of the working class.

The demands of the transport workers, of the miners, railwaymen, the engineers and public employees of anything from 15% to over 30% increases are an attempt to make up for the lost wages due to the prices and incomes policy. The dock strike was intended to mark a stand on the part of the government. The Confederation of British Industry and the Government itself announced that the economy and the country could not stand further

"wage inflation", i.e. an increase in the share of the wealth produced by the workers, or an attempt to catch up on the steadily increasing prices.

Retail prices are steadily rising. They rose $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ in the first seven months of this year according to the official index which is artificially weighted not to show the extent of price rises. The poisoned argument of the capitalist press that increased wages cause increased prices is falsified by the admission of the financial press - not read by the workers - that devaluation and world inflation are having their effect in Britain. It is not prices that chase wages but wages that chase prices!

The politically illiterate and savage journal of the right wing Tories, The Economist, was screeching for action and a firm stand to withstand the dockers' claim, even at the cost of a long strike. This, for the purpose "pour encourager les autres" (to encourage the others) as a lesson to the other sections of the working class. In more decorous terms, the Financial Times and the Times editorialised in the same vein. The actual strike of the dockers was greeted with delight by The Economist - its effect on the balance of payments was considered secondary, from the point of view of these ruling class spokesmen, to that of teaching the working class a lesson, and thus helping safeguard an increased share of the profits for the ruling class. Thus we see it is not the 'country' and its interests that dictate the policies of these loud-mouthed representatives of the capitalists, but the naked and selfish interests of capital.

The Economist greeted with screams of pain the minor concessions to the dockers which amounted to 7% increase on their wages. (Of course, this was a major "concession" in comparison with the past guidelines of $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ increase of the Prices and Incomes policy).

CAPITALIST RETREAT

Mr. Michael Nobel, President of the Board of Trade, at Cumbernauld on 21st August, gloomily said that "Britain was not in a period of slump but we were very much on the borderline". He declared that number one priority to be the "curbing of inflation" even before solving the problem of economic growth".

The Financial Times for 21st August points out editorially: "taking a half-yearly comparison (of industrial production) the rise in the first half of 1970 as against the second half of last year has been less than $\frac{1}{2}\%$ per cent Even (consumer spending increase) is unlikely to bring the rate at which output is rising quickly into line with the underlying rate of increase in productive capacity even if the latter is now somewhat less than has been widely assumed." Thus even the miserable increase in productive capacity cannot be utilised because it would not help to increase the profits of the capitalists. Capitalists are not interested in producing goods because they are wanted but only for the purpose of increasing

the mass of profits in relation to the capital laid out.

The TUC and the Labour leadership, pointing out the slack capacity which is not utilised, are making the mistake of asking capitalists, their Government and system, to do things which are not possible. The contradiction of want and low wages, amid the possibilities of plenty, are results and causes of the problem of the maximisation of profit under capitalism, which is interested in this and not maximum production.

The mood of the working class to oppose attempts to cut living standards or even to prevent improvements in the standard of living is almost universal throughout the industrialised capitalist countries. The working class in Britain is not prepared to tolerate a disguised version of a Prices and Incomes Policy from the Conservative Government.

The Financial Times of 26th August presents the dilemma of the Government editorially: "The choice is in essence a simple one. The Government can either accept the argument of the National Institute (Economic Review) that there is little the Government can do about inflation one way or the other and that it, therefore, might just as well reflate. If incomes policy does not arrest the rise in British costs relative to those of our main competitors, then sooner or later the exchange rate must take the strain."

The Government's alternative to this spectre of a new devaluation, before adopting any new "stimulus" to the economy was first: "We would have to get to grips with wage inflation". It then argues on the National Institute premises that inflation and devaluation "could in time become a vicious circle, with one triggering off the other in turn. But the real argument against accepting inflation is a much more fundamental one. Inflation even at the present rate, sets up considerable social, and therefore political, strains. If the rate were to accelerate these strains would become all the greater."

Neither inflation, meaning steadily rising prices, nor deflation meaning depressing standards and leading to even higher unemployment, serve the interests of the working class. What then of the present impasse combining both deflation and inflation? Such is the result of so-called "planned capitalism" in America and Britain. All the high-flown theories which were supposed to have solved the problems of capitalism and explained the post-war economic upswing are shown in all their bankruptcy. (In the next issue we will deal with these questions).

In the first seven months of 1970, more than a millions workers were on strike, about 1 in 25 of the labour force. This is the largest number since official statistics began in 1947. The number of working days lost amounted to 6.05 million. This is double the number of days lost during the same period last year. As things are developing 1970 could record the highest number of industrial conflicts since the General Strike. The Government and the employers are set on a collision course with the Trade Union and

Labour Movement. Because of the complete incapacity of the employers, and the virtual stagnation of the economy, not enough has been invested to put British capitalism in a strong position in relation to her competitors. Devaluation, an indirect attack on standards of living, gave them a breathing space which has not been used to retool. Now the workers are not prepared to accept passively attacks on their standard of living, or to accept the continuation of their present standards. Meanwhile, the Government, while not even pretending to limit prices, has demanded a virtual standstill on "high" wages increases. They have "asked" the chairmen of nationalised industries to resist "inflationary" wage increases. They have "asked" private employers to do the same - of course, in effect the message the employers "ordered" to be given to them.

As the Daily Express of 28th August puts it: "since the unions have made it clear that they will fight any interference in wage bargaining, mines, railways and local government services could all be disrupted before the year is out."

The TUC reflecting the pressures of the working class, as shown by the election of left-wing leaders in the AEF and T&GWU, has announced in the mild words of Vic Feather, TUC General Secretary, that the Government's efforts to control wage rises were "a misguided and dangerous course of action". According to the Financial Times of 27th August, "members of the TUC General Council have clearly not yet decided how best to react to the Government's imprecise ideas on wages, and accordingly are not pressing forward to a premature confrontation The desire not to slide into a major wide-ranging battle was voiced especially by Sir Fred Hayday, of the G&MWU, who stressed that the TUC should not start on a path which could lead to a repetition of the 1926 General Strike".

Thus the right-winger leader tried to scare the TUC with the apparition of the titanic battles of the past. By trying to be conciliatory and placate the Tory Government, they merely embolden it and increase its obstinacy.

The only thing holding the employers and their Government back is the fear of the consequences of social conflict and its effect on their position both at home and in the world. The publicists of the ruling class are warning them of the consequences and advising restraint and compromise. Dealing with the inactivity of the Government, the political editor of the Financial Times writes: "an all-out attempt at 'union-bashing' would simply produce more problems than it would solve".

The policy of the Government is not "misguided" but dictated by the interests of the employers and the present difficulties of British capitalism. The only thing that would hold them back, at least for a period, is if they saw that it would cost the capitalists more than they would save by the strike struggles and their effect on the economy. The lack of resolution of the TUC can only lead to the employers and the Government believing they can "deal" with the workers with the minimum of damage to the capitalists' interests.

Spinelessness always stiffens the resistance of the employers. If the Government and their publicists and tools in the Press and mass media are hesitating, it is because of the militant uncompromising attitude of the rank and file. Despite all manouvres and the threats to take action against "wildcat" strikes by legislation, it is this mood which is being reflected in the attitude of the union leaderships, including that of the G&MWU.

Since the Second World War, when it came to the issue of a "showdown" which would mean a confrontation between the classes, the ruling class representatives in the government preferred to retreat. Under Churchill, Eden and Macmillan, faced with shattering industrial struggles which would have exacerbated class relations and weakened the position of British capitalism abroad, they preferred to give increases. This they could afford to do, even with Britain's slow growth, because of the development and expansion of world economy and world trade. Thus, at each stage, the ruling classes preferred to put off the decisions and the gruelling struggle to the morrow.

However, the government, under pressure of Big Business, has dutifully raised the question of a showdown with the workers. Meeting with the chairmen of the nationalised industries, Barber, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, 'offered' full support to their resistance to inflationary wage increases even at the expense of national strikes. 'Summoned' by the Chancellor, the CBI solemnly agreed to make the same recommendations to private industry.

It is for this that Big Business piles up its contributions to the coffers of the Tory Party. There is only one shadow on this comedy of the servant "instructing" his master, of course, not in the interests of the latter, but "of the nation", and that is the attitude of the working class and its organisations. At the time, when he was appealing the strike which has now lasted five weeks, of four thousand building workers on the Shell site at Guesmere Port was taking place.

They refused the offer of 1s6d. per hour increase or £3 per week or more, demanding 3s6d. This is a symptom of the mood of the organised workers, and of the difficulties of operating an unwritten restraint on the wages of the workers. Particularly as after the Tories' coming to power, prices have continued to increase faster than before. In the past, the capitalist class could retreat as a lesser evil, because of the upgrowth of the economy - though this was shockingly low in comparison with its rivals.

OECD FIGURES

<u>Gross Domestic Product - 1963 Prices</u>		<u>1960-70</u> <u>Average Rate of Growth</u>
JAPAN	140 billion dollars	11.3%
ITALY	110 " "	5.7%
FRANCE	100 " "	5.6%
U.K.	90 " "	2.7%
GERMANY	80 " "	4.7%
USA		4.2%
SPAIN		7.4%
CANADA		4.9%

The gross domestic product rose by only $\frac{1}{2}\%$ between the first quarters of 1969 and 1970, according to the calculations of the National Institute Economic Review of May, 1970.

PILKINGTON STRIKE

Nevertheless, this increase was sufficient to allow concessions to the stronger sections and the highly organised. But in the last few years, the revolt of the low paid workers has reached the stage of increasingly bitter struggles and strikes. The strike at Pilkington glassworks, which is the first important one involving all its glass factories, was symptomatic of this. It was the first strike at the St. Helen's glassworks for fifty years. It involved the right wing Labour town of St. Helens, and the G&MWU. (Partly owing to the intervention of a tendency which the workers referred to as having "socialist measles", in dubbing the G&MWU as a "scab union", they conduced to the formation of an independent union of Glassworkers, thus tragically separating sections of the militant workers from the more politically and industrially backward elements.) This played into the hands of the G&MWU leadership, which, of course was responsible for the situation, by its bureaucratic mishandling and remoteness from the rank and file. The split and the strike which followed helped the employers and the G&MWU bureaucracy to crush opposition. The bureaucrats outmanoeuvred the dissidents by carrying through some reforms in the organisation of the workers in the plants. The attitude of the ultra-lefts has helped in provoking the temporary demoralisation of the workers.

It is no accident that after the experience of Pilkingtons, the Tories have announced that in their projected anti-union legislation, they will make provision for split unions and for the "Right" of workers to decide by ballot what proportions should be represented by different "unions". They understand the weakening and demoralising effect that split unions have on the organisations of the workers. Undoubtedly, had the militants stayed inside the G&MWU, they would have been elected as shop stewards and controlled the new union branches which had been set up.)

There have been strikes of the dustmen, teachers, and other sections in recent months. The working class have remained firmly committed to the unions, even where these unions have been bureaucratically run. In the recent period, the seamen's union has transformed itself from a semi-company union into one more responsive to the pressures and demands of the rank and file. This is the most dramatic expression of the process. The move to the left in the AEF and the T&GWU are indications of the same process. The radicalisation of the white collar unions is another sign of these developments. The process will continue and even be intensified in the coming year. There were 3,021 industrial disputes in 1969 as compared with 2,378 in 1968. The number of workers on strike was 1,619,600 (including 227,000 indirectly involved) compared with 2,257,000 in 1968 (including 182,000 indirectly involved). But the 1968 figure includes 1,500,000 in the one

10.

day engineering strike. In terms of days lost, the increase was significantly greater, rising from 4,690,000 in 1968 to 6,772,000 in 1969. This does not include the approximately quarter million in 1969 who struck in protest against the projected anti-trade union laws. The figures for 1970 bid to exceed the figures for 1969.

The battles of the Australian workers at the present time are an indication of the process. Not dismayed at the election of a Tory Government, they swept aside anti-trade union legislation and engaged in militant strikes. They are demanding their share of the expanded profits of the Australian industrial boom.

In the 1968-69 financial year, Australia lost 1.9 million working days in strikes. This was double the previous year, and that was almost double the year before that. Even the Financial Times (28th August, 1970) remarks that this year will be a record. 250,000 Australian workers struck as a demonstration against the vicious budget which gave millions to the upper income brackets in lesser taxes and pennies to the workers, while steeply increasing taxes on hardware goods such as cars, fridges, transistors, kitchenware, etc. Civil servants have worked to rule, and there have been strikes of oilworkers, milkmen, teachers, brewery workers, container depot workers, electricity workers in Melbourne, gas workers in Brisbane, airline maintenance men, and even nurses in Canberra. Most of these have been local strikes but they indicate the trend. There have been strikes against inflation, or to put it in rude language, steadily rising prices.

The bitterness and resentment of the ruling class at the strength of the unions was shown by the campaign of all the mass media for anti-trade union legislation. But bitterness has to be tempered with realism if it is not to lead to disastrous conflicts. The CBI has not wholeheartedly welcomed the commitment of the Tory Government to anti-union legislation. In meetings with the Minister, delegations of this body have actually asked for a watering down of anti-union legislation! And not at all from kind heartedness or philanthropy do these narrowminded and faithful members and representatives of Big Business take this action.

Their main pre-occupation is to aim at the funds of the unions, to try and frighten the bureaucrats of these unions into docility, at the same time, trying to enmesh the unions in the state machinery of arbitration and other 'conciliatory' machinery.

The threats of the CBI and of the Government to the unions have met with a sceptical echo from the financial press. The Financial Times of 19th August has some very interesting material on the negotiations between the T&GWU and the giant oil and smaller oil distribution companies in relation to the wages of the lorry drivers of these concerns. It sourly comments on the fact that the employers were forced to grant, in full, the 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % wage increase demand of the workers. This, the Financial Times felt, showed the strength of the T&GWU and, in particular, the shop stewards.

These negotiations, as the Financial Times wryly remarks, were taking place at the very time that the CBI and the Government were issuing their dour warnings on the effects of wage inflation, and the necessity of absolute resistance!

The real tenor of the Government and the reactions of the workers to it, are shown in relation to the question of establishing a second line of air transport, apart from the State concerns BEA and BOAC. BUA, which was preparing to sell out to BOAC, as it was virtually bankrupt, has now seen the light and is trying to merge instead with Caledonian Airways. This is to be a reminder of the advantages of private (un)-enterprise.

As a blessing to this marriage, the Tory Government wants to hand over air routes which would bring £7 million a year profit to the new airline at the expense of the State airlines. Even the chairmen of BEA and BOAC despite their increases of £2,500 a year, have protested strenuously at this racket. Naturally, the "progressive" press, such as the Observer, has enthusiastically welcomed this suggestion. None of the mass media have explained the repulsive character of the suggestion that the State hand over a new "license to print money", to monopoly concerns, without these having spent a penny of money, or forethought, to the development of such routes, which were created at great cost by the State airlines.

This pleasant transaction, as was to be expected, has hardly been met with enthusiasm by the workers at the airports. The workers at Heathrow, Manchester, Glasgow, Catwick and other areas, have responded indignantly by declaring that they not touch any of the aircraft of such a line, and will have it blacked by their brother unionists in all the airports of the world! They demanded that the original BUA-BOAC merger go through.

STORMS AHEAD

Thus, whatever direction the rulers look, the prospect is that of stormy political weather. Any attempt by the Government to carry through their policy would provoke the biggest industrial storm of the postwar epoch. Yet in this weather, they have at the head, Heath, who may be good at sailing small crafts, but hardly has the stamina and the understanding to steer the ship of state through the stormy years that lie ahead.

For more than two decades, the ruling class has constantly proclaimed through the mouth of its statesmen, the mass media and individual capitalists, that investment is the key to progress in the future. Yet it is precisely in investment in Britain that they are falling behind. Investment abroad totals up to £1,000 million in 1969. The investment of the nationalised industries is actually more than 50% of the total of investments in Britain. At the same time, so-called private industry comprises 90% of manufacturing and productive industry in the country. In comparison with the colossal amounts invested in America and Japan and the proportion of national income

which goes to investment in Western Europe, the sums put into new industry by British capitalism are puny.

At the same time, the tendency of the falling rate of profit has begun to affect all sections of the capitalist world. Falling profits provokes an universal reaction of the capitalists, to try and limit wages as a means of insuring a bigger share of the wealth created by the working class. In Japan and Western Europe, this has partly been overcome by a higher growth rate, which, of course, ensures bigger profits. The chronic crisis and the measures of the government to overcome it, have added artificial impediments to the already slow rate of growth.

The disparity between America, Europe and Japan on the one side and Britain on the other, in the rate of growth, was further accentuated by the higher investment in proportion to the national income in these countries in comparison with Britain. The industrial production figures of some important countries between 1957 and 1967 indicate the trend. Sweden increased at the rate of 6.1% annually, France 5%. West Germany 4.8%, USA 4.6% and Britain only 2.7%.

In 1970, the level of investment will only be 3 to 4% higher than the miserable level of 1969, according to a forecast by the CBI after consulting their member firms. Under Wedgwood Benn the Ministry of Technology had forecast 7%. Even this abysmally low figure will not be reached.

The level of fixed investment (including housing) fell by 1% in 1969. The increase in world trade was 14% by price but by volume only 10%. This increase disguised the slow rise of British exports. The exports of West Germany and Japan leaped ahead by contrast.

In the field of machine tools, Britain's industry now stands fifth in size. This is the indispensable base for the re-tooling of industry. Deliveries of machine tools in 1969 reached the figure of £180 million. Exports were over £67 million, but in return £40 million worth were imported, leaving a favourable balance of only £27 million.

In the field of electronics, exports increased from £140 million in 1965 to £255 million in 1969. An apparent success; but imports increased in the same period from £82 million to £241 million. The favourable surplus dropped from £57 million to £16 million. The trade is forecasting an actual deficit in 1970 in electronics.

The Midland Bank Review also complains: "profit margins, if not generally falling, are at least rising less rapidly than previously, thus restricting the availability of internal funds, the main source of finance for capital development Interest rates (are) at high levels the amount of new money raised in capital issues was £159 million in the first half of 1970 (compared with) £469 million in the first half of 1969...." It expected a modest revival in consumer expenditure.

The rate of interest has increased from 5.8% in 1960, already a high figure, to 9.1% in 1969. In the same issue of The Banker quoted above, it states baldly: "The international interest rate war has, of course, been very much a reflection of the economic times: a consequence of the pursuit of over-ambitious growth rates and employment levels, to the detriment of price stability and international payments equilibrium". Consequently, the Tory Government looks with equanimity at the prospective growth of unemployment to three-quarter million by the end of the year. It is afraid of "stimulating" production for fear of "stimulating" the workers' demand for an increased share of the wealth they produce. Rather a smaller "cake" of which the ruling class get a greater share. Production under capitalism is not for the sake of production but to increase the profits of the ruling class!

According to The Banker, "Gross Domestic Product at constant prices fell by 1% up to the end of June. Consumption remained virtually unchanged, with exports levelling off. The fall in total spending reflected slightly lower levels of fixed investment and stockbuilding. The estimate of fixed investment has since been revised to show little change on the previous quarter for manufacturing industry Indeed the Treasury has since suggested the outcome may be more in line with the lower estimate of 3%-4% reached for manufacturing industry by the CBI Investment plans seem to have been revised downwards because of the failure of the economy to expand, and also the severity of the liquidity pressures (lack of cash and banking limitations on lending) on the private sector " Business failures in the first half of 1970 were 21% above that of the corresponding period of 1969.

These figures are an estimation of the weakness of British capitalism. Nevertheless, there has been a growth of British industry to a far greater extent and far faster pace than in the inter-war period.

Despite the limping character of its progression, Britain has seen more mergers and concentration of capital than any other country in the world. This concentration on the one side, with the development of mass industries, has not been confined to industry, but to the commercial side as well. While the industrial workers, because of their organisation, have defended and even extended their standard of living, the white collar workers have fallen behind. Relative to the organised industrial workers, their standards have declined. At the same time, the old paternal relationship between managers and staff has largely disappeared, the big commercial firms employing hundreds and even thousands of white collar employees have begun to be organised.

Some white collar workers have taken militant action. Especially in the engineering industry, where the big firms are strongly organised,

the staff side, which is close to the workers, has organised militant action involving DATA and the clerical workers' organisations. Layers of workers not reached by unionism in the past, and in which the employers have organised company unions to prevent genuine union organisation, have now been affected.

Bank clerks and insurance officials have rejected company unions and joined unions affiliated to the TUC. Civil servants, post office workers, typists, clerks, among whom strikes had been unheard of, have conducted strikes for better wages and conditions. Many of these unions affiliated to the TUC as a symbol of solidarity with their blue-collared brothers. If they have not yet drawn a political conclusion by the dialectic of history, this has partly been because of the experience of the Labour Government. This has delayed the process but cannot prevent it. Any big movement of industrial workers will gain sympathy and in certain circumstances support by strikes by sections of the white collar workers which would have been considered impossible formerly. From a reactionary attitude, they have been won to the principles, in however vague a form, of Trade Unionism.

On the fringes, in Northern Ireland there has been a struggle of the Catholic minority for equal rights and against the artificial partition of the island. (This raises a whole series of questions which have been dealt with in an article on Ireland in this issue.) However, the effects of the struggle of sections of Irish workers, must have a powerful echo in Britain, where an important segment of the working class is of Irish origin.

The problem of the coloured immigrants threatens to form an explosive issue in the next turn of events.

Because of the whole background of rising militancy on the industrial field, the inevitable disillusionment of large sections that voted for the Tories will have a big effect. Above all because they will not be able to hold down rising discontent expressed in the waging of strikes or because they will be compelled to partially capitulate to such struggles on the part of the workers, it is unlikely that this government will last out its whole term. Even if they are able to, they will be compelled to retreat in face of working class strength. But the very continuous decline of Britain in her world power must mean at some stage a real showdown with the working class to try and compensate for the loss of positions abroad.

The ruling class is probing and pressing and taking the line of least resistance, while they are capable of making concessions. This can continue so long as the upward swing of the economy hides the relative fall in the power of Britain. But even such an unhealthy process as inflation can better be cushioned by her rivals, than by Britain herself. Her margins are much less than those of her competitors. Only the great wealth that Britain has accumulated over a period of centuries helps her to alleviate the worst effects of the slow but continuous decline of capitalism.

EFFECTS OF THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT'S DEFEAT

The defeat of the Labour Government has had a big effect within the ranks of the advanced elements in the Labour and Trade Union movement. The anti-working class measures of the Labour Government were resented by large sections of the Labour Movement. Big sections have understood that the defeat was due to the adoption of capitalist policies by the Labour Government. The abandonment of any pretence of Socialist policies and the effect that that has had in the defeat of the Labour Party at the polls, has aroused widespread criticism of the policies of the Labour Government. This has resulted already in the first signs of attempts by trade union militants to become active within the Labour Party in order to fight reactionary policies.

In Liverpool, for example, trade unionists in some areas have gathered together a caucus to discuss policies and activities in their local parties. They are uncertain as to programme and policy, but they are determined to change the Party policy on Socialist lines. The youth, which always is the most sensitive barometer of political developments, is moving towards the left. The section, however small at the moment, organised in the Young Socialists, is moving rapidly to the left. A big section is already convinced of the necessity for Marxist policies, as the only solution for the problems facing the working class. Critical protests against the lack of militant policies by the Labour leaders are increasing.

Meanwhile, Wilson and the other members of the former government stand aloof from the attitudes of the working class. In the hot-house atmosphere of the House of Commons and the exotic atmosphere of government in the Cabinet, the class struggle seems far away and the rocking of the boat of the "national" economy, ie. the vested interests and the privileges of private ownership and the status quo are accepted as the basis for the politics of the nation.

It is in this atmosphere that after the post election defeat and following apparently severe strictures on Heath and the Tory Party, that Wilson declared that he always knew that Heath was a good and capable fellow. At the Macleod funeral, Wilson walked abreast of Heath and Macmillan. Thus, the class struggle in the comfortable atmosphere of Parliament seems an invention of foreigners like Karl Marx. It doesn't apply to Britain. The game of politics they view as if it were a game of cricket. Wilson in effect declares "it's your innings, fellows".

The grim realities of life and the hard struggle of the working class to maintain and increase a little their standards of living; the necessary vigilance to maintain trade union and shop stewards organisations, with the endless pinpricks and provocations of the employers, see the working class, particularly the organised sections in the trade union and Labour movement, taking a different standpoint on the realities of the class struggle. In

their daily life, and at work, they are constantly brought up before the necessities of a struggle for existence. Theirs are not the rosy, pleasant exchanges in the House of Commons and in the smoking rooms; theirs are not the port and whisky, caviar and limousine existence of the tops, but on the contrary, the matter of fact realities of fish and chips, and down to earth details in the struggle for wages and prices in the factories, plants and other undertakings where they work.

Thus despite the Labour leaders, and even more, in spite of the threats of the Government and employers, pressures from below will force these leaders - at least in words - to the left. Barbara Castle is already edging her way over in the criticism of the employers and the suggested measures of the government.

At this stage of the process, the bankruptcy of the reformist and Parliamentary Left is clearly shown in the feeble programme they are putting forward. It really does not differ radically from the programme put forward by the right in the past.

Yet the explosive possibilities that exist within the working class are shown by the general mood. Should the Tories cling to power and try and maintain this for the whole of this Parliament, big industrial struggles and even the possibility of a general strike, loom on the horizon.

It is in this period that a slow, steady growth of the Marxist current in the Labour movement is taking place: a current not afflicted with infantile delusions and frivolous preening of themselves as the mass leadership of the working class. They have understood the sober realities of history. Events are moving in favour of Marxist ideas and a Marxist tendency if it knows how to work with the real currents of history as they really are and not in fantasy.

In the last fifty years, it is in the Trade Unions and their political reflection in the Labour Party that the radicalisation of the working class has manifested itself. The mass of the workers, especially the organised workers, will never easily leave their traditional organisations, particularly in the early stages of mass radicalisation. They will seek to transform their unions, as they have partially pushed to the left the T&GWU and AEF into fighting organs of the working class. Over and over again, the Labour Party will be refreshed and renewed by the Trade Union branches sending militant and left delegates and the transformation of the wards in the constituency parties. New elements will push to the fore in the shop stewards' committees and in the trade union branches, and in the political labour organisations also. The process that has reached quite a high level in the youth organisations will be repeated in the adult organisations and trade union movement also. The white collar workers who are becoming unionised and union-conscious, will be politicised also, adding to the ferment in the movement.

With the movement into action of big layers of the trade union workers, and the development of political crisis in Britain, the most oppressed and exploited, the most quiescent section of the working class, will begin to awaken. The submerged, unskilled workers in catering, in small sweatshops which have succeeded in preventing union organisation, in clothing factories, retail shops and other sweated trades, the workers will move into action. The exploited workers, who have shown their capacity for struggle in the Tailors' and Garment Workers' Union in Leeds and other cities, are forerunners of real mass action on the part of the women.

The clashes and struggles will harden and push out a layer of advanced political workers, convinced of the correctness of the ideas of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. At the same time, at the opposite pole of politics, forces will be gathering for a struggle against the workers. Powell and the weapon of racialism is still only a reserve instrument in the hands of the ruling class. Discontent at the fumbings and hesitations of the government in the ranks of the Tory Party will be expressed in a drift to the right wing. They will know how to use the weapons of demagogy rather than the old fashioned Toryism of Powell, while using the powerful poison of racialism.

In the Tory Party, the process will complement those taking place in the Labour Party but in the opposite direction. Opposition in the Labour Party will move towards the left, opposition in the Tory Party towards the right. But these processes will not reach fruition till there is a change of government. A new Labour Government will come to power with the pressure of the workers demanding a radical transformation of society. The counter-pressures of Big Business, the City, the mass media, would far outdistance the mild pressures on the last Labour government. Thus, a new Labour Government would begin its activity with a far different atmosphere than that of the last. With a watchful, wary working class and an embittered ruling class, the stage should be set for explosive possibilities.

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Crisis in Northern Ireland

The Question in Perspective

by PAUL JONES and PETER TAAFFE

The stormy events in Northern Ireland, involving the mass uprising of the Catholic population of Derry and Belfast a little over a year ago, the deployment of 11,000 British troops, the daily street fighting, armed clashes and bomb incidents, together with the reverberations from these developments South of the border have shaken the position of British imperialism in Ireland.

All the carefully laid plans, the deliberate fostering of sectarianism over centuries, the entrenchment of a virtual police state and the guarantee of a political monopoly to their Unionist cohorts have all blown up in the face of the British ruling class. Retribution for the sins of the fathers is visited on the heads of the sons. The very methods which ensured their domination in the past now recoil on them in the changed situation North and South of the border.

Ireland is Britain's oldest colony. Its conquest and domination reads as one of the bloodiest chapters in the very bloody history of British Imperialism. Even a cursory study of its role in Ireland is enough to explode all those myths as to the benevolence, culture and "democracy" of the ruling class so carefully nurtured by its ideologues. That one incident alone, the mutiny of the officer caste at the Curragh in 1914 against the milk and water scheme for "Home Rule" of the Liberal Government demonstrated the ruthlessness of British capitalism when its interests are threatened. This "treason" was openly and publicly backed by the Tory Party at the time "I can imagine no length of resistance to which Ulster can go in which I should not be prepared to support them" (Bonar Law - Tory leader).

The British ruling class were able to cleverly utilise the Irish in Britain to divide and weaken the working class "The revolutionary fire of the Celtic workers does not harmonise with the restrained force but slowness of the Anglo-Saxons This antagonism between the proletarians in England is artificially cultivated by the bourgeoisie". (Resolution of First International).

It was in Ireland also where all those methods were first tried out and perfected which served the British bourgeoisie in carving out its Empire. It served as the drill ground for the British army and its policies of blood

and iron. At the same time the country was reduced to a mere appendage of the British economy. Every independent development of industry and agriculture was crushed by the British ruling class, it being tailored to their needs. Thus, as a consequence of the repeal of the Corn Laws, ending the virtual monopoly of Irish corn in the English market, the Anglo-Irish landlords went over from tillage to pasture farming, evicting at the same time the tenant farmers. As a result one million perished and another million were driven out of Ireland to the four corners of the world. This was at a time when millions of bushels of corn were exported from Ireland in order to fill the pockets of the landlords. The consequences are still evident in the population figures for Ireland today. In 1840, the total population of the whole of Ireland stood at $8\frac{1}{4}$ million, while today it is barely $4\frac{1}{4}$ million. It was these brutal conditions in the countryside which prompted the growth of spontaneous resistance organisations of the peasants in the eighteenth century, "Oakboys", "Whiteboys", etc., like the "woodland produces mushrooms" as Marx pointed out.

DIVIDE AND RULE

At the same time the British ruling class found in the division between Protestant and Catholic peasants, in turn a product of the earlier plantation of the northern counties, a convenient tool to hand in order to head off any movement which challenged its position. It was thus that the Orange Order was first used by the State. Originally formed as a defence against the attacks of the Catholic Defenders it was combined with the terror of General Lake at the end of the eighteenth century to defeat the United Irishmen. The latter organisation, led by Wolfe Tone, encompassed Protestant and Catholic petit-bourgeois and peasants alike. Its aim was the establishment of a republic on the lines of the French revolution. It instilled terror into the ranks of the landlords and capitalists and the ruling class took measures to inflame sectarian passions to ward off the danger: "I have arranged to increase the animosity between Orangemen and the United Irish. Upon that animosity depends the safety of the centre counties of the North" (Knox, assistant to General Lake). From that time onwards this policy obtained the force of a law in the dealings of British imperialism with Ireland. Any tendency towards the Catholic and Protestant reaching across the sectarian divide was defeated in like manner.

But neither military might nor the scheming of the British ruling class was able to still the Irish rebellion. Like Antagus, who regathers greater strength every time he is thrown to the ground, so too every generation witnessed a movement against British rule. In the wake of the defeat of the United Irishmen there followed the plebeian movement, based mainly in Dublin, and led by Robert Emmet. This was followed by the Young Irelanders, then the Fenians, characterised by Marx as having a "socialist tendency", the Irish Republican Brotherhood and in the twentieth century by the most famous of all, the Citizens' Army, the first Red Army in Europe, led by James Connolly. But invariably the national revolt of the Irish fell under

the influence of the nascent bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie leadership who attempted to moderate the movement and steer it away from social issues.

Never was this more evident than in the period following the 1916 uprising, the guerrilla war, which tied down 100,000 British troops, and the subsequent partitioning of the country. The forces which either stood aside or condemned from the sidelines the 1916 uprising, i.e., the Irish bourgeoisie and their political representatives, were the inheritors of the gains made possible by the sacrifice of Connolly and the 1916 insurgents. Against the execration heaped on them by their "fellow" Irishmen and almost alone in the international Labour Movement, Lenin and the Marxists defended the leaders of the uprising against those who attacked it as a "putsch". Lenin pointed to the massive turnout at the funeral of the Fenian leader O'Donovan Rossa, the suppression of the nationalist press and the clashes with the police to indicate its roots in the Irish people.

Nevertheless, none of the necessary steps were taken which could guarantee the success of the uprising, i.e. the calling of a General Strike, and a class appeal to the British troops. The tragedy, as Lenin pointed out, was that the uprising came before the European proletariat was ready for an outright assault on imperialism. But against the treachery of the Labour leaders of the time, who played first fiddle in the war chorus of the monopolies, and the treachery and cowardice of the German Communist Party and Labour leaders, who allowed Hitler to come to power "without a pane of glass being broke", the action of Connolly, Pearse and company stands out in glorious distinction. A tradition was laid down which directly led to the mass movement which taxed to the hilt the power of British imperialism.

NAVAL IMPORTANCE OF IRELAND FOR BRITAIN

Not the least of the factors which determined the defeat of the rising was the position in the Irish countryside. Even in the latter part of the eighteenth century the strategists of capital had realised the importance of Ireland as a sea base. "Britannia rules the waves" merely summed up its determination to maintain the predominance of its naval power as a prime condition of its world supremacy. Gladstone had initiated a number of Land Acts between 1880-1903 which "bought out" the landlords, at a handsome price to the latter. In giving over their estates to the tenant farmers, he attempted to break the backbone of the revolt of the Irish. In this way half a million tenants were able to purchase the land, being forced to repay the British Government in the form of land annuities over a period of time. This played a part in keeping the agricultural districts quiet in 1916.

The naval importance of Ireland to British imperialism was further demonstrated, both in the Treaty of 1922 and later during the Second World War. British Government Cabinet papers released only this year show that

Churchill even considered military intervention against the twenty six counties in order to secure the important bases in the South for use against German imperialism in the U-boat war. But the main fear of the British ruling class centred on the social effects of the revolutionary movement between 1916-23. In so far as the nationalist movement took on mass form, it fed on the social conditions of the workers and peasants. Connolly understood that the struggle for national freedom was bound up with the struggle for workers' power: "If you remove the English Army tomorrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organisation of the Socialist Republic your efforts would be in vain. England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists".

The class aspects which Connolly and Larkin had given to the national struggle had ensured the predominance of the forces of the Labour Movement in this movement before 1916. Compared to the bourgeois nationalist weekly Sinn Fein with its circulation of 5,000, the revolutionary organ of the Labour Movement Workers' Republic enjoyed enormous influence, with a top circulation of 74,000 in 1911. But following the execution of Connolly and during Larkin's absence in America the epigones who took their place, Thomas Johnson and Cathal O'Shannon abdicated leadership in the struggle against the British ruling class. This meant ceding control to Arthur Griffiths, the founder of Sinn Fein (Ourselves Alone) who idealised the strivings of the effete Southern bourgeoisie and to petty-bourgeois nationalists such as De Valera. The class standpoint of Griffiths was clearly revealed in the 1913 lock out, when he came together with "Home Rule" capitalists like Murphy, clerical reaction and the British Government to smash the Dublin workers. At the time of the 1916 uprising he stood aside from the movement. His economic policies echoed those of the German economists list, of self-sufficiency and tariffs to protect Irish industry. At the outset Griffiths was prepared to accept Dominion status and even Dual Monarchy. Included in his outlook also were elements of racialism:-

"The right of the Irish to political independence never was, is not and never can be dependent upon the admission of equal rights in all other peoples He who holds Ireland a nation and all means lawful to restore her the full free exercise of national liberties thereby no more commits himself to the theory that black equals white ..."

In order to mobilise the workers and peasants who constituted the fighting personnel and the mass basis of the struggle against the British ruling class, the social programme of the first independent Dail (Parliament) was forced to reflect their demands: "the full resources of Ireland for the people of Ireland, etc." Johnson, the Labour Party Leader, was allowed to do the drafting of the main part of the programme. The more specific demands of the Labour Movement were omitted. That there was a basis for a clear class lead was revealed in the Civil War which followed the signing of the Treaty in 1922 by the bourgeois representatives in the liberation movement. The anti-Treaty forces, although still led by petty-bourgeois nationalists

such as De Valera, at bottom represented the opposition of the small farmers and working class to the acceptance of a deal with British imperialism. The best elements within the Republican movement such as Liam Mellows belatedly understood the class role of Griffiths, Collins and Co. From his death cell he declared: "We are back to Tone - and it is just as well - relying on that great body of men, the men of no property. The stake in the country people were never with the Republic."

The pro-Treaty forces underlined Mellows' characterisation of them by beginning the short-lived but bloody Civil War with guns borrowed from the British Army and murdering Mellows as a "reprisal". Before his execution he urged that the social programme of the Republican movement should be made more specific and the workers and farmers mobilised in action: "Under the Republic all industry will be controlled by the State for the workers' and farmers' benefit."

PARTITION SPLITS WORKERS

The partitioning of the country only served to reinforce the divisions within the working class and were ratified by the bloody pogroms unleashed against the Catholic workers from the outset of the Northern Ireland state. In the first two years over 435 were murdered. Belfast lived under a reign of terror and a curfew for four years. The terror spread its tentacles into every aspect of the lives of the Catholic population. The blood letting was urged on by the Unionist regime as a means of cowering into submission the Catholic population. The head of the Northern regime, Craig, congratulated the Protestant workers in the Belfast shipyards after a particularly murderous attack on the Catholic workers: "Do I approve of the action you boys have taken? I say yes". (Quoted in D. McCardle's The Republic). That ruthless apparatus which has made up the "stability" of Unionism for fifty years was then introduced, armed police, Special Powers Act, abolition of proportional representation, the para-military B-Specials and the discrimination against the Catholic population. The state itself was completely unviable right from the outset and could only be supported by the inclusion of two overwhelming Catholic counties, Fermanagh and Tyrone, and massive subventions by British imperialism amounting now to over £200 million a year. Despite this, massive unemployment was endemic from the beginning. Even in the relatively "prosperous" post-war period, unemployment has fluctuated at two and three times the average for Britain as a whole, affecting the Catholic population the worst. Strabane possess the highest unemployment per head of population of any town in Western Europe: in the region of 30% for the male population. (See Militant Nos. 46, 51, 53, 64 and 66 for further details).

From these social conditions came the seething discontent of the Catholic population. Yet, if anything, the economic position of the Catholics has been easier (by Northern Ireland standards) than was the case in the inter-war period. The state was conceived amidst a massive 18%

unemployment level and reached 25% a few years later. Even this only occasionally shook the Unionist monolith and it remained in power longer than any other regime in Europe.

Why then the mass upheavals in the past period which have irretrievably shattered the Unionist Party in its old form? The explanation is to be found in the changed conditions within Northern Irish society which have effected all the advanced countries as a consequence of the post-war economic upswing. Better though it undoubtedly was than in the past, nevertheless, the new generation of Catholic workers were not prepared to accept the old conditions; the "croopies would not lie down". The downturn in the British market in 1966 exacerbated the situation, bringing in its wake the closure of a number of factories. The crisis-ridden shipbuilding and linen industries offered no way out. Neither did foreign capital, induced there by massive bribes, eat up the "surplus" labour. The new jobs created only barely accounted for those lost in the dying industries.

In revolt against the system which condemned them to a living death it was the impatience of the youth which fuelled the Civil Rights campaign. The mailed fist of Paisley and Craig only served to inflame the situation. Even sections of the Protestant working and middle classes were initially sympathetic to the demands of the Civil Rights Movement. This was demonstrated by the overwhelming support for the movement in Queens University (75% Protestant). As part of the middle strata the students reflected the changes unfolding in the ranks of the middle class and the working class.

An investigation by Strathclyde University also revealed that at that time a majority of the Catholic workers no longer viewed the Border as an important issue. So when the 1968 October 5th Civil Rights demonstration was broken up by the clubs and boots of the RUC, to be followed by the vicious attack on the students at Burntollet bridge, this only served to propel into action more and more sections of the Catholic population. The British bourgeoisie and the O'Neill wing of the Unionist Party early on drew the conclusion that the old methods would endanger their position in Northern Ireland and have "dangerous" repercussions South of the Border and in Britain itself.

CHANGED CONDITIONS

The more far sighted sections understood that to screw down the lid on the social protest behind the Civil Rights campaign would lead to, on the one side, a veiled "religious civil war". This in turn would lead to massive damage to property and a seizing up of foreign investments. Already over £40 million of their investments have been destroyed. On the other side, one consequence of a movement on the streets, even if it began as a religious clash could easily be a turn in the direction of mass class action. In the changed situation in the six counties, the Labour Movement, far more powerful than in the past, would be forced to step in. The tendency

was already evident in the "peace committees" in East Belfast last year and the action of the shipyard shop-stewards in opposition sectarian divisions. The political connotations of such a movement filled them with dread. That is why they attempted to get rid of the more open sectarian abuses against the Catholic population, by exerting pressure on the O'Neill and Chichester-Clarke Governments.

Another factor in the situation is the changed attitude of the British bourgeoisie and their Southern Irish counterparts towards the Border. The organs of Big Business in Britain have openly come out for some kind of unification of the country on a capitalist basis. No longer do they fear the effects of a social revolution emanating from the South. And as if to confirm the British bourgeoisie in their belief, the Fianna Fail regime in the South has held out the olive branch to them: "The task confronting us today has to do with evolution - not revolution" (Irish Press, semi-official organ of Fianna Fail, 21/1/69).

Having tried and failed to build up an independent base, in the abortive pre-war tariff war with British Imperialism, the Southern bourgeoisie have hitched their star to that of their British Big Brother. At the same time a reassessment of the strategic interests of the Southern ruling class is presently taking place in the Irish bourgeois press. Reflecting its premature arterio-sclerosis, one section represented by Dr. Geary has even come out against unification with the North on the basis that the cost of British social services "would cripple their economy". The other favours a "Federation" and transitional measures to unity.

As a conciliatory gesture to their Unionist "brothers" in the North they have even obtained the support of Cardinal Conway and the Catholic Church to delete from the Constitution Article 44(2) which recognises the "special position" of the Church. There is also talk of rewriting the Constitution so that divorce and contraception can be allowed.

One thing is certain, the economy of the 26 counties has never been more dependent on the British market. 69% of its exports go to Britain while 51% of its imports come from Britain. More than at any other time in history the Irish economy is a labour reserve, market and field for investment.

And even sections of the Unionist tops realise that the worst aspects of discrimination against Catholic workers need to be eliminated in order to preserve the position of the ruling class: "They (meaning British capitalism) do not really believe that Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom anyway, they feel that it would be nice to get rid of it soon". (Ulster Times).

CLASS BATTLES BEHIND UPRISING

Thus, from a policy of division and playing on sectarian strife, the organs of the capitalists are now hypocritically declaring in favour of "unity" and against the "economic tragedy of a divided Ireland" (Sunday Times). But history has a way of playing tricks on the shrewdest ruling classes. Nourished on a diet of sectarianism and religious hatred the monster refuses to lie down. Ensnared by its own past propaganda the Unionist regime found itself on the horns of a dilemma in August, 1969. To have banned the Apprentice Boys demonstration would have undermined their own position in the eyes of the Protestant population, as the latest prohibition of Protestant parades has demonstrated. To allow it to go ahead only served to enrage the Catholic population of Bogside and ignite a mass explosion of practically the whole of the Catholic population of the area.

Having learnt the lesson in the preceding two months, the Bogside were determined to prevent another police and Paisleyite pogrom of the area. The result was an uprising of the Catholic workers in Derry and the Falls Road area of Belfast. 150,000 workers for two months set up their own "law and order", refusing to allow the writ of the Unionists to run in their area. It represented a social movement for jobs, housing, education and democratic rights, although in the eyes of the Protestant population it took on the form of a "Catholic rebellion". Only the Derry Young Socialists and Labour Party attempted to stress the need for a class appeal to the Protestant population, adopting as their emblem the flag of the Citizens Army, the starry plough.

The "Green Tory" wing of the Citizens' Defence Committee, made up of millionaires and an assortment of businessmen, were the same forces which had opposed any class orientation in the period of the Civil Rights. Their position was echoed by the ultra-left sects both in Northern Ireland and in Britain who characterised the Protestant workers as "colons". To support their position they appealed to Irish history.

PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC WORKERS COME TOGETHER

But in fact this very history speaks against them. It demonstrates that the Protestant population has never been impervious to a class appeal by the Labour Movement. Not only did the 1913 lock-out demonstrate this, when the Protestant workers of Belfast refused to black on their Dublin brothers, but even earlier in 1906-7 in Belfast, James Larkin clearly illustrated how to counter the sectarianism of the Unionist capitalists. Larkin was able to forge a powerful alliance between Catholic and Protestant workers. His main allies were the leadership of the Independent Orange Order. This began as a vicious sectarian splinter within the main Orange Order. In defence of "Protestantism" it denounced the Orange Order as

"an instrument of landlordism and class rule the majority of the Grand Lodge were well-to-do merchants, justices of the peace, etc." Under the guidance of R. Lindsay Crawford this movement began to develop a non-sectarian programme and linked up with Larkin to fight the sweatshop conditions in Belfast at the time. So successful was the alliance that "in 1906 Orange domination in Belfast was broken" (James Larkin by Emmett Larkin).

The Unionist capitalists learnt their lesson well in the school of Larkin in a negative sense and prepared to recapture their hold over the Protestant workers by inflaming sectarian passions. They were assisted in this by sectarianism of the Catholic Ancient Order of Hibernians, much as the Catholic bigots today are grist to the mill of the Paisleyite Right.

But perhaps the best indication of the possibilities of bridging the sectarian divide was given in an account of an incident in Belfast in 1931 by an IRA veteran Bob Bradshaw:

"Discontent in the city (Belfast) rose to revolutionary dimensions and in the great Belfast fitting shops, and the densely populated Labour exchanges, Socialist and Communist opinions were easy to hear".

He further points out that as a result of street fighting between the unemployed and the police in the Catholic Falls Road area, he went to obtain support from the Protestant unemployed in the Shankhill Road:

"I picked a tall athletic young man 'Any fighting?' I said. 'That gutless lot won't fight'. This was my chance. 'Why don't you go to the Falls?' I said, watching him. 'Why, is there trouble there?' 'They have been fighting all day and many people have been shot.' I said.

"While we spoke, his eye fell on my lapel button. For at least a half a minute we stared at each other without speaking, and his face clearly showed his changing emotions - ancestral dislike for tricolours, and Fenians, slowing changing to friendliness as he realised that this particular Fenian spoke his language, and that we were both in something a bit more important than the religious squabbles of our native city, and attempting to deal with forces not likely to respond to placatory speeches. Our long eyelock broke. 'If that's where the fighting is, that's the place for me' he said." (Irish Times, 13/3/69).

This particular incident illustrates more than anything else the potential for working class unity. In the heat of battle, particularly if a clear class lead is given, all the prejudices and religious mythology can be burned from the consciousness of the Protestant working class with the majority.

This has been further underlined by the developments in Northern Ireland in the past year. The actions of the Belfast shipyard shop stewards stood out as a beacon against the background of sectarian clashes which swept Belfast last August. It is now fashionable in ultra-left circles to question the role of the shop stewards, as indicating "a low level of consciousness". They point to the appeal to Unionist ministers and the award of the MBE to the leading shop steward. While these undoubtedly, indicate the confusion and even opportunism of some of the leading trade union leaders, nevertheless, the shop stewards' committee demonstrated a greater class sense and understanding than did the so-called 'advanced guard'.

The stewards at least understood the need to maintain basic class unity in the factories and the shipyards and to fight any manifestation of sectarianism, to prevent a repetition of events similar to the inter-war period. The mass meeting was called in the face of management opposition and threats by the small Paisleyite section within the yard. The actions of the Belfast shipyard workers re-emphasises the potential for uniting the working class. The possibilities are there within the ranks of the unions. All it needs is to be given a clear direction and a class programme.

The action of the Belfast shipyard shop stewards and the "peace committees" in East Belfast could have become the starting point of real united working class action against sectarianism and hooligan attacks from both sides. The British Army was originally welcomed by the overwhelming majority of Catholic workers as a protection against the attacks of the B-specials and Paisleyites, only because no alternative was given by the Labour Movement. While one by-product of military intervention was to prevent a full scale pogrom against the Catholics its main purpose was to safeguard the position of British Imperialism which was endangered by the possibility of a civil war as was explained earlier. The role of the British Army has always been to safeguard the position of British capitalism. In British Guyana, they "went" into ostensibly prevent racial clashes and retreated only after a minority, undemocratic constitution had been implemented. In Aden, Malaya and in the former "Empire" they played a similar role. But the only way to have cut across the arguments in favour of military intervention was by the implementation of a Trade Union Defence Force. This could have become the starting point for united class action and as such would be opposed as bitterly by the Southern capitalists, as it would be by British Imperialism.

ATTEMPT TO HEAD-OFF LEFT SWING

It was precisely the possibility of these developments which caused consternation within the ranks of the Fianna Fail regime in the South. Its right wing, Blaney, Haughey and Bolan, deliberately prepared to head off the movement towards the Left, North and South, by re-establishing the Nationalist and Unionist polarisation. Long before the gun-running affair had come into the open they conspired behind the scenes to create the

political weapons to put this into practice. Money was poured into the financing of Voice of the North, the mouthpiece of this particular faction. The intention of the Blaney wing of Fianna Fail was blurted out by their creatures within the editorial staff of the Voice at the time that the gun-running charges were made.

They boasted that all the talk of "the future being with doctrinaire Socialism and Cuban style commune politics has been blown sky high by the events in Dublin". It then attacks "all the talking 'revolutionaries', extreme Socialists, Trotskyists, Maoists, pettitcoat revolutionaries like Bernadette Devlin and Maureen de Burca, Farrell, McCann, etc. The 'Green Tories' have belied the smear name attached to them." (Voice of the North, 17/5/70).

At the same time, they have been successful in splitting the Republican movement Sinn Fein. Assistance was given on condition that the old guard Republicans split away from the "political" and "Socialist" Sinn Fein which had now been taken over by the Irish Communist Party. The position of this "provisional" section was outlined in the first issue of its journal "An Phoblacht" (The Republic). In the reasons given for the split were "extreme socialism leading to totalitarian dictatorship". While some may have reacted to the Stalinist programme of the leadership of the official movement, the overwhelming majority did so because of the "need" to uphold the traditional anti-parliamentarian, "unity first" position maintained by Sinn Fein from the 1920's. That they were able to take with them big sections, in the North in particular, was a consequence of the failure of the official movement to protect the Catholics in Belfast from the August 1969 pogrom. Some of the youth have been drawn into the work of the "provisionals" with disastrous results for class unity.

The scheming of Blaney & Co. has been demonstrated in the sectarian attacks which have been made on Protestants in the past few months. Thus, Paisley was delivered of a gift just before the Bannside bye-election in the attacks on Protestants made in the Ballymurphy and Springfield Road area. In linking up with the "provisional" wing, Blaney & Co. care little, in reality, for their own "kith and kin". Blaney represents Donegal, the county with the highest unemployment in the 26 counties. He also has acted as the Defence Counsel for the TACA (the millionaires club within the Fianna Fail) at Fianna Fail Congresses. Boland's father (who resigned from the party with his son) was the Minister of Justice in 1941 and interned and shot out of hand countless republicans.

Not one gun would have been forthcoming if all the arms in the North were under the control of the Trade Unions. It has been precisely this fear which has been one of the factors in the attitude of Lynch and the bourgeoisie as a whole to gun running: "Mr. Lynch ... (is) taking the view that guns used for the defence may be turn to attack". (Times, 29/5/70). The "attack" he fears most is one that would come from a joint Catholic and Protestant movement.

BANKRUPT 'THEORIES' OF 'PROVISIONALS'

Behind the actions of the right wing "provisionals", which has been responsible for the reinforcement of sectarian divisions, as was shown by the driving out of the Catholic workers from the shipyards in June, are some weird and wonderful "theories". The main aim, it seems, is to force a confrontation between the Catholic population and the British Army which will provoke an upheaval in the South. In this way, it is hoped that a section of the Irish Army might march over the Border or be prepared to give assistance to the Catholics in the North: a mutiny along the lines of the one in 1924. However, while some sections of the army, might come to the assistance of the Catholic population, British Imperialism is not prepared to be militarily forced out of the North. The "other" solution is to create such chaos that the United Nations would come in and carry out a miraculous unification of Ireland! The lessons of the intervention of the United Nations (in reality the dis-United Nations) in Cyprus, the Congo, the Middle East, where not one of the problems has been solved, is lost on the leadership of the "provisionals."

The only way to undermine the power of British Imperialism and their capitalist allies North and South of the Border, as the only way of bringing about real unity, is through class unity. The election of Bernadette Devlin, on the basis of an astounding 92% turnout and the vote of 6,000 Protestant farmers and workers, demonstrates the way forward for the working class. But for it to be guaranteed of long-term success, it must be channelled through the organised Labour Movement. The suggestions of a "broad alliance" outside the ranks of the organised Labour Movement is doomed to sterility. Only by the coming together of the Northern Ireland Labour Party, and the Irish Labour Party, actively participated in by the Marxists on the basis of a socialist programme and linked in action to the British Labour Movement would it be possible to begin to break down the Catholic-Protestant syndrome of the last half-century.

PERSPECTIVES

In the short term, British Imperialism will have no alternative but to press ahead with the process of "reforms" i.e. the ending of the most blatant discrimination against the Catholic population. It has warned the right wing of the Unionist Party of the consequences of any dragging of feet on this issue.

In the event of a right wing take over by Craig or Paisley, the British ruling class has already advocated the suspension of the Constitution and direct rule from Westminster. "Mr. Maudling and the rest of Britain may have to accept that Ulster cannot solve its problems and that the Stormont system must be wound up" (Economist) The vague threats of a Universal Declaration of Independence made by Mitchell and West,

the supporters of Craig, as laughable as they are to the British bourgeoisie, nevertheless, indicate the irreversible split within the Unionist Party. It has forced them to look towards the dismantling of the Unionist Party in its old form. Their perspective is for its reconstitution or replacement by a traditional type of "Conservative" Party by involving the Catholic bourgeoisie and middle class within its ranks. Its realisation depends on the development of the British economy and the possibility of resolving some of the worst economic ills of Northern Ireland.

In the meantime, while on the one side making concessions, it is also preparing to come down heavily both on the Republicans and the UVF if necessary. One "reform" urgently pressed by the bourgeois press is the building of a new prison to accommodate "the increase in the prison population". Over 300 have been arrested in the past two months alone.

On the basis of "physical force" alone, the British Army, with its superior forces and fire power will win hands down. What the capitalists will be powerless against is working class unity organised on the basis of a Marxist programme and appealing to the "workers in uniform" in the British Army. But the Republicans, the "Left" and right, by their actions and propaganda, are, it seems, determined to prevent this coming about. It has come to be expected that the right wing "provisionals" would refuse to appeal to the British troops but how to explain the vicious chauvinism of the "official" Sinn Fein. In a leaflet circulated in Derry which appeals to Catholic workers "DON'T FRATERNISE", individual troops are described as "murders, intimidators, looters, oppressors". The "United Irishman" carried a similar article.

This is calculated to drive the British troops further into the arms of the reactionary officer caste. Most of the troops come from similar backgrounds, sometimes from worse social conditions, as the workers they face on the streets of Derry and Belfast. If a class appeal was made, including the demand for TU rights for servicemen then the rank and file soldier would be won to support the struggle for workers' power both in Ireland and Britain. It is a measure of the degeneration of the "Communist" Party leadership that it can so miseducate its ranks that this kind of propaganda can be disseminated by them. They forget the history of the Communist Party on the issue; one of the leaders of the British CP, Campbell, was arrested in 1924 for making a class appeal to troops!

The Catholic workers also will turn against those who merely provoke one fruitless violent confrontation after another with the Army.

CLASS CONTRADICTIONS WITHIN PAISLEYISM

But British capitalism and any new-fangled "liberal" type of capitalist party which it brings into being will be incapable of solving the problems of jobs, housing, education and a rising living standard for the

working class of Northern Ireland.

Neither can Paisleyism offer any way forward for Protestant and Catholic workers. In the short term, mainly as a result of the actions of the Catholic bigots, it will probably continue to grow in strength. From the crisis within the Unionist Party, Paisley will pick up some support. But under the pressure of events the class divisions within the Paisleyite movement will come to the fore. The clever demagogy of Paisley against the "aristocrats" at the top of the Unionist Party has paid off in the short term but will rebound on him at a later stage.

In conditions of economic crisis, the Protestant workers will be looking for something more tangible than religious ranting. In that situation, and even before then, Paisley's position amongst the Protestant workers, can be undermined by the Labour Movement fighting on a class programme. From the point of view of the British bourgeoisie, they wish to keep Paisley, like Powell in Britain, as a reserve weapon for the future. But if any attempt is made to openly challenge its position now then they are prepared to deal with Paisley as with Right Wing Republicans.

Neither will any section of the Southern Irish capitalist class be able to liberate them socially or bring about the unity of the country which would benefit them. The crisis in the North has brought to the surface all the festering sores within Southern society. A crisis of confidence within the ranks of the capitalist class has developed as a result of the events in Northern Ireland and the unprecedented upswing in the power and cohesion of the Southern working class. The Southern Irish workers have presently the highest strike record in Western Europe. Here as well as in the North the pattern set by the struggle against British imperialism and the Civil War is breaking down. A newly strengthened Labour Party, formally adhering to the idea of a "Workers' Republic" (but denied in practice by the Labour Leaders) has taken shape. Further upheavals in the North will exercise a dramatic influence on the South and vice-versa.

Developments in both areas will react on Britain and conversely the gathering storm here will be reflected in North and South Ireland. The British dock strike, which provoked the active support of Protestant and Catholic workers, to counter the blacklegging which was carried on between the North of Ireland and Scotland, is an augur of these developments.

BACK TO CONNOLLY, MELLOWES AND MARXISM

In the course of these developments the ideas of Marxism will find a greater and greater response within the Labour Movement. A tried and tested tendency will be developed from the youth, in particular, who have been prompted to rediscover the ideas of Connolly, Mellowes and the Marxists by the Northern Ireland explosion. The ultra-left impatience which manifested itself in the splits from the Labour Party in the past must be avoided

if the same mistakes are not to be repeated.

Only by this means, by formulating a clear Marxist perspective and programme along the lines of that proposed by the Derry Young Socialists can the age-old poverty, misery and division of Ireland be ended. This programme entailing the demand for the nationalisation of the big monopolies under democratic control and management by the producers themselves, the winning of the small farmers to the idea of a planned socialist economy through the guarantee of cheap credits, fertilisers and cancellation of their debts to the banks, would usher in a period of peace and plenty for the workers both sides of the Broder.

A Socialist United Ireland would break the pattern of centuries: instead of "exporting" her best sons through unemployment, etc. the idea of change, of the socialist transformation of society, would be the message that would go out to the international Labour Movement. Such is the perspective and programme which Irish Marxists will be fighting for in the tumultuous period ahead.

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The Gathering Storm in Russia

by Roger Silverman

Every totalitarian regime is by its very nature a regime of crisis, an expression of class deadlock. The Stalinist bureaucracy in Russia, which overturned all the political rights won by the revolution, owed its power after the betrayal of the revolution in the West, to the existence of objective barriers which stood in the way of the realisation of the workers' internationalist aims - the isolation of the workers' state, and the heritage of cultural backwardness. Despite the deadweight of bureaucratism, the planned economy achieved historically unprecedented advances. But every social and economic advance further intensified the incompatibility of Russia's political deformations - a ghastly relic of the class oppression of the past - with its social basis, which remains the model for Mankind's future. Every step forward further undermines the foundations of Stalinism and plunges it deeper into crisis. The experience of the last few years clearly underlines this.

THE 1964 COUP

Brezhnev and Kosygin were brought to power in the coup of October, 1964, against a background of emergency. With the seven-year plan (1959-65) drawing to a close, the temporary benefits of Khrushchev's decentralisation policy had long since been offset by its inherent contradictions. The growing complexity of the economy came more and more into conflict with the bureaucratic structure. The rise in the industrial productivity of labour was inexorably slowing down (from 6.5% p.a. in 1956-60 to 4.6% p.a. in 1961-65), and although in comparison with capitalist growth this figure is still consistently superior, productivity remained only "40-50%" of that of the USA. Between 30% and 50% of production was wasted. 1,600 million roubles' worth of productive plant lay idle in the RSFSR alone. Half of all journeys were performed by empty lorries. Sometimes as many as thirty officials' signatures were required to agree upon simple rationalisation procedures, and there were countless instances of delays of three, five or eight years in effecting such plans. Many industrial indices fell well short of target, and agricultural output rose by only 14% in seven years. Continued vacillation in economic and social policy, and the cracking open of the international monolith (in particular, the split

with China) had discredited the authority of the CPSU, strikes and local uprisings were breaking out, and the process of disillusion among the youth had begun.*

The new "collective leadership" hoped to reverse the slide into disaster by adopting reforms that would overcome all the chaos and incompetence inevitably associated with bureaucratism without actual relinquishing any part of the ruling caste's power and privileges. They intended to achieve this by slightly shifting the emphasis from the state officialdom to the managerial section of the bureaucracy. At consecutive Plenums of the Central Committee and at the 23rd Congress of the CPSU (held in March, 1966), decrees were issued bringing industry under the Leiberman system, whereby managers were to be rewarded according to the profitability of their enterprises. Greater emphasis was to be placed on the production of consumer goods, and glittering promises were made of "a western standard of living by 1970". More was to be spent on agriculture within the current five-year plan (1966-70) than in the previous twenty years, in a massive effort to raise the countryside above the cultural level of the nineteenth century. The emergence of this modest team of efficient faceless technocrats aroused the hopes of the population.

THE NEW CRISIS

Today those hopes lie in ashes. Halfway through the final year of the plan, the 24th Party Congress (due to be held in March 1970) has been postponed for at least a year. Fear of public scrutiny forced Stalin in his day to hold no Congress at all between 1939 and 1952, and Mao between 1957 and 1969; but so discredited has the regime become that today it dare not temporise without incurring the anger of the masses. A major factor in its decision to delay the Congress is uncertainty on the principles underlying the new Plan, in the light of the performance of the current one.

Agricultural productivity was to have grown by 40%-45% over the last five years, but today after severe hurricanes and drought the agricultural crisis is worse than before. The 1968 grain harvest was $5\frac{1}{2}$ million tons short of the 1966 record, and in 1969 grain output fell by 3.2% instead of rising by 6.1% as laid down in the plan. This year a disastrous grain harvest is expected, in some regions reaching only 50% of target. Livestock reserves have actually fallen over the last five years, owing partly to the shortage of feed. Brezhnev has admitted to the Central Committee that "farm supplies are falling far behind the growing needs of the population.... The situation in grain production still does not satisfy us. The amount of vegetables and fruit being grown is inadequate. As we all know, the demand of the population for livestock produce, especially meat, is not being satisfied by far". Where Stalin rejected the policy of gradually raising the cultural level of the peasantry and collectivisation by example, and instead indulged in the lunatic adventure of collectivisation at bayonet-point, his successors, faced with an emergency, adopted long

*For details see "Bureaucratism or Workers' Power".

term measures that would take at least a generation to achieve results - and then failed to implement them. The consequence is that with more than 30% of the population working on the land, there is still a chronic food shortage, while in the USA the "surplus" food produced by 5% or 6% of the population is destroyed. The Soviet economy pays heavily for agricultural backwardness: every year millions of workers and students are sent into the fields, the prices of food and raw materials stay high, and precious foreign exchange is consumed in importing the balance.

The performance of industry is also disappointing. It is true that if we take the figures for 1968 (the last available), industrial output has risen by 41% since 1964 - compared to 25% in the USA and 11% in Britain. The national income (net material product) has risen by 34%, which would at first sight look less than the American figure of 38% until one takes into account the enormous rate of inflation in the USA - at constant market prices the figure is 22%. Thus the planned economy continues to assert its overwhelming superiority over capitalist anarchy. But if we examine the dense bureaucratic resistance it has to come up against, we can appreciate the tremendous potential speed of development that could be realised on the basis of workers' management.

WASTAGE AND CORRUPTION

We predicted in "Bureaucratism or Workers' Power" that "as with every other twist and turn in the past, for a year or two the new (Liebermanist) system will undoubtedly correct certain anomalies and produce impressive statistics. But, again as at every time in the past, initial progress will come to an end as new anomalies are created. As the managers get to know all the loopholes, a new spate of swindling and corruption will result, mixed this time with the bungling associated with the clumsy multiplicity of supervisory bodies that have been resurrected from the era of centralised ministerial control." This prediction is borne out. The twin evils of wastage and pilfering have not been checked. The desperate attempt by the central bureaucracy to bribe and spur the lesser parasites by combining certain monolithic features with liberal concessions to the managers has given them the worst of both worlds. The rate of growth of labour productivity - the crucial index of social advance - has not reached its target. The production of consumer goods is not keeping pace with demand, and contrary to plan imports have risen from Eastern Europe.

In December 1969, Brezhnev sent an urgent letter to the major factories and collective farms, citing the disastrous experience of the Tyumen natural gas on which all the heavy industry of the Urals depends. In 1965 the Government had ordered the building of a compressor station to maintain the level of underground pressure, which was seriously diminishing after years of exploitation. Nearly five years later, work had not started, and the station will now be useless because of the continued reduction in pressure. This deals the key Urals complex a body blow. In the oil and

gas industries, a shortage of tubes and lorries is holding back the construction of pipelines, so that for the first time the USSR and Eastern Europe are having to import oil from Iran and Algeria. A Soviet press report criticising every aspect of the oil industry significantly complained that "rigs are sited in convenient spots to earn a quick drilling bonus regardless of the likelihood of striking oil". In March 1969, a major overhaul of the financial and credit system was announced, reversing the tendency to decentralise investment, and in June a decree halving the number of sites started in 1970 referred to "chronic delays and wastage" in the construction industry. A new steelworks was built in April 1969, in Cherepovets, 300 miles north of Moscow, which will depend on ore and coal to be supplied by an overland route stretching over 2,000 and 1,000 miles respectively.

The monumental blunders of centralised bureaucratism have been accompanied by the outright fiddling always arising from decentralised bureaucratism. In July 1970, a full-scale investigation was announced into "gross financial abuses" by the management of a bulldozer plant at Chelyabinsk in the Urals, which had inflated its output figures by nearly £1 million. Other plants were also said to be implicated. The Chairman of the State Bank, the Head of the Central Statistical Bureau, and the Minister of Construction, Highway and Communal Machine-Building, were all publicly reprimanded for such "irregularities" in their departments.

Already scapegoats are being sought. The Times reported that the reforms were "working well" but that they were "suffering mainly from the failings of individual persons who are to be dealt with partly under the new public discipline campaign". But Stalinism inevitably encourages the "failings of individual persons", and the retreat to a new "public discipline campaign" is a confession that the reforms have failed to inject new life into the anachronistic hierarchy. In 1970, fifty three years after the socialist revolution, such is public morale that failures are blamed on "absenteeism and alcoholism", the police and judiciary are been instructed to "deal more severely with people who refuse to work" and to "take a more serious view of cases of bribery which come before them", and to remove

Bureaucratism or Workers' Power

by ROGER
SILVERMAN and
TED GRANT.

FROM AN INDIA TO AN AMERICA
"SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY"
CRACKS IN THE MONOLITH
LIEBERMAN . . . OR LENIN?

ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS !
THE PLAN - AND THE PURGES
THE BUREAUCRATIC IMPASSE
TOWARDS A NEW OCTOBER

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"loafers" and other "violations of the social order". The law courts are increasingly becoming concerned with labour problems, and a new labour code threatens to deprive unsatisfactory workers of housing and holiday services. As the campaign gathers momentum, the KGB has been given back one of the dreaded names it bore under Stalin - the MVD - and the *druzhinniki* (voluntary militia) have been brought back from Party to police control, as under Stalin.

The international authority of the Soviet regime has further deteriorated. Relations with China have sunk to the level of bitter and bloody clashes around the common frontier, whereas for Marxists and internationalists the very existence of national boundaries is a relic of imperialism. No clearer proof could be found than these events of the nationalist parochialism of both the Russian and the Chinese Stalinists. Even more catastrophic was the invasion of Czechoslovakia - an event which exposed the true basis of the new, supposedly "liberal" regime, just as decisively as the massacre of the Hungarian political revolution in 1956 exposed the superficiality of Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin. The significant difference is that Stalinism's hold is now so unstable and precarious that the intervention was needed at a much earlier stage. Even the mild reforms of the Czechoslovak Gomulka and Liebermans threatened to upset the delicate equilibrium, and ignite the powder-keg of criticism in the USSR. This explains the insistence of Shelest, the Ukrainian Party leader, on firm action as a warning to dissident elements at home. Even the Soviet programme for the "integration" of the economies of Eastern Europe on an authoritarian basis centred in Moscow has now come under such persistent opposition from Czechoslovak, Hungarian and Polish bureaucracies that a meeting of Communist Parties of the COMECON bloc had to be postponed several times.

THE REGIME AT THE CROSSROADS

Once again the ruling faction of the bureaucracy is gripped in deadlock. One bloc centred around Shelepin (once head of the KGB, now in control of the trade unions), Suslov (the hack theoretician left over from Stalin's time), and Mazurov (the regime's rising star) is reported to have issued a document demanding a halt to the reforms. The growing list of uncompleted projects, the critical shortages, the unusable products, the delays, the corruption, and the wastage, have put the whole new line in jeopardy. A clear symptom of the bureaucracy's indecision and paralysis of will is the ambivalent attitude to its own traditions. On the one hand, the 1968 edition of the History of the CPSU contained only four references to Stalin (three of them unfavourable); on the other, Professor Kopelev was expelled from the CP for warning in an Austrian CP journal that influential pressure was at work to gain the rehabilitation of Stalin, a recent war film included a sympathetic portrayal of the "wise Generalissimo", and Trotsky's ideas were attacked by name in a recent novel.

The constant zig-zags in economic policy; the repeated re-falsification of history; the sharp lurches in general policy against "the personal-

38.

ity cult", then against "voluntarism and subjectivism", and no doubt shortly against "petty-bourgeois adventurism" or some such label; the crescendo of personal abuse between various national Stalinist leaders; the growth of a multiplicity of "national roads" to socialism; the bloody crimes in Hungary and Czechoslovakia; the tendency towards economic and social stagnation; the blatant careerism and sycophancy at every level; the propagandists' cheap opportunism in playing on every backward prejudice and soiling the banner of Marxism and the October Revolution; all these factors have tarnished the leaders' image in the eyes of the masses. And wherever direct channels of popular expression are blocked, the masses' aspirations become refracted through the prism of literature. That is why relations between the ruling clique and the writers have always been a crucial issue.

After 1956, Khrushchev deliberately consolidated his position against those diehard Stalinists who by their unsubtle and provocative attitude threatened the survival of the whole caste, by allowing the publication of a certain amount of critical literature. An important example is the novel "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" by Solzhenitsyn, which was based on his experiences in a labour camp from 1945 to 1956. However, the regime gingerly walked the tightrope between complete licence - which could have opened the floodgates to mass discussion and an end to totalitarianism - and crude repression - which would push influential unofficial voices into direct opposition. The new leadership, however, hoped to combine reform with repression. In the context of economic reforms which would raise the masses' material welfare, a firm policy towards a recalcitrant minority of intellectuals might for a time be feasible. Kuznetsov (the emigre writer who, incidentally, betrayed some leading writers to the police in order to obtain permission to travel abroad) described literary policy as follows: "If Stalin is on top, then praise Stalin. If they order people to plant maize, then write about maize. If they decide to expose Stalin's crimes, then expose Stalin. And when the stop criticising, you stop too." Against the reality of economic failures, and the growing appetite of the masses for control over the officialdom, this policy was doomed. From the individual plea for artistic freedom, the embryo of a mass opposition has been formed, fighting for a free press, the right of association and demonstration, the implementation of all the rights nominally granted in Stalin's 1936 Constitution - a programme which will lead directly to the demand for a return to workers' democracy.

The events listed below demonstrate that the persecution of the opposition in today's conditions have only accelerated its growth. The leadership has lost the allegiance of a whole stratum of intellectuals, students, writers, scientists. Sections of the bureaucracy itself have been drawn into the wake of the movement - a phenomenon that has marked every anti-Stalinist struggle from Hungary to Yugoslavia. But the ominous meaning of these events is understood only too well by the regime: in Russia today as in the dying years of Tsarism, as in Hungary in 1956, as in France in 1968, as on the eve of every revolution in history, behind the revolt of the intelligentsia there lurks unmistakably the spectre of the working class. Discontent among the authorities' hired thinkers is the first articulation of the groundswell in society, the expression of the stifled subterranean undercurrents of criticism among the masses.

The following diary shows the growth of the opposition.

THE GROWTH OF THE OPPOSITION

January, 1967 - A number of young writers (Ginzburg, Galanskov, Debrovolsky, and their typist Lashkova) were arrested for producing the underground publication "Phoenix 66", which protested at the imprisonment of Sinyavsky and Daniel for publishing works in the West. These arrests prompted a public demonstration in Moscow, at which three young intellectuals (Bukovsky, Delaney and Kusherov) were themselves arrested.

May, 1967 - The Congress of the Writers' Union was boycotted by the celebrated writers Yevtushenko and Voznesensky and even Ehrenburg in protest at the sentences of Sinyavsky and Daniel. Solzhenitsyn was forbidden to attend even as an observer, but nevertheless he managed to circulate an open letter to delegates, attacking the Union's leaders for complicity in the "medieval anachronism" of censorship, and for neglecting in the past to defend the six hundred innocent writers who fell victim to Stalin's purges. More than eighty leading writers publicly associated themselves with his letter "Komsomolskaya Pravda", the official daily paper of the Young Communist League, published an attack on the theatre censorship.

September, 1967 - Bukovsky and the other two appeared at a secret trial. The transcript was leaked out by Pavel Litvinov, a mathematician and grandson of the late Soviet Foreign Minister. Bukovsky had twice been incarcerated in a mental hospital - a ghoulissh penalty favoured by the KGB because it obviates the need for a trial. In 1962 he had been thus punished for publishing a clandestine journal, and again in 1965 for organising a demonstration against Sinyavsky and Daniel's arrest. At this trial, which was held seven months after his arrest, he conducted a spirited defence, based on the Soviet Constitution which nominally guarantees Soviet citizens "the right of street processions and demonstrations" and secures them their rights by "making available to workers and their organisations printing facilities, supplies of paper, public buildings and streets" (Clause 125). The judge incessantly interrupted his speech, and despite the illegality of his arrest he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

November, 1967 - The first of a series of trials was held in Leningrad, the Ukraine, Sverdlovsk, Tomsk and Irkutsk, of members of an organisation which, although it apparently had some religious overtones, campaigned above all for a "Socialist republic with a freely elected President and Parliament". At this and subsequent trials in March and April 1968, defendants were imprisoned for up to fifteen years.

In the Ukraine there was also the trial of Chornovil, an official of the Komsomol (YCL), for his conduct at the time of the trials

of Ukrainian nationalists in Spring 1966. Campaigners against the policy of forced Russification were imprisoned for up to six years, and protest demonstrations were held in Kiev and Lvov. Chornovil had refused to testify against a lecturer, and had written a 20,000-word report of the proceedings. At his own trial, he, like Bukovsky, quoted the Constitution in his own defence, and condemned the practices of the KGB in tapping telephones, opening mail, searching homes, and holding secret trials. He was imprisoned for eighteen months.

December, 1967 - Nearly a year after the arrest of Ginzburg and the others, forty four people including Litvinov and Daniel's wife signed a petition demanding that their trial be held in public. More than one hundred people, including the mathematician Yesenin-Volpin (son of the popular poet) issued a public protest at the delay in bringing them to trial. 180 intellectuals addressed an appeal to the Supreme Soviet for freedom of the Press. Litvinov defiantly sent abroad the transcript of Bukovsky's defence speech, together with a record of the sinister warnings made to him in private conversation by a KGB official.

January, 1968 - After a year of KGB pressure to extract false confessions, Ginzburg and his associates were at last brought to trial. It was held in secret. Relatives of the accused courageously passed details of the trial to foreign correspondents at a press conference. Debrovolsky, a convert to Christianity who had been confined in a mental institution and had given way to police pressure, testified against the others, accusing them of contact with the reactionary NTS. In an "appeal to world public opinion", Litvinov and Mrs. Daniel complained that fake evidence was presented and that evidence was suppressed showing that Dobrovolsky was a police provocateur. They said that the courtroom was filled with KGB men and druzhinniki, who "shouted, jeered, and insulted the accused and witnesses". The trial was "in violation of the most important principles of Soviet law ... a stain on the honour of our State ... no better than the celebrated trials of the 1930s which involved us in so much shame and so much blood that we have still not recovered from them". All the defendants were imprisoned, and Ginzburg who had been in and out of prison since 1960 was sentenced to seven years' hard labour. Forty three people signed a protest at the secrecy of the trial, including the writers Akseyonov and Akhmadulina and the scientists Weissberg and Shafarevich, and also Major-General Grigorenko. The latter was formerly at the Frunze Military Academy, and had been dismissed in 1961 for criticising the censorship, courageously opposed the regime, and in 1964 was incarcerated in a mental hospital for two years. Fifty two more writers protested at the sentences. Litvinov was dismissed from his job.

February, 1968 - A leaflet signed by Litvinov, Grigorenko, Mrs. Daniel and the historian Yakir (son of the famous General who was executed in 1940) was distributed at the international conference of Communist Parties. Ninety nine mathematicians published a protest at the confinement of Yesenin-Volpin in a mental hospital. Twenty

two more writers, including the veteran Paustovsky, added their names to the protest at the sentences on Ginzburg and Galanskov.

March, 1968 - Six members of the Communist Party were expelled, including Ginzburg's lawyer and Professor Kopelev (see above).

April, 1968 - There were more than twenty expulsions from the CP in Moscow, Leningrad and Akademgorod. Many people were expelled from the Artists' Union - and thus deprived of their livelihood - and the Moscow branch of the Writers' Union in a purge of "voluntary defenders of renegades" investigated twenty two of their members.

May, 1968 - 800 Crimean Tartars arrived in Moscow to demand an inquiry into the plight of their nationality, but were arrested and transported out of the capital. In May, 1944, the entire Crimean Tartar community had been branded with the accusation of collaboration with the Nazis and deported in closed cattle-trucks, in the heat of summer, to Central Asia. Their republic was abolished, their houses demolished, their cemeteries ploughed up, and all their books destroyed: According to their own estimates, 46% of them died of thirst or suffocation on the journey, although according to official statistics "only 22%" perished. After the denunciation of Stalin in 1956 they began to agitate for rehabilitation, a demand only finally granted in September, 1967. At that time there were 637,000 Tartars in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and some in Tadzhikistan. Their rehabilitation followed that of the 750,000 Kalmucks, Chechens, Ingushi, Balkars and Karachais (Caucasian nationalities) and the 600,000 members of the Volga German community. When 6,000 Tartars claimed their rights by going to their former homeland in the Crimea, only two families and three bachelors were permitted to settle there. The campaign was renewed. On Lenin's birthday in April, 1968, a demonstration was held near Tashkent commemorating his assistance in founding the Crimean Tartar republic after the revolution. The demonstration was dispersed by police and troops, and there were several arrests. The deputation arrested in Moscow was accused of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda". When General Grigorenko appeared as a defence witness at their trial some months later, he was himself arrested, and this prompted further demonstrations and arrests. Similar demonstrations have been held by the Ingushi and Meshkhetian peoples.

June, 1968 - Yahimovich, Chairman of a Latvian collective farm, wrote to the Central Committee demanding an amnesty for all political prisoners. He was instantly dismissed, despite the fact that he had recently been publicly praised for his work in the press, and expelled from the CP.

July, 1968 - Grigorenko, Yahimovich, the writer Kosterin, and two others delivered a letter to the Czechoslovak Embassy in Moscow supporting the reforms in Czechoslovakia and warning of the danger of invasion. The Chronicle of Current Events, a bi-monthly under-

ground journal, began regular publication. Like similar unofficial publications, with even stencils and duplicators inaccessible to individuals, it was produced by "samizdat" (self-publication), whereby a chain of supporters laboriously types out a few carbon copies and passes them on to friends who make new copies, and so on until circulation reaches into the thousands - mainly of students and intellectuals at present.

It was at this time that another method of muted criticism came under attack: what the Ministry of Culture condemned as "the artificial modernisation of classical plays, in which the criticism of social defects is re-directed at our society". In one production of a Moliere play, the actors in an unscripted passage fall on their knees before a waxen image of the King imploring him for permission to continue the performance. "We will not even try to guess", commented the conservative journal Ogonyok, "the allusions which the producer expected to convey during these moments." The authorities reacted sensitively to a play about Galileo's fight against medieval obscurantism, and to another about the struggle against Tsarism which included the lines: "there is no freedom of the press, no freedom of speech, no freedom of scientific research".

August, 1968 - The lawyer Gendler and two engineers were arrested for publishing leaflets attacking Soviet policy towards Czechoslovakia. They were imprisoned for up to four years.

Following the invasion, Litvinov, Mrs. Daniel and others demonstrated in Red Square and were arrested and sentenced to long terms of exile. Kuznetsov later declared that "the invasion shocked the whole of the Soviet intelligentsia, the majority of whom were opposed to the Soviet regime Many people in Russia wept during those Days."

Anatoly Marchenko was imprisoned for a year, ostensibly for the technical offence of "visiting Moscow without the necessary residence permit." A Siberian building worker, Marchenko had been sent to Potma Labour Camp in 1960, at the age of 23, for "hooliganism". The impact of his ordeal, and his contact with political prisoners who were starved, beaten and tormented, made him resolved to endure it all for the sole purpose of telling the world that "today's Soviet camps for political prisoners are just as horrific as in Stalin's time. And everybody ought to know about it." During his six years' imprisonment he studied Lenin's complete works, and was told on leaving the camp by an officer: "I see you've been reading Lenin. Of course, in general that's a good thing, but all the same, with your views I think we'll be seeing you here again." On his release, Marchenko clandestinely published his "Testimony" on conditions in the camp, and also joined the protest against the invasion of Czechoslovakia. In reality, it was for these actions that he was imprisoned. This was proved by the fact that just before his sentence was due to end in July, 1969, he was sentenced to another three years for "slandering the Soviet system" while in the camp. Outside the courtroom, Marchenko's friend Belgorodskaya left a petition for his release in a taxi. For this she was herself sentenced to a year in a

labour camp for "slandering the Soviet system". There were demonstrations in the court as Marchenko and Belgorodskaya were sentenced.

November, 1968 - The funeral was held of the writer Kosterin, who joined the Bolsheviks in 1916 at the age of twenty, and lived from 1937 to 1953 in one of Stalin's labour camps. In 1968 at the age of seventy two he resigned from the CP "to free myself from party discipline, which deprives me of the right to think". Having been sentenced to three years' imprisonment for his association with the opposition movement, he died in November. Grigorenko used the occasion of the funeral to denounce "the bureaucracy which hides behind the mask of so-called Soviet democracy".

December, 1968 - Ninety five intellectuals wrote to the Supreme Soviet and two daily newspapers protesting at the sentences meted out to Litvinov and Mrs. Daniel.

January, 1969 - A 22-year-old Leningrad youth shot at a parade of Soviet cosmonauts in a futile gesture of despair.

February, 1969 - Grigorenko and Yahimovich were arrested for publishing an open letter on the occasion of Jan Palach's suicide.

April, 1969 - Rips, a Jewish student in Riga, tried to burn himself to death, but was saved and arrested. The authorities hinted on his nationality, and talked of his "abnormal mental condition", but an underground leaflet claimed that "his main public protest was against the occupation of Czechoslovakia". The Jewish radio engineer Kochubievsky who had been promised the right to emigrate to Israel was imprisoned for three years for "slandering the Soviet state".

May, 1969 - Fifty four intellectuals signed an "appeal to the United Nations Commission for Human Rights" expressing anxieties of "a return to the Stalin era when our entire country was gripped by terror". Although this action indicates their naivety and confusion - it is significant that they made it clear that "none of the people condemned at the political trials we know about had the aim of slandering the Soviet system, let alone of acting with the intention of undermining it". This was reluctantly confirmed even by the reactionary commentator Crankshaw, who admitted (Observer, 14/1/68) that "many of them are party members and think of themselves as convinced Communists. They are Soviet Patriots. They do not seek to overturn the system, only to improve it." For their attempts to forward this appeal, Grigorenko and Yahimovich were again arrested, together with the Tartar Gabay and the artist Kusnetsov. The mathematician Burmistrovich was imprisoned for distributing material written by Sinyavsky and Daniel.

June, 1969 - An open letter was addressed by Yakir, Mrs. Gabay and eight others to an international meeting of Communist Parties

appealing to them to "prevent the sinister ghost of Stalin from darkening our future". From within the camps Daniel, Galanskov, Ginzburg and three others petitioned the Supreme Soviet to relax conditions. Ginzburg successfully staged a hunger strike for the right to marry his fiancée.

October, 1969 - A new letter to the UN was written by Yesenin-Volpin, Gorbanyevskaya, Krassin, Mrs. Grigorenko and Yakir.

November, 1969 - Solzhenitsyn was arbitrarily expelled from the Writers' Union, and a flood of new protests followed.

August, 1969 - The writer Amalrik openly authorised publication of two books in the West, as a deliberate challenge to the constitutionality of charges that this would provoke.

May, 1970 - As soon as Lenin's centenary was out of the way, the persecution started again with the detention of the outstanding biologist Medvedyev in a psychiatric clinic, after attacking restrictions on communications with foreign scientists. Nine months previously he had been dismissed from his job as head of a radiological institute. On June 1st, he was pronounced "normal" but told he would be kept for a week "under observation". Officials at the Ministry of Health in Moscow ordered that he be subjected to a new examination, and on June 5th a team of doctors arrived from the Serbsky Institute for the Criminally Insane, including the notorious Professor Lunts who had declared Grigorenko "mentally incompetent". Fifty famous scientists protested at his "forcible hospitalisation for an article on Soviet postal censorship", and demanded that he be examined by doctors from a civil and not a criminal mental hospital. Solzhenitsyn organised a campaign against this "cruel and arbitrary" treatment. Finally the authorities had to release him, but he is still unemployed.

July, 1970 - An American television network broadcast a film made up of reels and tapes smuggled out of Russia, made by Amalrik, who was arrested as a consequence; Bukovsky, who had just been released after three years' hard labour; Yakir, who has spent years in a labour camp; and Ginzburg, whose contribution was brought out of the camp where he is still confined. Despite their distaste for the distorted propaganda that the West would make out of this broadcast, they decided that any channel available should be used to bring the world's attention to their struggle.

THE APPROACHING POLITICAL REVOLUTION

Every arrest and every penalty provokes bigger demonstrations and draws more people into the struggle. The movement has embraced Generals and collective farm chairmen. The offspring of the top bureaucrats of the past have lost their faith in the political system - either, like Litvinov, joining the movement of change, or, like Stalin's daughter, treacherously

deserting to imperialism. A Soviet press report in April, 1970, entitled "Disturbed Youth" expressed concern that the most talented pupils opt out of creative work at the age of fifteen or so. All the leading writers and scientists, especially those under forty, have to some extent been affected by the movement. On every front - economic, literary, historical, external - the bureaucracy is in a hopeless impasse. To continue as at present is unthinkable. To return to the old methods of stark terror is impossible in the context of a sophisticated technological economy which depends on a skilled and confident labour force. And yet in the long term Stalinism is incapable of providing any way forward.

Meanwhile, the bureaucracy has pinned its last hope of concealing its utterly restrictive economic role on the tactic of concluding far reaching agreements with monopolies from the imperialist countries. Deals have been made with Japanese imperialism to develop Eastern Siberia, and with West Germany, Italy and Britain to build productive plant. The vast programme of development involving imperialist firms - in the construction of mines and roads in the undeveloped but potentially tremendously rich expanses of Eastern Siberia, of a whole range of engineering plant (including the biggest lorry factory in the world), of electronic computer factories, of chemical plant, etc., with monopolies like Fiat and Courtaulds sharing the market with the most powerful German and Japanese companies - will undoubtedly have a beneficial effect on Soviet economic growth. To a large extent the worst effects of bureaucratic bungling and sabotage will be overcome for a period. As the immediate benefits come to an end and the plant is built, however, the bureaucracy will become exposed to a renewed and deeper crisis which will pose an even more urgent threat to its survival. On the basis of a more advanced and complex economy, its stifling control will be even more harmful than before.

It is an historical irony that Stalinism has been forced from its dream of "Socialism in One Country" and an autarchic self-sufficiency, more and more on to the world market, as Trotsky predicted, while imperialism has moved from a policy of economic blockade of Soviet Russia to an accommodation with a bureaucracy which it knows offers no threat of revolution in the West. While the giant corporations of the West eye greedily the expanding markets of the non-capitalist sector and scramble over one another for lucrative deals, the bureaucracy can temporarily mask its own incompetence by promoting the importation of new techniques into those fields in which the Soviet economy is less advanced. It is fear of the working class - of social revolution in the West and of political revolution in the East - that brings imperialism and Stalinism huddling together. The overthrow of one would immediately precipitate the downfall of the other. That is why, regardless of their mutual economic contradictions, each has a stake in the survival of the other.

Only the programme of October can take society forward. The Bolsheviks' safeguards against bureaucratism - no official to be paid more than a skilled worker, no Communist to earn more than the average wage,

all officials to be elected with the right of recall, no standing Army but an armed people, all the people to share in the process of administration, all the functions of the State and the economy to be placed under democratic workers' management through Soviet power - these measures on the basis of today's standard of civilisation and technique could be applied a thousand times more effectively than in the terrible conditions of the first years of the revolution. Then the workers were a tiny proportion of the population, plagued like the peasantry by starvation, illiteracy and disease, working superhuman hours in the struggle to produce subsistence output, decimated by the ravages of civil war and famine, dependent on the old administrators who were hungry for material comforts, and increasingly disappointed at the failure of the revolution beyond the borders of the former Russian Empire. Today the political regeneration of the revolution and the restoration of Soviet democracy would release the gigantic potential of society from the shackles of Asiatic despotism.

The apparition of Hungary, 1956, haunts the bureaucracy. In Czechoslovakia the regime installed by Russian tanks has no basis in society, and it has not dared to terrorise the population by means of a bloodbath, in the tradition of Hungary. Poland, racked by economic contradictions and no longer after 1956 open to nationalist smokescreens, has witnessed demonstrations by thousands of students and young workers. Thousands of industrial workers in East Germany marched in protest against the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Yugoslav students in June, 1970, staged a hunger strike in solidarity with a thousand miners who struck after a 20% wage cut. Nowhere in Eastern Europe, from "autocratic" East Germany to "liberal" Yugoslavia can be protected from the approaching political storms.

In the USSR the workers have not yet spoken. When they do, they will in the space of weeks and days sweep away the last and greatest obstacle to a world transformation of society. Just as the climb of the bureaucracy on to the back of the revolution mirrored, stage by stage, the triumph of counter-revolution in the West, so the sharpening and quickening of the class struggle in the West is striking an echo inside the Stalinist world. The Russian economy has outgrown the fetters of Stalinism. A new age is dawning East and West.

to the stark repression of the early years of the Franco regime is impossible. It would only provoke greater resistance among the workers. To make concessions is to open the floodgates of revolution. Appetite comes with eating. The workers would demand even greater concessions. That is the dilemma of the regime.

It is only inertia that keeps the regime in being, plus the fears of the ruling class and the petit-bourgeoisie. Already the Spanish "Labour Front", the totalitarian joint "trade union" of employers and workers, is no more than a fiction in industry. The illegal "workers' commissions", elected secretly by the workers, have the support of the overwhelming majority. The employers are compelled to negotiate "illegally" with the workers' commissions. In the recent period the workers "illegally" received higher wage rises than the officially promulgated state norm of the Spanish "prices and incomes" policy. The employers were compelled to concede this and the "State", i.e. the repressive fascist apparatus was compelled to turn a blind eye.

It is the accumulation of incidents of this character which are undermining the hated terror regime. The aid given by American Imperialism can now not even delay the process of decay of the power of Franco. The revenge of the working class and of Socialism is being prepared. The new generation of workers and peasants is preparing to wipe out the stain of the defeat of their fathers. This movement of the Spanish people can be measured not in decades or even years but must be measured in months. New clashes will prepare a general strike in Barcelona, or Madrid or one of the industrial cities of Spain. This in turn would provoke a nation-wide general strike and armed uprising. The history of Spain has many examples, especially the immortal ones of the workers of Barcelona, Madrid and Valencia in July, 1936, as a reply to the Fascist conspiracy.

The death or retirement of Franco would not alter the process. In fact it might speed it up. The accession of the royal heir-apparent to the throne of Spain would be greeted by mirth among the workers and peasants. The monarchy can solve nothing.

If there were a strong revolutionary party in Spain it would be possible to conceive of a revolution leading straight to the Socialist rule of the workers and peasants. But under present conditions it would lead to a return of the bourgeois republic. However, as the illegal workers' commissions show, the workers' juntas would appear all over Spain and perhaps also peasants' and students' juntas. What then? The policies of the workers' organisations, of the Communist Party, of the Socialist Party, of the Anarchists and the POUM demonstrate that they have learned nothing from the bitter history of Spain and of the reasons for the victory of Franco Fascism. By one of the ironies of which history is full, the Communist Party which played the principle role in ensuring defeat is perhaps the strongest organisation in Spain. The Socialists, the Anarchists and the POUM will all re-appear on the scene. If it depends on the

leadership of these organisations we will have a repetition of the history of the Republic of 1931-39.

However, the Communist Party in Spain has not been immune from the processes of decay which affect their brother parties. There are rumours of dissension and even splits within the ranks of the leadership. Events in Russia and Eastern Europe, the split between China and Russia, have aroused echoes, even if muffled, within their ranks. The fact that China and Russia and the other States of Eastern Europe choose just this time of crisis to increase friendly contacts and trade with the Franco regime must leave doubts and suspicions in the minds of the already disturbed rank and file.

These regimes do not want revolution in Spain upsetting the status quo in Europe and provoking movements among other sections of the European proletariat. This might awake echoes among their own working class and upset the bureaucratic appletart.

However, the proclamation of the Republic would usher in a new period of storm and stress in Spain and Europe. It would affect also the British workers. A whole series of crises would develop in Spain. With their new found freedom, strikes, demonstrations and struggles would be on the order of the day. The new generation of workers, even the advanced guard, have not had experience of these events. To the leaderships of the mass organisations the lessons of these events are a closed book. However in the struggle the workers will learn. The advanced guard in the Communist Party will not tolerate a repetition of the crimes of the past. They will split. A new grouping basing itself on the ideas of Lenin and Trotsky will develop. They will find in the works of Trotsky on Spain an invaluable guide to the understanding of events as they develop. Over a few years the choice will be revealed in all its stark reality: either the conquest of power by the working class or the rise of a new Franco.

These letters of Trotsky which we are publishing here are an indication of the processes which will develop and give the necessary understanding to the militant leaders of the working class if they are to be victorious.

THE EDITORIAL BOARD.

discussion on these questions had a semi-academic character for certain comrades and for certain groups. But today, these questions are the very incarnation of the struggle, of life. Can we permit ourselves to be bound hand and foot at so important a historical turning point? Just as during the Sino-Russian conflict which threatened to let loose a war we could not lose ourselves in discussions over whether it was necessary to support the Soviet Union or Chiang Kai-Shek, so today, face to face with the Spanish events we cannot even admit an indirect responsibility for the sectarian, semi-Bakuninist superstitions of certain groups.

PROBLEMS OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION

June 24, 1931.

Unfortunately, I don't have enough information to know how the various groups of the Spanish communists pose the political questions of the day. The analysis of the revolutionary situation is, in such a case, more difficult than playing chess blindfolded. On all questions there remain some points on which I require additional elaboration.

The main part of my article concerning the dangers threatening the Spanish revolution consists in proving that between the bourgeois republican revolution of April of this year, and the proletarian revolution to come, there is no room for a special "workers and peasants" revolution.[‡] Incidentally, I noted that this does not mean that the party of the proletariat has to devote itself to the peaceful assembling of strength until "the final and decisive conflict". Such a conception would be a philistine anti-revolutionary one. While there cannot be either an intermediary revolution or an intermediary regime, there can and will be intermediary mass actions, strikes, demonstrations, clashes with the police and the troops, tumultuous revolutionary convulsions in which the communists will naturally be at the most exposed fighting points. What may be the historical meaning of those intermediary fights? On the one hand, they may introduce democratic changes in the bourgeois republican regime. On the other hand, they will prepare the masses to conquer power in order to create a proletarian regime.

The participation of the communists in these fights, and especially a leading participation, demands from them not only a clear understanding of the development of the revolution as a whole, but also the capacity to put forward at the right moment such partial, sharp, fighting slogans that by themselves don't derive from the "programme", but are dictated by the circumstances of the day and lead the masses forward.

[‡]"The Spanish Revolution in Danger", June, 1931. Poiner Publishers. The "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasantry," as a state-form in between bourgeois democracy and proletarian dictatorship, was a theory then promulgated by the Stalinists. - Ed.

The enormous role of the Bolshevik slogan "Down with the ten capitalist ministers" is well known, in 1917, at the time of the coalition between the conciliators and the bourgeois liberals. The masses still trusted the socialist conciliators but the most trustful masses always have an instinctive distrust for the bourgeoisie, for the exploiters and for the capitalists. On this was built the Bolshevik tactic during that specific period. We didn't say "Down with the socialist ministers," we didn't even advance the slogan "Down with the Provisional Government" as a fighting slogan of the moment, but instead we hammered on one and the same point: "Down with the ten capitalist ministers." This slogan played an enormous role, because it gave the masses the opportunity to learn from their own experiences that the capitalist ministers were closer and dearer to the conciliators than the working masses.

Slogans of that type are the best fitted for the present stage of the Spanish revolution. The proletarian vanguard is fully interested in pushing the Spanish socialists to take over the whole power. For that purpose, it is necessary to split the coalition. The next task is the fight for the expulsion of the bourgeois ministers from the coalition. The achievement of this task in full or in part is conceivable only in connection with important political events, under pressure of new mass movements, and so on. Thus, in Russia, under the constant pressure of the masses, first Guchkov, Miliukov, then Prince Lvov, were ousted from the coalition government, which was then headed by Kerensky; the number of "socialists" in the government rose, and so on. After the arrival of Lenin, the Bolshevik party did not solidarise itself for one moment with Kerensky and the conciliators, but it helped the masses to push the bourgeoisie out of power and to test the government of the conciliators in practice. That was an indispensable stage on the road of the Bolshevik movement to power.

Insofar as it is possible to see from far away, the elections to the Cortes will show an extreme weakness of the rightist republicans of the Zamora and Maura type, and will bring about an overwhelming majority of petty bourgeois conciliators of different colouration: Radicals, Radical-Socialists and "socialists." Notwithstanding this, we can expect almost with certainty the socialists and Radical-Socialists to cling with all their forces to their allies on the right. The slogan "Down with Zamora-Maura" is perfectly on the order of the day. It is only necessary to make one thing clear: the communists are not agitating in favour of the Lerroux ministry, nor are they assuming any responsibility for the "socialist ministry, but at every given moment they deliver the strongest blow against the most definite and consistent class enemy, thereby weakening the conciliators and clearing the way for the proletariat. The communists say to the socialist workers: "Differing from us, you believe your socialist leaders; then, force them, at least, to take the power. In this we shall honestly help you. Afterwards, let us see by what happens which of us is right."

We have approached this question in connection with the composition of the Cortes. But other events, for instance repressions against the

masses, may give an extreme acuteness to the slogan: "Down with Zamora-Maura." The victory in that field, i.e., the resignation of Zamora,* would assume in this new stage almost the same importance, for the further development of the revolution, as the resignation of Alfonso in April. In putting such slogans forward, we must not let ourselves be guided by doctrinary abstractions, but by the state of consciousness of the masses, their way of taking the events, and the way they react to the various partial successes. The bare counter-balancing of the present regime with the slogan "A proletarian dictatorship" or "A workers-peasants republic" is in itself absolutely insufficient for it will not catch on with the masses.

In connection with this, the question again rises of social-fascism. This silly invention of the terribly leftist bureaucracy is presently becoming in Spain the greatest obstacle on the way to the revolution. Let us turn again to the Russian experience. The Mensheviks and the SRs, then holding the power, led an imperialist war, defended the owning class, persecuted the soldiers, the peasants and the workers, made arrests, introduced the death penalty, condoned the killing of Bolsheviks, forced Lenin into illegal existence, kept the other Bolshevik leaders in prison, spread the most ignominious calumnies against them, etc., etc. All that is more than enough to call them in retrospect "social-fascists." But there, in 1917, that word did not exist at all, which did not prevent the Bolsheviks, as is well known, from coming to power. After the terrible persecution of the Bolsheviks in July-August, the Bolsheviks sat together with the "social-fascists" in the bodies set up to fight against Kornilov. In the beginning of September, Lenin, from illegality, proposed a compromise to the Russian "social-fascists": "Break with the bourgeoisie, take the power, and we, the Bolsheviks, shall peacefully fight for power within the Soviets."

If there had been no difference between the conciliators and the Kornilovists, the real "fascists" of that time, the struggle of the Bolsheviks jointly with the conciliators against the Kornilovists would not have been possible, whereas that struggle played the greatest role in the development of the revolution, by throwing back the attack of the generals' counter-revolution and by helping the Bolsheviks to tear the masses away once and for all from the conciliators.

It is precisely the nature of petty-bourgeois democracy to oscillate between communism and fascism. During the revolution, these oscillations become particularly acute. To regard Spanish socialists as a variety of fascism means to abstain beforehand from profiting by their inevitable oscillations to the left, to close off our way to the socialists and trade union workers.

As a conclusion to this letter, I shall note that the criticism and the unmasking of Spanish anarcho syndicalism is an extremely important

* President of the Provisional Government and then of the Republic, 1931-35. - Ed.

task, which cannot be postponed for a single day. The top leaders of anarcho-syndicalism represent the most masked, the most treacherous, and the most dangerous form of conciliationism with and servility towards the bourgeoisie. In its rank and file, anarcho-syndicalism contains large potential revolutionary forces. Our basic task here is the same as in regard to the socialists: oppose the rank and file to the tops. This task, however, must be carefully adapted to the specific nature of the syndicalist organisation and the specific character of the anarchist mask. I shall deal with this in one of my next letters.

TACTICS FLOWING FROM THE ELECTION RESULTS

July 1st, 1931.

1. I have before me the local newspaper of July 1st with the first information on the results of the Spanish elections. Indeed everything up to now rigorously follows a "planned" succession of events. The movement toward the left took place as if according to plan. Let us hope that our Spanish comrades will analyse the results of the elections with indispensable precision, after gathering all the material. It is necessary to ascertain how the workers, and particularly the anarcho-syndicalists, voted. In certain districts, the answer must quite clearly derive from the electoral statistics. It is most important, of course, to learn how the peasants in the various provinces voted. At the same time, it is necessary to gather all the "agrarian programmes" which were presented by the various parties in the various parts of the country. This is a very urgent and very important work.

2. The socialists, as was to be expected, appear to have won a great victory. This is the central moment of the parliamentary situation. The socialist leaders feel happy for not being the majority in the Cortes, their coalition with the bourgeoisie consequently being justified by parliamentary statistics. The socialists do not want to take the power, for they justly fear that a socialist government will only be a stage on the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat. From Prieto's speech it is clear that the socialists intend to support the coalition so long as it is thereby possible to hold back the proletariat, and then, when the pressure of the workers becomes too strong, under some radical pretext, pass into the opposition, leaving it to the bourgeoisie to discipline and crush the workers. In other words, we have before us a variation of the line of Ebert and Tseretelli. Let us remember that the line of Ebert was successful, that Tseretelli's policy failed, while the decisive factor in both cases was the strength of the Communist Party, and its policy.

3. We must immediately expose the plan of the socialists (their political game of playing to lose), unmasking them on each particular

question. This, of course, concerns in the first place the Spanish Left Opposition. But unmasking alone is not enough. A clear political slogan, corresponding to the character of the present stage of the Spanish revolution, is necessary. The results of the elections make the slogan absolutely clear: The workers must break the bloc with the bourgeoisie and force the socialists to take the power. The peasants must help the workers, if they want to obtain the land.

4. The socialists will appeal to the fact that they don't have the majority in the Cortes. Our answer to that: genuinely democratic elections to the Cortes on the basis of a truly universal and equal suffrage for men and women from eighteen years of age. In other words, to the non-democratic, falsified Cortes, we oppose in this given stage a truly popular, truly democratic, honestly elected Cortes.

5. If the communists, in this given stage, would turn their backs to the Cortes, opposing to it the slogan of the soviets and the dictatorship of the proletariat, they would only demonstrate that they cannot be taken seriously. There probably is not a single communist in the Cortes (this is the information given by the Turkish telegrams). Of course, the revolutionary wing is always stronger in deeds, in the struggle, than in parliamentary representation. But still, between the strength of the revolutionary party and its representation in parliament, there is a certain relation. The weakness of Spanish communism is fully disclosed. Under these conditions, to speak of the overthrow of bourgeois parliamentarism by the dictatorship of the proletariat would simply mean to play the part of imbeciles and babblers. The task is to gether strength for the party on the basis of the parliamentary stage of the revolution by rallying the masses to us. Only thus can parliamentarism be overcome. But precisely for that purpose it is indispensable to develop a fierce agitation under the most decisive and extreme democratic slogans.

6. What should be the criteria for the launching of the slogans? On the one hand, the general direction of the revolutionary development, determining our strategic line; on the other hand, the stage of consciousness of the masses. The communist who does not take the latter factor into consideration will break his head. Let us meditate a little on the way in which the Spanish workers en masse take the present line-up. Their leaders, the socialists, have the power. This increases the demands and the tenacity of the workers. Every striker will figure that the Government not only is not to be feared, but that on the contrary help must be expected from it. The communist must direct the thoughts of the workers precisely on that path: "Demand from the government. It is your leaders that are in it." The socialists will appeal, in reply to the workers' delegations, that they do not have the majority yet. The answer is clear. With a truly democratic electoral right and the split in the coalition with the bourgeoisie, the majority is assured. But this is what the socialists do not want. Their situation places them in contradiction with the slogans of thoroughgoing democracy. If we simply oppose to the

Cortes the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the soviets, we weld the workers with the socialists, for both will say: The Communists want to command us. Whereas under the slogan of democracy and of split between the socialists and the bourgeoisie, we push a wedge between the workers and the socialists and prepare the next stage of the revolution.

7. All the above reasoning would hang in the air if we limited ourselves only to democratic slogans and their parliamentary refraction. There cannot even be talk of such limitation. The communists participate in all the strikes, in all protests and demonstrations, raising ever new strata of the population. The communists are in the battle with and in front of the masses. On the basis of these battles the communists put forward the slogan of the soviets, and, at the first opportunity, build soviets, as the organisations of the proletarian united front. In the given stage, the soviets cannot be anything large. But if they emerge as the combat organisations of the proletarian united front, under the leadership of the communists, they will inevitably transform themselves at a certain stage into organs of insurrection and then into organs of power.

8. While audaciously presenting our agrarian programme, we must by no means forget about the independent role of the agricultural workers. This is the main and basic piston of the proletarian revolution in the rural districts. The workers have an alliance with the peasants, while the agricultural workers are a part of the proletariat itself. This deep difference must always be borne in mind.

9. I learn from the Verite that the Stalinists accuse either the Left Opposition en masse, or me alone, of the fact that we allegedly are opposed to the immediate confiscation of the landlords' estates. It can never be foreseen, indeed, in what direction the bureaucratic demagogues will turn this time. What does the "immediate" confiscation of the land mean? By whom? By what organisations? The inimitable Peri, it is true, asserted already in April that the Spanish peasants were creating soviets, and that every worker followed the communists. We, of course, are for the immediate taking over by the soviets (or unions, or committees) of the landlords' estates. But it is still necessary to arouse the peasants. And for that it is necessary to tear the workers away from the influence of the socialists. One cannot be done without the other.

Or maybe the Stalinists want to say that we are protecting the landlords' property? But even in calumny there has to be some logic. How can the defence of the landlords' property be derived from the position of permanent revolution? Let them try to explain that to us.

We, on our side, shall recall that when the Stalinists in China pursued the policy of the bloc of four classes, the Politburo, under Stalin's leadership, sent a telegram to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, demanding that the peasants' movement be held back, in order not to repel the "revolutionary generals." In the agrarian programme,

Stalin and Molotov included a small limitation: the confiscation of landlords' estates, except those of the officers. And as all the landlords, their sons and nephews entered Chiang Kai-shek's army, "revolutionary" officership became the insurance of landlords' property. This shameful chapter in the history of Stalinist leadership cannot be crossed out. At that time, the Opposition found a copy of the telegram in the minutes of the Politburo, and disclosed and stigmatised this ignominious treason to the agrarian revolution. Now, these gentlemen attempt to throw on us in Spain the crime which they themselves committed in China. But no: now the Opposition has its sections in almost every country, and it will not let lies and filth be spread on it unpunished. In the living experience of the Spanish revolution the Left Opposition will clear up all the basic problems and will make a gigantic step forward. It is not in vain that revolution is the locomotive of history.

THE ROLE OF STRIKES IN A REVOLUTION

August 2nd, 1931.

The purpose of this letter is to exchange our views on the occasion of the tumultuous strike movement in Spain. In my second pamphlet on the Spanish revolution, I indicated in detail one of the possible perspectives: the revolutionary movement develops violently without the correct leadership and concludes in an explosion which the counter-revolutionary forces may exploit in order to smash the proletariat. As pointed out in the pamphlet, this perspective does not, of course, mean that the role of the communists should be to hold back the revolutionary movement. I do not doubt that in this respect we will have no differences, but I would like to analyse this question more thoroughly because it may become of great practical importance.

First of all, it is necessary to make clear that this violent elemental outburst of strikes is the inevitable outcome of the character of the revolution itself, being in a certain sense its basis. The overwhelming majority of the Spanish proletariat does not know what organisation means. During the time the dictatorship lasted, a new generation of workers grew up, which is lacking in independent political experience. The revolution awakens - and in this lies its force - the most backward, down-trodden, the most oppressed toiling masses. The strike is the form of their awakening. By means of the strike, various strata and groups of the proletariat manifest themselves, signal to each other, verify their own strength and the strength of their foe. One layer infects and awakens the other. All this together makes the present strike wave absolutely inevitable. Least of all do the communists have to be afraid of it, for this is the very expression of the creative force of the revolution. Only through these strikes, with all their mistakes, with all their "excesses" and

"exaggerations", does the proletariat rise to its feet, assemble itself in one unit, begin to feel and to conceive itself as a class, as a living historical force. Never have revolutions developed under a conductor's stick. Excesses, mistakes, sacrifices are the very nature of any revolution.

Had the Communist Party told the workers: "I am still too weak to guide you, therefore, wait a little, don't press too much, don't start the fight by striking, give me a chance to become stronger", the party would have made itself hopelessly ridiculous, the awakening masses would have stepped over it, and instead of becoming stronger, the party would have only weakened.

Even if you have foreseen correctly a historical danger, this does not mean that you may eliminate it by mere reasoning. The danger can be removed only if you possess the necessary strength. But in order to be such a force, the Communist Party must enter whole-heartedly into the arena of the developing "elemental" or semi-elemental strike movement, not in order to hold it back, but in order to learn to direct it, and in the very process of the struggle, acquire authority and strength.

It would be a mistake to think that the present movement was provoked by the anarcho-syndicalists. The latter are themselves under the indomitable pressure from below. The leading group of the syndicalist nucleus would like to slow up the movement. Individuals like Pestana are certainly negotiating behind the stage with the employers and administration about the best means of liquidating the strikes. Tomorrow, many of these gentlemen will prove to be the executioners of the workers and, while shooting them, as the Russian Mensheviks did, will preach against the "intoxication of strike", and so on.

One cannot doubt that along this line will grow the differentiation among the anarcho-syndicalists. The most revolutionary wing, the further it goes, will find itself ever more in contradiction with the syndico-reformists. From out of this left wing will inevitably surge up putchists, heroic adventurers, individual terrorists and others.

Needless to say, we cannot encourage any kind of adventurism. But we must in advance be certain that not the right wing which combats the strikes, but the left revolutionary syndicalist wing, will come closer to us. It will be all the more easy to overcome all kinds of adventurist elements, the sooner the revolutionary syndicalists are convinced that the communists are fighters - not rationalisers.

The official (Communist) party is being accused of an adventurist policy in the field of strikes. I personally cannot judge in the matter due to my lack of information. The general attitude of the party in the previous period, however, leads one to think that this charge is probably justified. But precisely for that reason there is a danger that having burnt its fingers the party may abruptly turn to the right. The greatest

misfortune would be if the working masses would come to the conclusion that the communists, just as the syndicalists of the type of Pestana, would like to instruct them dogmatically, from the top downward, and not to rise with them from the bottom upwards.

Summarising: The danger of June days* remains without any doubt the gravest in the perspective, but the most immediate danger for the communists may become abstract arguing "trying to appear intelligent", abstract coaxing, which revolutionary workers will regard as pessimistic croaking.

The Left Opposition must not forget for a single moment that dangers which arise from the development of the revolution should be overcome not by watchful caution but by audacity, audacity, and more audacity.

FROM A LETTER TO ANDRES NIN**

September 1st, 1931.

Maurin*** has issued the slogan: "All power to the proletariat". I think you are quite right in pointing out that he has chosen slogans of this sort in order to provide himself with a bridge to the syndicalists and to lend himself the appearance of greater strength than he actually possesses. Unfortunately, the chase after appearances is very strong in politics, and very disastrous in revolutionary politics. I ask myself - at times - why are there no Soviets in Spain? What is the cause of this?

ON THE SLOGAN OF SOVIETS

In a former letter, I expressed several ideals in this connection. I have developed these much more amply in an article I sent you on workers' control in Germany. It appears that the slogan of "juntas" is associated in the minds of the Spanish workers with the slogan of Soviets; and for this reason it seems too sharp, too decisive, too "Russian" to them. That is to say, they look at it in a different light than did the Russian workers at a corresponding stage. Are we not confronted here with a historical paradox in that the existence of Soviets in the USSR acts to paralyze the creation of Soviets in other revolutionary countries?

*A deliberate provocation to bring the workers into the streets in order to shoot them down; derived from the bloodletting of June in the French Revolution of 1848. - Ed.

**Nin was a well-known Spanish revolutionist, for many years a close collaborator, and personal friend of Trotsky. He later broke with the Trotskyist movement in order to organise a centrist party, the POUM, together with Maurin. He was murdered in Spain by Stalin's GPU during the Civil War. - Ed.

***See letter of June 18, 1931.

This question must be given the utmost attention in private conversations with workers in the different parts of the country. At any event, if the slogan of Soviets (juntas) fails as yet to meet with response, then we must concentrate on the slogan of factory committees. I dealt with this topic in the above mentioned article on workers' control. On the basis of factory committees we can develop the Soviet organisation without referring to them by name.

On the question of workers' control, you are in my opinion absolutely correct; to renounce workers' control merely because the reformists are for it - in words - would be an enormous stupidity. On the contrary, it is precisely for this reason that we should seize upon this slogan all the more eagerly and compel the reformist workers to put it into practice by means of a united front with us; and on the basis of this experience to push them into opposition to Caballero and other fakers.

We succeeded in creating Soviets in Russia only because the demand for them was raised, together with us, by the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries, although, to be sure, they had different aims in mind. We cannot create any Soviets in Spain precisely because neither the Socialists nor the syndicalists want Soviets. This means that the united front and the organisational unity with the majority of the working class cannot be created under this slogan.

But here is Caballero himself, forced to it by the pressure of the masses, seizing upon the slogan of workers' control and thereby opening wide the doors for the united front policy and to forging an organisation that embraces the majority of the working class. We must seize hold of this with both hands. Certainly, Caballero will try to transform workers' control into the control of the capitalists over the workers. But that question already pertains to another domain, that of the relationship of forces within the working class. If we succeed in creating factory committees all over the country, then in this revolutionary epoch that we are witnessing, Messrs. Caballero and Co. will have lost the decisive battle.

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