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7-6-75

Dear comrades,

De facto, regroupment discussions are ended by your letters of 13-4-75 and of 7-5-75.

While refusing fusion and, indeed, pulling back from already-agreed commitments to cooperation, you propose a 'Revolutionary Socialist Alliance', to lead to fusion, perhaps, in the misty future (the distant future, evidently, since you announce your intention to set up a rival paper to WF in the summer). We favour united fronts on specific actions with the RMC as with other revolutionary groups, but we cannot accept this vague hybrid 'Revolutionary Socialist Alliance.'

Your endless procrastination, obvious seeking after any differences, and now the decision to bring out a paper, make it unavoidable for us to conclude that no general special relationship - beyond normal united-front activity - can exist ~~between our~~ tendencies. Your conception of the 'Revolutionary Socialist Alliance' is the opposite of what we proposed to you six months ago - it is an evasion of fusion rather than a transition to it.

It could only be a discussion club of a most unhealthy sort, particularly since you favour the involvement of the ex-WF DCF. The DCF comrades, whether or not they say they agree with the 12 points of the Open Letter, proved in practice unable and unwilling to work and discuss in a rational way with the rest of WF.

Within a framework of common commitment to action, useful discussion is possible even on very far-reaching differences. With no such commitment, the discussions in the RSA would only be the play-acting of sectlets; an umbrella under which new sectlets could be generated. We can see no purpose for the RSA unless it is to gain for the RMC a 'reflected' credibility from WF, the better to pull dissidents out of IMG Tendency D, and strengthen the RMC as a new sectlet. We are not interested in that purpose.

WORKERISM

You advocate, as one of the advantages of the RSA, that its discussions would attract dissidents from IS, IMG etc as being more honest than the discussions in their own organisations. But no serious revolutionary will be attracted by discussions for the sake of discussions, with no coherent organisation coming out of them. In this context, your charge against WF, of 'workerism', raises some important issues. (Though how a group with our position on the UWC strike, for example, can be charged with 'workerism' in relation to Ireland, we do not know.)

In some periods, revolutionaries are confined by circumstances to propagandist discussion-circle type activities. This is not such a period. A serious revolutionary organisation in this period, if it is to draw lessons from the major class struggles around us, if it is to try to make any sort of serious intervention in those struggles, if it is to take the opportunities that do exist to build a working-class cadre nucleus, must turn its face to the industrial struggle. It is still true that a small organisation will have to give a large part of its energies to propaganda, strictly defined (explaining complex sets of ideas to relatively few people); and it will face great difficulties in recruiting and developing industrial militants. But if it does not make the effort to develop a working class base, if it remains content to confine itself to propagandist activity in a petty bourgeois milieu, then it will not even

attract the more serious revolutionaries from the petty bourgeois milieu, and in any case such an orientation will eventually affect the group's politics in a passive-propagandist, cliquist direction. As against such an orientation, we are 'workerists'.

SPECTATOR OR PARTISAN?

The nature of your other criticisms of our orientation, like the charge of 'workerism', also point to the real problems which have thwarted RMC/WF fusion.

You do not criticise from the point of view which asks, how can we help correct these failings. Nor do you criticise WF's methods and achievements by counterposing RMC's methods and achievements. You criticise, in short, as 'consumers', as passive spectators, hors de la melee.

Such a stance even on the part of individuals, when continued over a period, indicates a lack of the necessary revolutionary decisiveness. On the part of an organised grouping, a contender for revolutionary Marxist leadership, it is a sign of extreme ill health.

WF'S ORIENTATION

Let us take up two of your specific points. You oppose our work in the LPYS and propose instead better-developed work directed at members of IS and IMG.

The fact is that at the Easter conference of the LPYS (the largest Labour youth conference ever, with over 2000 attending) we were the chief opposition to the reformist 'Militant' leadership. (And this despite much sluggishness, inadequacy, lack of energy, etc. in our LPYS work). Where, in years of work directed at IS, IMG, etc. could we get similar opportunities? Perhaps you will reply - we could if we adopted the RMC's methods. We doubt it, though. Our fight in IS, conducted by a tiny minority which was persecuted and ghettoised right from the start, in a period when IS was 'booming', quadrupled our numbers. Your fight in IMG, starting with numerous leadership positions, in a period when IMG was in chronic crisis, ended with fragments of your defeated army crawling out the back door.

Work directed at IS, IMG etc. is certainly necessary. But we must combine it with attempts to develop independent work, through such channels as industrial work and the LPYS. Otherwise we will not attract the most serious revolutionaries, and our politics, also, will in the end be affected by prolonged immersion in the revolutionary left discussion-circle milieu.

THE POLITICAL DIFFERENCES: WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK

The question, revolutionary activism vs. coterie-politics, seems to us to be more to the point than the political differences you cite, on 'Wages for Housework' and the Birmingham bombings.

On 'wages for housework', your criticism runs as follows. WF counterposes to 'wages for housework' the socialisation of housework and the re-integration of women into industry. This is maximalist and economic. Instead we should counterpose the demands of the Working Women's Charter.

However WF, as you full well know, does take up the Working Women's Charter. We circulated a document on the Working Women's Charter at the Women and Socialism and

Women's Liberation conferences, and we can supply you with copies if you haven't seen it. In that document we point out that the Charter, as such, is just a list of demands (one which the CP, for example, can and does support) and requires to be located in more general explanations, in a rounded socialist perspective - which is surely summed up in the socialisation of housework and the re-integration of women into industry.

To counterpose the Charter against the increased involvement of women in industrial and trade union struggles (dismissing the latter because it only gives 'trade union consciousness') is a very strange position, which makes sense only if the object is pedantic hair-splitting, or if you fall into a totally passive-propagandist view of how to work round the Working Women's Charter.

This latter point, as you will be aware, is made in Pat Longman's reply to Sue Lincoln's original article. But the RMC rushed to declare 'wages for housework' a major obstacle to fusion without waiting for or responding to our reply. Why? Only, we can suppose, because of an urgent desire to find political rationalisations for your retreat from regroupment to coterie-politics.

THE BIRMINGHAM BOMBINGS

It is the Birmingham bombings, however, which loom larger in your letter. Indeed, that question has been looming larger and larger since last November, from the proportions of 'a bad article' to the proportions of declaring that you could not "as a matter of principle" sell issues of WF with our line on the Birmingham bombings.

This ultra-sensitivity to principle is newly-acquired. Indeed, it was only in JDB 3 that you declared you recognised no such things as principles. When in the IMG, you managed to sell 'Red Weekly' without choking on principles - even though Red Weekly carried the claptrap it did about a 'general strike to kick out the Tories' and Labour governments approving 'socialist measures'; even though, to come closer to the matter at hand, Red Weekly conducted an open polemic against those who continued to argue for solidarity with the IRA. (RW 30-5-74) Not only did you sell Red Weekly - you failed even to conduct any factional struggle on these issues inside the IMG.

You say that the issue of the Birmingham bombings would paralyse a fused WF/RMC group: it would be "riven in two internally". Do you not believe a democratic centralist organisation could accommodate differences on issues like the Birmingham bombings through the majority determining the public position of the organisation? The Liverpool RMC resignation letter insists "The majority (IMG) line has been carried out by the branch..." - if such respect for majority decisions was possible in the IMG, why not in a fused WF/RMC?

Actually, an organisation that could not and did not accommodate differences such as over the Birmingham bombings could only be a cult or a clique.

THE ISSUES

In relation to the Birmingham bombings, the RMC charges WF with a moralism of abstract principles. In reality it is the RMC which remains at the level of abstract principles.

We support the violence of the oppressed against the violence of the oppressor, say the RMC. An excellent general principle. But you just leave it at that - a general principle - without looking at the underlying arguments behind that principle, and how

they relate to the specific issue.

Why do we support the violence of the oppressed against the violence of the oppressor? To build workers' power, the working class must become conscious of its own identity as a world-revolutionary class. That involves opposing all discrimination against or subordination of oppressed peoples. If that opposition is serious and thoroughgoing, it will extend to supporting and promoting the struggles of oppressed peoples against their oppressors, by any means necessary, including violent means.

These general considerations obliged us to make clear our general position of unconditional solidarity with the Irish Republican struggle - and we did that in WF. But we cannot answer specific questions about the specific event just by retreating to those generalities. Were the Birmingham bombings of any assistance to the Irish national struggle? No, they were not. Were they a blow against the British state which, while perhaps tactically mistaken, was in principle justifiable? No, they were not. Therefore we condemn them while maintaining our general position.

The RMC's position may be excellent if your purpose is to impress connoisseurs of juggling with abstractions and maintaining your principles. As an attempt to argue with workers reacting to the Birmingham bombings, it is useless, because evasive. "Don't condone, but don't condemn", is all the RMC say about these particular bombings, as distinct from the general justice of the anti-imperialist struggle. What then? Do we search through the dictionary for a suitable word intermediate in meaning between 'condone' and 'condemn'? A very interesting exercise, if you want to draft a 'perfect' article for other leftists to appreciate; a useless exercise, if you want to argue with people reacting to the bombings and convince them of the justice of the Irish national struggle.

WHERE IS THE LOGIC?

The idea that it is differences on the question of women and on the Birmingham bombings that block RMC/WF fusion does not stand up to examination. The RMC comrades were content to remain in IMG - without even a factional struggle - despite infinitely more serious differences - and now wish to involve the ex-WF DCF, a group whose 'politics' are a mish-mash of extreme and often reactionary confusion. Even in relation to WF, while excluding fusion now, you continue to say it might be possible in some barely visible future.... what future? Through what change? Does the RMC expect to lose its suddenly-acquired sensitivity to 'matters of principle'?

In terms of logic, it is impossible to make sense of the RMC's contradictory views. In reality, however, the contradictions are only too easily understood. To vegetate inside the IMG; to vegetate in the revolutionary-left-ad-hoc-committee-milieu... those are acceptable. To conduct a faction fight inside the IMG; to enter into political battle inside the LPYS; to fuse with WF and conduct a political and ideological struggle inside the fused organisation... those are not acceptable. Here we have a very important aspect of the politics of the RMC - a passive discussion-circle concept of building a revolutionary organisation.

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

Our comments on democratic centralism in relation to the Birmingham bombings, above, are relevant here.

Further, you appear to have doubts about our expulsion of comrade Roy Ratcliffe,

and you certainly advocate involving the ex-DCF (led by RR) in 'regroupment' discussions. But in relation to RR the facts are clear. It took place before your eyes! RR publicly broke with WF - not just disagreeing with our majority line (which is entirely legitimate), but definitely setting himself in active, public, organisational opposition to WF as such. Even if he had later apologised (which he emphatically didn't) we could scarcely have done less than suspend him.

What sort of zoo could this 'regroupment' be which you apparently envisage, permitting RR to violently and publicly assault the organisation at will, accommodating the most diverse views and even more diverse actions of the DCF comrades, yet unable to accommodate political differences on the Birmingham bombings? Only a peculiar cult, with no real internal political debate, but with complete practical laissez-faire! All that relieves you from the charge of endorsing this absurdity is the fact that you evidently do not actually envisage the 'regroupment' happening.

RMC AND IMG

We have not waited until now to comment on discussion-circle tendencies in the RMC. (though earlier we hoped that the political intelligence of the RMC and the pulling-power of joint work would outweigh it). We commented on the hesitant, semi-Souvarinist attitudes indicated by the November 1974 RMC meeting. We commented on the RMC's hesitancy in joint work. We commented (verbally) also on some aspects of the Liverpool RMC resignation letter.

Dealing with the internal situation in the IMG, the Liverpool RMC comrades recount how they contributed a document 'On Bureaucracy' - "not designed as a factional 'attack'". Jones' reply, they complain, was demagogic, dishonest, and attempts to discredit their document by associating it with the ex-LOT. But, the Liverpool comrades continue to insist, "we would absolutely deny, for the record, that in those two (last) years... we have behaved in a factional way".

But, comrades, you should have behaved in a factional way. The document on bureaucracy, coming as it did from a grouping who were associated with the previous struggle of the LOT (weren't you?), was factional (and quite right too). Jones, in replying, was quite right to try to 'flush out' the politics of the grouping. That he did so in a dishonest and demagogic way we can well believe. But how to respond? Not to crawl out of the IMG, whining as you go about the leadership's nastiness, but to fight back tooth and nail until you forced the IMG leadership to throw you out, or some major scandal in the political line of the IMG made it appropriate to break.

MIDWIFE TO A SECT

We hoped, nevertheless, that these attitudes would 'wear off' as comrades 'recovered' from their experience in IMG. When they seemed to persist, we tried to bring the problems out into the open. This was dismissed as 'abuse', 'gossip', etc. In reality, however, our fault was to be too soft on the practical questions, the questions where discussion was dismissed as 'abuse' and 'gossip'. By engaging in too-lengthy diplomacy with the RMC, instead of posing sharply the question of for or against WF, we have not promoted regroupment - instead, we have enabled a defeated and dispersed collection of people to form into yet another sect. Without the umbrella of 'regroupment', the RMC would never have formed and solidified itself.

Why? One major factor with us was a degree of trust in cd. Marshall. While clearly personally unstable, egocentric, and concerned for his own 'standing', cd. Marshall

seemed to us to be at least politically honest; and thus it was worth spinning out discussions. Our illusion was rudely shattered by cd. Marshall's remarkable 'Addendum' to the RMC's reply to the Open Letter.

What the 'Addendum' seems to ignore is the cardinal fact that the Open Letter is a political document. To support it or sign it is not to approve its literary style, or the quality of the polemics, or the manner of its publication; it is to endorse the basic political content and more especially the political conclusions. Leaving aside the fact that the text of the Open Letter was discussed at length with CM and checked with him before publication, and almost every amendment he proposed was accepted, for CM to change his position from supporting the Open Letter to opposing additional signatures is a change of political position and should be justified with political arguments. It was not so justified, any more than was CM's earlier withdrawal from practical collaboration with WF.

Since cd. Marshall has, through his own choice, been the 'lynchpin' or 'mediator' of the regroupment efforts, it is necessary (and not 'descending to personalities') to discuss his personal role.

Cd. Marshall has an often incisive and illuminating intelligence - critical rather than creative. In a collective leadership he could be useful. Unless regulated, though, his talents turn to sterile pedantry - and, what goes with that, assuming the robes of a 'great thinker'. In such conditions, his personal instability has full rein. Thus we had close collaboration with WF - detailed cooperation on the Open Letter, articles for 'Workers Fight', agreement to serve on the WF EB, and to attend internal WF meetings, the 'Notes on Regroupment' - turning to hostility, refusal to speak, formal breaking-off of organisational relations, etc; all without one word of political justification.

CM allowed himself to be swayed by considerations of keeping the 'position' he had gained in the RMC; and the RMC, also, has, unfortunately, now allowed itself to be swayed by CM. This sort of mutual symbiosis - where each partner picks up the other's grudges, pet notions, etc, and helps to weave them together into a sect platform - is the essence of coterie-politics.

The direction is towards a cult with the worst features of "1972 thinking"; organically propagandist; distinguished by a 'methodology', which inevitably all but a well-read elite have to take on trust. That is: if you, comrades of the RMC, allow it. That is your business and your responsibility.

OUR MISTAKES

We shall learn from our mistakes. We shall learn that playing at diplomacy with tiny sectlets can produce nothing useful. We shall learn that a small group like ours can build only on the basis of consistent, hard propaganda for its politics, posing the questions sharply, not by attempting to form a refugee camp for those displaced from larger tendencies. We shall be wary of allowing individuals to act as 'mediators' in the way CM did.

We hope some of the comrades of the RMC will learn those lessons too.

Fraternally,

WORKERS FIGHT Steering Committee.

On Rank and File Committees and Movements

I. What are Rank and File Movements are
We are not, as Trotsky put it, the "inspector-generals of history. We take responsibility only for ourselves and our programme. Why? Not because we are sectarians who refuse to pay attention to any struggle or any development outside some limits we have laid down in advance. But because we believe the proletariat can only be a class for itself, a class capable of becoming the subject of history rather than just the object of exploitation, on the basis of a revolutionary Marxist programme - and we believe the other programmes advanced by other tendencies in the labour movement are inadequate, wrong, or misleading.

The working class does not reach class consciousness smoothly, simply, in a straight line fashion. All sorts of intermediate and contradictory organisations develop - trade unions, rank and file committees, united fronts, etc. If the revolutionary Marxist organisation is to develop, it must get involved - but under its own banner, with its own methods, and with its own aims.

We may often take the organisational initiative in forming some non-party committee or grouping. But never, ever at the expense of our own independent action. Never, ever when the non-party nature of the committee reflects us hiding our politics rather than the incompleteness of the political development of militant workers around it. Never, ever, when it involves us taking responsibility for politics and organisations other than our own.

2. The current state of the labour movement.

The vanguard of the labour movement is at present extremely fragmented. There is a low level of general political culture and sectionalism is strong. No party is strong enough to structure the whole vanguard; but the various left groups are strong enough to thwart a "spontaneous" coming-together on a syndicalist basis.

The IS "Rank and File Movement" will not build, cannot build, and could never have built, a genuine rank and file movement. Why? For no "objective" reason, but because of IS's politics. IS are strong enough to dominate it, and they have no intention of building anything but a backyard for themselves and anyway do not have the politics to build a rank and file movement. Certainly, we fight IS, we protest, we advocate the "Rank and File Movement" should build a genuine rank and file movement; but we are also realists who know that we are not going to somehow evoke massive rank and file pressure which will "force" the IS leadership into revolutionary politics.

The possibility of groupings coming together outside the "Rank and File Movement" is slight. In the case of them doing so, the domination would pass into the hands of IS or the CP, either of which has the strength and the will to ensure rapid death. That should n't stop us fighting - it should stop us having illusions.

A rank and file movement will not be built in the present state of the labour movement. That does not stop us making propoganda, fighting the policies of the tendencies which block the development of a rank and file movement, etc; generally trying to change the state of the labour movement. But to proclaim that we will bypass the obstruction of IS and the CP by building a rank and file movement through a nation-wide network of Rank and File committees is very noble - and very bombastic.

3. The political dangers.

Bombastic - and politically dangerous. An unrealistic strategy on rank and file committees can lead us to substituting for real rank and file committees - subordinating our independent action for the sake of

fake rank and file committees.

At events like the Clay Cross conference we advocate the formation of an organised left in the Labour Party. From time to time we press the demand that the Tribunites should organise their left-wing following. Fine. But when we get defeated by the "Militant" at the conference, if afterwards we go around saying "we will not be beaten by the Militant; we will build a broad leftwing in the LP from the ground up" - then we would fall into serious opportunism. If, when Tribune stubbornly refuse to organise the left wing, we say "we'll do it ourselves" - then we adopt a policy which does not gear into reality. Logically, we would end up like "The Week"; ourselves substituting for the "left centrist" current in the LP which we hope to see develop - adopting left centrist policies ourselves.

In practice, to try to build "from the ground up" would lead us to tailing after IS or to little cliques, either of WF plus contacts, or of a diplomatic alliance of WF with some other tendency pretending to be a rank and file committee.

4. Our past discussions.

It is no saying that we can have both rank and file committees and our independent action. In present reality, a rank and file committee formed not as a United Front round specific actions, but as a general precursor of the future hoped- for new Minority Movement (like the IMG advocated councils of action as precursors of the future hoped- for dual power), cannot fail to cut across our independent action, because it becomes a sort of "revolutionary alliance" or "propoganda united front".

That has in fact been our experience. See NC discussions of Feb 1973 and Feb 1974, the Midlands region discussion minuted in IB I4 part 2, and the reply to the DCF.

5. Our policy.

Our policy should therefore be along these lines::

A) We seize every opportunity to make propoganda for the rank and file movement which is objectively called for, and blocked only by the politics of the dominant groupings on the left. We make propoganda round our political platform for a rank and file movement.

B) We advocate united- front committees locally round specific issues and specific actions (e.g. solidarity with miners, Shrewsbury 24, Intex etc.).

C) Where these committees draw in real forces outside our own we do not dogmatically and automatically shut them down once the specific issue is past. We do attempt to broaden them out etc. But always on the basis of recognising that such a committee can have no long term possibilities, and of never being tied down by diplomatic alliances with other tendencies for the sake of keeping the committee going.

D) We push for local report-back meetings from IS "R&F" Conferences, local mobilisations to help specific disputes etc.

E) On this basis we can realistically go about building the serious Leninist organisation which alone can make a genuine rank and file movement a possibility.

Martin Thomas.

WORK IN THE LPYS

Introduction

This article is to back up what JJ wrote in 1928 and to relate it to some of the problems I face in Bristol. I think that it is clear that the success we have had so far has been mainly due to our ideas and not our organisation in the LPYS. The time it has taken to overcome our reluctance to get stuck in means we have lost a lot of opportunities and not followed up a lot of openings. What I am suggesting is some mainly organisational solutions to this side of the problem.

The local situation

i) The Militant have in the past concentrated in 3 of the 6 constituencies and have considerable strength in Bristol. Andy Bevan the Nat. Chairman of the YS is representative of the South West of the LPYS N.C. & yet in one area there is a Tribune LPYS which the Militant have ignored and kept out of the city YS.

ii) My local LPYS was only set up about a year ago by the Militant, yet it took about 3 months to get them to inform me of the meetings.

iii) Since then I have attended meetings regularly and have been recently joined in the LPYS by CS. We now sell papers to about 90% of those who turn up and 20% are beginning to move towards us.

Problems

1) since the militant control the LPYS they have the initiative - nationally, in the campaigns the LPYS launch, through WF etc. Locally in having the positions in the local LPYS, contacts etc.

2) Since we have dominated the LPYS for some time the policies accepted by most members are theirs. We have not yet produced material to counter this, yet if we are to beat them we must have material aimed specifically at the LPYS. E.G. on the Spanish Defence Campaign, on the Irish Campaign or the charter for Young Workers.

At present the Young Socialist is little real help. Its irregularity and the poor appearance are against it. So we rely on WF, but it is far from the ideal paper for the LPYS.

3) We have not yet adequately defined our positions w.r.t. the campaigns of the LPYS. Yet many of the members of the YS are involved in them and we must relate in some way to this critically.

4) Our national co-ordination is non-existent. Our intervention is unplanned. I have no more idea what other WF comrades in the LPYS are doing than I have as to what happens on the moon.

Some steps to a solution.

a) In spite of the decision that the SC could control our intervention in the LPYS this has not happened. I don't know if the editorial board of YS has met yet, but any way it contains non-members of WF. What we need to do is to elect from conference, this summer, a committee of 5 or 6 comrades active in the LPYS to form a YS sub-committee charged with leading and organising our work in the LPYS under the N.C.. This committee would meet monthly and organise our intervention and oversee the production of YS.

b) We need to produce in the near future a series of pamphlets in the name of 'YS' on the major positions and current campaigns of the LPYS/Militant.

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In particular on the new autumn campaign on youth unemployment which should be out in August, a pamphlet to take up their positions and counter pose our own. We could see this at YS meetings and during the campaign and it would be far more useful than ~~xx~~ either WF and YS because it would always be current. Also the promised pamphlet on the militant group should be produced as soon as possible as there must be many new comrades that have difficulty when faced by Militant.

c) We must ensure the regular monthly production of YS that way we can build up circulation and support for the paper as such. It doesn't matter if it is only 4 pages and cost 2 or 3p with one leading article a major article review and letters + LPYS news. We can build up the ~~size~~ as we build up the support. 3 issues in 6 or more months means you can build nothing around the paper as such.

d) We should not be afraid of using LEFT. We should aim to write letters regularly and when ever possible articles presenting our views. If they are not published print them in YS afterwards. We should try and be the most active members of ~~the~~ LPYS and if possible be able to campaign against the Militant for denying us our rights as we were able to do at Conference over the book-stall.

e) We should have detailed reports of LPYS work in the IB to spread the experience and successes we have had to other less successful branches.

The LPYS Youth Unemployment campaign.

It appears that the LPYS will be having a campaign against Youth Unemployment in the autumn. This should provide us an excellent opportunity to intervene for 2 reasons. i) We will be in at the start and agree with the basic demands (unlike the EEC campaign) ii) the method of fighting for them will clearly pose the differences between the Militant and us.

What will the Militant approach be? They will have a series of local meetings and leafletings followed by regional marches and rallies followed by a national march etc as they did over their racialism campaign. Then at the end of the year the campaign will be over and Youth unemployment will be a question of the past - except for unemployed youth but they aren't in the LPYS so who cares. Their campaign will be one of passive propaganda of 'pressure' on the labour government. What we can counterpose to this is the organisation of unemployed youth, to go out and get our hands dirty in the struggle to help them fight for their rights at the S.S. etc to form unemployed c'ttees with the Claimants unions. Finally we should fight to make this a permanent campaign as long as unemployment lasts.

In conclusion.

Our own weakness in speakers and experience will only partially be made up by schools etc and as JC suggests far more valuable in training our comrades will be the week to week struggle against the militant in the local and regional YSs as we can take them up there ~~so~~ we can take them up in the end at conference. But to go this we must make up for our lack in education in the YS through pamphlets and a regular 'YS' paper. To make up for our lack of numbers we need at least as good an organisation as the Militant have nationally. Our lack of presence must be made up by a paper that is closer to the problems of Youth than Left or Militant. If we don't finally get well and truly stuck in now we might as well not have bothered in the first place and return to where we were three years ago.

7/6/75

Chris Whytehead

CAMPAIGN FOR LABOUR PARTY DEMOCRACY
Report to WF Steering Committee

I. Social Composition

President: Frank Allaun MP

Secretary: V. Dever

Vice President: Joan Maynard MP

Chairman: Don McGregor
Allan Sapper

There were 17 people at the 20th June meeting at Caxton Hall, none of the vice presidents or president being there. They were drawn from a wide area.

2. Political basis.

Their main plank is recallability of delegates within the LP. They are putting a motion to the LP conference calling for reselection of MP's at every election, no automatic readoptions. This is wrapped up to get around constitutional ban on bringing up the same motion within three years. I think we should support this, but not as a priority.

They are also involved in e.g. support for Cllr. Evans, expelled from Notts East LP by majority decision of GML. The immediate issue for the meeting was how to prevent Labour entering a coalition, but there was no clear ideas on this. Prentice is apparently advocating coalition on the quiet. There was no political consensus. McGregor seems to be a Fabian. There were a couple of Militant supporters, some Tribunites. Main speaker Jane Chapman advocated TU's following AUEW initiative against the Social Contract. Joan Maynard apparently supported block on EPYS Irish Campaign according to the Chartists.

Age range was mostly 30s and 40s.

3. Conclusion

This is a loose left-reformist caucus with no unifying political philosophy. We should give it some attention on questions of recall bans and prescriptions, recall of MP's, opposition to coalition. We should raise the Maynard issue (if true). This may become an important nucleus for a left caucus of the National left-wing movement or Bevanite kind.

Next Meeting: Friday 16th July 8pm. Caxton Hall.

Ed. Conduit.

"Young Socialist" East Midlands Supporters Meeting 22nd June 1975

Present: DB, SL, AK, GB, ?, KM, RJ, RC, MF, KMc, JR, KH, KB, IW,
DG, PR, Chair KB, Minutes IW, SL.

The Situation in the Labour Party: SL.

The reshuffle on the left. The question of wage restraint, nationalisation of the Industry Bill likely to be amended to something similar to the Tories Industries Bill 1972. Benn made a scapegoat although he is not interested in real nationalisation - however did have 'open the books' and 'workers participation' in the Bill. Bennism though not for the working class but for capitalism eg. he does not speak against unemployment, the Social Contract or support specific struggles. Probably moved to Energy Ministry to sort out problems in the oil industry. Benn is just an individual voice. The Tribunites, on the other hand offer some combined effort, stand by manifesto, against coalition policies but have the weakening attitude that 'Wilson is there to lead the Party' - therefore no real fight. Real problem is to get the working class to be self reliant, not just related to Parliament. The T.'s job is to support the working class within parliament. Our job is to defend the working class and strengthen left where possible. KH: Is one of the problems with Tribune the fact that it does not organise locally. SL: Not as easy as that - it also depends upon their politics. KMc: Tribune is not all that united - look at the way it divided over the letter. KJ: What is meant by the formation of the left in the LP? SL: It must go for specific issues. IW: Two ways of looking at the 'strengthening' of the left in the LP (1) supporting specific issues and (2) supporting left against the right when there is a question of LP democracy. KJ: Supported Benn because attacks on him would be seen as an attack on the working class. PR: Only supported Benn in so far as he provided a better framework for revolutionaries. DG: Cannot just leave it at that.

History of the LPYS:DG

Before the war Ted Willis was the leading light in the Labour League of Youth but he was also a CP member. LLY supported the Republicans in Spain and wanted CP affiliation to the LP. Eventually Willis left and joined the YCL. LLY disbanded at beginning of WW2 but formed again after the war with a paper called 'Young Socialist'. It declined again after some expulsions by the bureaucracy and was finally disbanded in 1956. 1959 Young Socialists started up on the initiative of the bureaucracy to get 'new blood'. 250 branches - IS, Militant, SLL were all there. Two papers - 'Young Guard' and 'Keep Left'. 'Keep Left' was the more militant and was centred around campaigns. After a bit the LP NEC tells YS branches not to sponsor 'Keep Left'. 'Keep Left' went into CND. Campaign - "Hands off 'Keep Left' " - which had now gained control of the LPYS. 1964 'Keep Left' supporters expelled (mainly SLL (WRP)). 'Keep Left' still going today. Since 1964 'Militant' and IS dominate but IS eventually drops out and leaves 'Militant'. Questions - how should we work in relationship to outside struggles? how can we use LP? what relationship do we have with the left in LP? what united fronts? PR: What connection did tendencies in YS have with adult LP? DG: Not a lot.

GB: Why did SLL want to get booted out? KB: Because they thought they would immediately become the revolutionary party. SL: IMG have just joined the LP - what attitude would they take? DG: IMG'er he had met from Hemel Hempstead said he would go as far as he could before being booted out. PR: At times a 'smash and grab raid' for members was right. DG: CP and SLL were wrong -

should have attempted to stay in PR: WF and IS were right to come out in 1964-68 because of class struggles, Vietnam, France etc. DG: Again disagreed - should have stayed in to fight for policies and would not have found LPYS in same mess as it is in today.

Branch Reports:

- Northampton - been through several stages - talking shop at first - then joined in anti-racist campaign and went on Bradford Demo - Militant and IS went to branch meetings - Militant instinctively disliked because they could not provide any answers. Support for Maureen Colquhoun on TOM - attempting to build TOM locally. Sponsors 'YS' not because agree with everything but because it is the best of a bad bunch. Opposed 'Get Out' campaign. Anti-fascist alliance has been formed.

SE Derbs. - started 10 months ago - had discos - now being stopped due to trouble with elements in local LP. Joined NAC demo. Affiliated to Working Womens Charter. Trouble by Militant until 2 months ago but told them they could not attend business meetings. Sent down 3 delegates to TOM Labour movement conference.

Carlton - started up short time ago. Have a variety of activities - public meetings and discos etc. Best meeting probably on Working Womens Charter. Have bought a duplicator and are going to leaflet, have already leafleted for NAC. Put on 'ALL OUT' play by NYA. Success with getting YS members onto GMC. Sent 8 delegates to TOM LM Conf. Are in the process of initiating a meeting on Ireland locally. Getting local LP, GMC's, wards and LPYS's to sponsor it.

Questions: GP: What about reception of 'YS' paper? KJ: Have not sold it outside LPYS yet but were going to - well received by LPYS though. RC: Good reception in Wellingborough. DG: It is so irregular that it is difficult to have a campaign to sell it. KMc: Agreed with DG on irregularity of 'YS' but it is well-in Carlton. KM: Interested in SE Derbs. relationship with Militant at business meetings because had same problem in N'tgm. DG: How successful are discos. KMc: Very, before stopped by local Labour Club - gained one or two members.

Regional Constitution of LPYS: RC

Related experiences of getting onto Regional Committee and problems once on. IW proposed that RC should write out and duplicate if possible a short study of the Reg. Com. - its composition, what functions it has etc. A decision as to who should be nominated for the Reg. Conf. Arr. Cttee. was deferred until later. (That is the Reg. Conf. of the LPYS)

Regional Conference JR:

Most important fact was that Clause 4 got the LPYS places (2) from Militant on an anti-Trot basis. (There followed a general discussion on the way bureaucrats like Robertson were tightening up - getting Tribunites instead of Militant.)

Young Workers Conference: IW

Important because it was local, because it was not Militant's territory (even though the Coventry Climax lads are Militant supporters) and because Youth Committees and NUSS were going to become very important with the amount of youth unemployment.

The Way Forward.

DG: E.Mids area strongest supporters of 'YS' - should use that strength to encourage other areas. YS has got to make a push in the next year. In individual branches are using issues eg. Working Womens Charter - but should + received

try to expand regionally - put more emphasis on Day Schools eg EUC and Ireland - but as a tendency failed totally to make any impact on these. RC should propose more Day Schools and regional rallies at which we can put forward 'YS' line to discuss. Also should produce a bulletin for the region - looking forward to the next. PR: Should discuss most important issues - eg Ireland, Unemployment and democracy in the YS and LP. DG: Militant organising campaign on unemployment. KB: Would join in campaign with our own politics. Was demo organised in Leicester - YS did nothing. PR: What programme of demands? Problem is once unemployed can act as little more than a pressure group - a young workers union?.... to act with redundancies through T.Councils or Unions rather than local gvnt... i.e. trying to get young workers to act independently rather than relying on the LP. KB: Wouldn't people only get involved with an unemployment campaign if they thought they would get a job at the end of it? PR: But until we have jobs to give what can we offer? The point is to politicise young workers. KB: Does not understand what unionisation of young workers means. PR: T & G are the only ones who accept unemployed.. GB: In Teesside in 30's unemployed members of the T & G helped in redundancy struggles of workers in factories. DG: Setting up youth employment cttees - demos - work or full pay - appeal to join LPYS on basis of trying to get LP to take up question. GB: Also unions taking up question of 30 hour week. DG: Difficulty is we would be going along to dole ques. Proposed that RC find out if there is a Militant Campaign on Unemployment and contact everyone else. Agreed. Should we bring up any other issues at the next Regional Cttee. Meeting? PR: Internal Democracy? Propose bulletin with no censorship i.e. that all articles should be published. DG: Should propose Militant editors as opposed to Robertson. Proposed a Day School on Women. PR: Response to Clause 4 leaflet? On bulletin should initially write an article on internal democracy. If not passed we should take the issue ourselves. DG: We should have a regional 'YS' organiser.

Meeting Closed.

WF Teachers Fraction Report 1975.

The fraction consists of 12 full time teachers, 5 student teachers and 5 ATTI (college) teachers. We have a strong presence in N. London/Haringey, Liverpool, Nottingham, Coventry (ATTI) and Bristol, and to a lesser extent in Reading/Bracknell and Bolton. At the last aggregate it was decided to run the fraction from London, though with the net movement of cdes out of the London fraction for various reasons this has posed some organisational problems. The overall size of the fraction has remained the same, with a recent net increase in numbers.

There have been 3 main salary struggles over the past year. The first was for a London allowance of £350 for all teachers in the Greater London area. After a fight involving unofficial action agitated by R&F and the IMG (through ad hoc committees) there was finally imposed a 3-tier system starting at £350 in Inner London and tailing off to £141 in an area on the outside border of Greater London.

Struggle over the Houghton award, designed to bring teachers' salaries up to what they should have been in May 1974 was initiated by widespread unofficial leading to official action in Scotland. The demand was for a £15 flat rate increase for all teachers, regardless of their position in the hierarchy. The final settlement was for a 4% week rise for bottom scale teachers, £40 a week for top heads. Scottish teachers have a different system of salary payment, and their struggle led to some very real gains. The boost to differentials in the English award testified to a lack of muscle in the English campaign, which nonetheless did manage to mobilise large numbers of young teachers from scratch in a very short space of time.

During this struggle WF teachers produced an agitational/educational pamphlet on the award which sold reasonably well, although the London fraction was hard pressed to produce anything of a professional standard. We took up the fight for maintenance of threshold payments, in concert with IMG and against IS. There were attempts at victimisation of teachers who had taken part in unofficial action. These victimisations were successfully fought with mass lobbies and legal representation based on the rights of teachers, like any other workers, to take strike action. The NUT is affiliated to the TUC (though not the LP) yet it did not offer any support to those teachers who, at the time of Houghton, also came out in support of the TUC lobby for the Shrewsbury 2. It was only grass roots mobilisation which protected these teachers.

The IMG led the defence of the victimised teachers through their defence cttee. R&F did too little too late, emphasising (we said wrongly) the salaries issue to the detriment of defending victimised workers. R&F made very little impact at the NUT Conference. We had been arguing the case for overtime payment in the debate on the NUT Green Paper on Teachers' Duties and Conditions of service. This was helped by our knowledge of the situation in ATTI. Subsequently, the NC/SC proposed and the fraction ratified the proposal that ATTI cdes should organise in a separate fraction, with joint meetings with NUT cdes and cross voting rights.

The current situation in R&F is one of flux. Sally Owen is on the editorial board, and we have quite a strong presence in the areas outlined above. R&F is stagnating; we argue that it is because the IS leadership have overemphasised TU militancy to the exclusion of a political programme of socialist educational analysis and plan of action. Nonetheless we remain in R&F, fighting against IS attempts to water down the politics even further (so as not to 'scare' off recruits) in contrast to IMG who, through their socialist teachers' conference,

seem to be organising in parallel to R&F. We have 4 candidates for the R&F EC elected at annual conference June 28th, standing against 3 re-emerged IMG candidates, 6 IS, 6 IS stooges and 8 social democrats.

Inside R&F and the NUT we have fought for adoption of the WWC; under pressure from the national campaign as it has progressed, R&F now seem to be reassessing their original rejection of support.

We are concentrating, after the R&F Annual Conference and the socialist teachers' conference, on holding a fraction meeting on topics of educational theory.

We find ourselves inside R&F, fighting for its regeneration based on a socialist political programme as the way to win teachers in an ongoing way to the struggle against reformism in education. We are sympathetic to the IMG's moves to win teachers to a socialist strategy, but we maintain the main arena for this struggle remains Rank and File.

Minutes of WFNUT Fraction National Meeting 10/5/75

Attendance: MCy JBx IW KB JM SO DS CSMg FG BCK SA JR

Apologies: CBy(ill) LY(leave of absence) CT(wife ill) CL(WWC) PS(see below)
AH(paper) BW(LPYS)

Absent: TBr

IW introduced two probationary members, both student teachers at Trent Poly, Mary Fraser and John Peck, neither of whom could make it that day owing to MF(parents) JP(car broken down).

IH reported that PS's letter apologising for non-attendance at fraction meetings owing to pressure of other work had been referred to the Steering Cttee who had accepted it.

Reports

- a) Coventry: DS reported that a rank and file cttee had been set up for united action on the cuts. It consisted of NALGO action, 2NUTR&F gps and ATTIR&F. IS pulled out when they lost contròl. Trades Council have set x up a subcttee to monitor and combat cuts. ATTIR&F have their first meeting next week. IS have been blocking. ATTI Conference has WWC as motion 1. Local (ATTI) Coventry conditions of service better than those recently nationally negotiated; problems for ATTI members under pressure to acquiesce to nat. conds. NUT Coventry never had branch meetings till NUTR&F pressurised.
- b) Reading/Bracknell. CSMg & JR reported problems of isolation. There is no R&F gp in Bracknell, consequently CSMg is split between NUT in Bracknell and R&F in Reading. CSMg enquired about YTAC (Voting papers now out, from branch secs, deadline 23rd June, polling by districts - IH).
- c) Haringey: MCy reported. She is a member of the local NUT subcttee on WWC. R&F is affiliated to TOM locally. There is a joint public debate due between R&F and NUSS.
- d) Manchester: FG reported that a Trades Council subcttee of NUT, ATTI, ASTMS and NALGO delegates called a public meeting on education. Hardly any NUT represented: members not circulated. R&F caught on the hop. R&F has declining paper membership. Greater Manchester amalgamation on R&F gps now producing local R&F bulletin. BCK reported that the NUT had a membership of 3000, could expect 50 at meetings. R&F haven't won a motion for 3 yrs. They are outnumbered 30+ to 10+ in his district meetings.
- e) North London: IH reported. R&F swept off local NUT management cttee and Trades Council in Feb. R&F paper membership 45, 10 to 15 at meetings. Rank and File affiliated to TOM locally (all mention of TOM out of order in branch). Perspective towards joint work against army recruitment in schools. Covering sanctions operating in most secondary schools; 'Committee against Covering' set up. Nigel Wright (editor of Radical Education) reappeared in NLR&F recently with a letter of criticism of R&F which he was pushing prior to standing as EC candidate. Much internal debate, ISvNon-alignedvWF, balance swings. NUT management cttee (CP) have set up creche at union meetings and initiated a course for union reps (out of school time). R&F responds with campaign to get reps elected.
- f) Bolton: SA reported. YT section strongest. Bolton has peculiar arrangements for holidays. Raised question of questionnaire from Hamilton House on confidential reports and promotion. It was seen 6 wks ago. Local secs were asked to raise issue of professional conduct.

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g) Liverpool: JBx reported that the Liverpool 12 case seemed to be over. The original complaint had been ruled out of order by the NUT as there had been no named complainant, and a subsequent complaint had not been submitted. R&F meetings locally are attended by 20-25 members out of a paper membership of 50.

h) Bristol: SO reported. IMG not putting much work into R&F locally. R&F to produce a 'Red Paper' - not an answer to the Black Paper, but an independent view. (JBx warned of title: BPl spawned a Red Paper which was Social Democratic in content).

i) Nottingham: KB reported. NAS currently taking action on travelling allowances(!). Nottm has 2 NUTs: City (IW) and S. Notts (KB). S Notts R&F recently set up. KB convenor. City NUT and R&F dominated by IMG. Some impact on Trent Poly. Two lecturers there producing 'Red Paper'. Trades Council monitoring cuts.

Rank and File Editorial Board Report Back

SO reported. Articles can be put in quite easily. Paper schedules mid month. Deadline for articles beginning of the month. Send to SO.

NUT Conference 1975

FG reported. R&F not so much defeated as ignored. Also they put in very little effort. DN put in a speakers card every day (DN=Dick North, R&F and NUT Exec). R&F meetings pulled about 100 people. NUT imposed paper sales ban. R&F meeting voted to defy it, but no-one turned up to implement the decision (only 5). R&F held 3 types of meeting: organisational, recruiting and soul searching (why are we failing?). Perspective on salaries was to maintain living standards and improve them where possible. R&F amendments were predictably polarising in their effect on Conference and were put unobtrusively, i.e. the whole R&F motion was put as the amendment. WWC motion got solid support from the floor (more than the pure R&F traditional motions). DN(IS) abstained in the vote for the Exec amendment deleting reference to the Charter. There was no leaflet condemning Max Morris's anti-R&F article in the 'Teacher', as had been decided at the previous R&FNC (and proposed by WF). The activities of the IMG at Conference are discussed below, under 'IS, IMG and R&F'.

ATTI

DS and JM reported. ACTDE is to be amalgamated into ATTI. ATTI affiliated to NUT, but individual ATTI members must pay local NUT branch fees if they wish to attend meetings. ATTI branches are college based so it is possible to organise more around problems at work. IH requested, on behalf of the NUT fraction, that the ATTI fraction organise a separate fraction meeting in the near future and report back to the next joint fraction meeting. Agreed.

Cuts

IH reported along the lines of the London R&F factsheet (see WF 98). Declining roll argument. Official pupil-teacher ratio of eg 1:17 includes teachers such as Head primarily involved in administration. Classes are more like 30 in number. If the roll falls by 17 and a teacher is lopped off, what happens to the other 13 kids? Planks of defence: no teaching of classes over 30 on roll. Minimum inviolable preparation time for all teachers negotiated locally (R&F are pushing for a day a week). No covering for unappointed staff or staff absent for more than 3 days. No forced redeployment (NUT so far strong on this). No reduction in staff:pupil ratios. Union scrutiny of timetables. Set up area committees of reps to enforce branch policy and support schools.

Cuts (cont)

JBx pointed out the scope for local campaigns, with leaflets, booklets etc produced by R&F. Draw members in through alliances, eg UCATT, hospitals, teachers. Also work for joint action through Trades Councils. MCy reported that the cuts, exceptionally, were not hitting Haringey too badly, this makes drumming up support more difficult. IH re-emphasised that reduction in staff corresponding to falling rolls could not be covered completely by natural wastage and retirement. The only alternative is redundancy. KB pointed out difficulty of getting action off the ground before the cuts had actually begun to bite (cf agitation before Houghton was published). JBx stressed need for reports on effects of the cuts locally to be sent to the paper.

IMG, IS and R&F

At the NUT Conference, the IMG put round a petition calling for support for a socialist teachers' conference. IMG comprised about half of the original signatories. They are inviting R&F to support the conference, and are not putting R&F off the agenda as they feel this would be seen as splitting. They feel there is room to work on single issue campaigns around a minimum platform, thinking that the all or nothing approach of R&F tends to put people off.

Bck: IMG going for single issue united fronts. ISR&F are going for a permanent opposition position within the NUT on a broad front basis. Is WF clear on its relationship to the two? Would a fight that changed R&F's platform to that of WF be seen as a political victory for WF? If WF is not clear on its position, it can hardly criticise the IMG and IS.

IW The task of revolutionary parties is to fuse with R&F. But R&F is essentially spontaneous, it is neither initiated nor run by a party. (or shouldn't be - IH) We study the position of IMG and IS in order to help work out WF's position, we learn from what they are doing. The trouble with the IS revolutionaries is that they limit their demands so as not to scare off the rank and file membership.

IH: This is true, and leads to the ludicrous position of Jeff Hurford, a leading member of ISR&F, to regret in public that IS actually dominate the R&FEC.

JBx (In response to a question from Bck who asked whether WF would fight inside R&F for its full programme. IW had replied that it would.) We would fight for our political programme within R&F, our politics would not be watered down, but they would not necessarily comprise our full programme. Initially we would fight only on the key issues affecting the working class. The question is, how do we, as a small group relate? Rank and File will inevitably be a topic of debate at the socialist teachers' conference.

FG (who was one of the original signatories to the 'IMG' petition above, and who is thus involved in the planning of the conference). Following from this discussion, suggest submit the following to the next steering cttee for socialist tchrs conference. Agenda to include cuts, social contract, post mortem on Houghton, R&F, bankruptcy of R&F's response (eg 'bash the leaders paranoia). What issues face teachers? What should we be doing in the NUT? Propose afternoon session to thrash out motions for NUT Conference 1976 (R&F will have decided on its motions by then) ^{IH}

DS made the following 3 proposals accepted by fraction and FG. Not just NUT members at soc tchrs conf. Action to be aimed at shop floor level, not constrained by NUT. Work for united front on educational theory. These to be 3 points of attack for conf.

JBx Move defer planning intervention till after WF day school on rank and file movements. Produce pamphlet (not necessarily for July Conference). Be more aggressive. Agreed.

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IMG, IS and R&F cont

BCK: Do we want to split R&F? If so insist soc tchrs conf open only to NUT members and put R&F first on the agenda. If we do not want to split R&F, support DS and open it to all teachers. Agreed.

JBx: Proposed that we could not pre-empt discussion on R&F ~~to~~ till after the WF day school. In the meantime we say generally that discussion by socialist teachers is long overdue. Agreed.

Rank and File Annual Conference

In future it is obvious that fraction meetings will have to be timetabled better to fit in with events such as this - IH.

IH presented the two WF resolutions, on STV and platforms. Propaganda for STV had gone out for the May Bulletin of R&F. (It transpires that it missed the boat, but will be resubmitted for the June Bulletin; meanwhile members have been sent individual propaganda sheets - IH).

JBx Necessity of hammering the 'non-aligned' group of EC candidates in the paper. They represent fundamentally the Social Democratic way of thinking. There is a restriction of 3 resolutions per R&F gp. (In fact not true, there is no limit in the constitution, and this year those gps 'in the know' have submitted up to 12 motions - IH)

MCy Proposed support for the WWC in Haringey, but the meeting was after the motions deadline, which they had not been told about.

JBx Use amendments stage to amend along the lines of the WF amendments.

IH What is our position on putting up EC candidates this year? STV was introduced as a tactic for 1976. Also we are hanging fire to some extent waiting for the outcome of the WF Day School on rank and file movements.

CSMg If we put up EC candidates at this stage, it would be a rush job. If we are going to do it, it ought to be effective, and we haven't got time to make it so.

IW It is important that we put up a candidate. It would spotlight our arguments.

JBx Cagey prior to WF Day School. Given R&F as it stands we should be fighting to make it more democratic, more political. The day school doesn't pre-empt our standing for the EC. If the WFNC decided we should pull out of R&F we would do ~~it~~ so with the maximum explanation of our position, fighting to take those who had supported us with us. Suggest we put up a WF slate of 2 or 3 cand.

BCK Danger, given the current state of R&F, that WF would get good support from pissed off delegates. But precisely because of this, standing for the EC is a bad idea.

JBx Proposed a vote that we should put up a slate. Passed with one against and several abstentions. (I voted against for practical rather than political reasons - IH)

IW proposed that we should put as many as possible for the slate. A show of hands revealed that the following stood a good chance of getting nominated: IW, JBx, SO, IH. One delegate for every 5 members (or maj of 5) in each gp.

NUT Fraction Minutes (5)

Perspectives

SA Point out equal pay does not apply to women teachers. Complain at National Rank and File's convening conference on equal pay at same time as abortion rally. Also complain that white collar unions are excluded. (Organising Cttee now holding Conference on Women and Education on July 5th - IH)

IW Propose SA write a letter to WF complaining along these lines. Agreed.

SO Propose R&F gps write letters to Cox complaining. Agreed.

Suggestion to hold a fraction meeting on educational theory at the end of term was agreed. Cdes to prepare the following topics, linking in where possible with articles for R&F, WF etc:

IW: The Myth of Professionalism

KB: School and after - careers, apprenticeships etc

IH: Discrimination against women teachers

TBr: Gay teachers

JBx: Thresholds

DS: Overtime Pay

MCy: Subjects in the News, eg classroom violence

JR: Colleges of Education

SO: Student teachers

JM: ROSLA

BCK & FG: Examinations

CSMg: 'Progressive Education'

DS also to do a) Education and Revolution, a reply to C Rosenberg
b) Communism and Education, the unified labour school
c) Conditions of work, international comparisons.

Note Would cdes please make thorough notes ^{for} ~~of~~ their presentations and undertake to write them up afterwards in detail. They can then be used as the basis for pamphlets.

Apologies: CBy (ill) RL (ill) GB (TU meeting). Late: NW SM. Chair: BH. Minutes: MT

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING; MINUTES OF SC, MINUTES OF SECRETARIAT.

FB questioned whether the introduction to the LO article on the EEC were not a change of our political line.

MT said it was less a change of line than drawing conclusions from the EEC experience in terms of concretisation of our general position.

Agreed to arrange a further discussion on the FI at a NC meeting soon.

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES.

NS introduced his draft (as per IB). Despite our position on the EEC, we should recognise that the referendum result was a setback for the working class. The great majority of active working class militants campaigned for a "No" vote and were defeated. We should not underestimate the results in terms of demoralisation. This makes it easier for the government to adopt right-wing policies. They are unlikely to move to a statutory incomes policy, but more likely to adopt a sharp 'Social Contract Mark II'. They will also cut public spending and increase unemployment. This will lead to increasing disillusion in the Labour Government. We need to orientate to the rank and file industrial struggle; we should therefore pay attention to strengthening our industrial work.

In relation to the cuts, we should advocate a Public Sector Alliance.

There is unlikely to be a coalition, but there may be an informal Labour right/Tory consensus on issues such as the Industry Bill. However, the Labour left at present shows a marked lack of fight.

MT said NS could be right about the Labour left buckling under with little fight. But we should note two paradoxes. The Social Contract was approved by the TUC almost unanimously and enjoys the support of every single parliamentary politician. Yet it is a laughing stock, held in general contempt! Moreover: the Labour government has been able to secure good relations with the TU bureaucrats, getting them to promise big things; but at the cost of not actually requiring them to implement any of these promises!

In the tensions underlying these paradoxes there is a possibility of a considerable sharpening of conflict between left and right in the Labour Party. It may well be initiated by the right. The Common Market debate will have some effect here in that it definitely has loosened up party discipline.

The developing political crisis focuses attention more and more on questions of the general running of society. This raises a chronic problem for Trotskyists. We have to present our programme for the general reconstruction of society; we have to say what should be done at governmental level. Otherwise we confine ourselves to economism. But the instrument the working class has developed for political action is in fact running a bourgeois government. How resolve the contradiction?

We risk slipping either into opportunism (just "plugging" the "correct" programme into the Labour Party as the only available instrument, ignoring the bourgeois nature of the Labour Party: 'Labour to power on a socialist programme'), or sectarianism of a rank-and-filist/economistic nature (ignoring what the government does and just preaching sectional direct action). At present our main danger is sectarianism. During the Common Market campaign we had to be apparently sectarian - standing aside from a struggle. The point was that the 'struggle' was just hot air. But unless we are careful that apparent sectarianism could carry over into a real sectarianism.

What we should do: advance specific demands on the government, with the general theme of calling on the Labour government to break with the bourgeoisie. Within that framework we can focus on the 'lefts', calling on them to take up particular demands,

to oppose reactionary government measures, to organise at grass-roots level etc. We can call for the organisation of a left wing/the LP, as long as we don't make it an empty panacea of the type of saying "build the revolutionary party" is the answer.

Finally, on the IMG's "Sack Wilson" slogan. As long as you don't attempt to make too much of it, to read into it more than it will hold, there is nothing necessarily wrong with this slogan. The only question is, have the IMG judged the present situation & mood correctly as one where that slogan gets a response rather than just being the IMG's pet idea?

DS pointed out that NS's document should be described as draft British political perspectives.

PR asked how NS saw a 'tighter' version of the Social Contract being constructed.

AH said that 'Tribune' felt their whole programme was repudiated by the 'Yes' vote - the reason being that their social-reformist programme is theoretically based on a nationalist anti-EEC economic perspective (the 'siege economy'). This situation raises problems for us in relating to the left.

If we look at the Trotskyist attitude to reformists in the 1930s - e.g. Trotsky's attitude to the De Man Plan of the Belgian Labour Party - it is basically (1) we criticise the reformist plan (Trotsky described the De Man Plan as state capitalist); (2) we say nevertheless we will engage in a joint struggle alongside the reformist workers to implement their reformist plan against the resistance of the bourgeoisie. This is based on the idea that the reformists' plan includes measures which we favour while considering them inadequate. We say "Yes, but..." to the reformists' plan.

But we cannot say "Yes, but..." to the Tribunites' programme. They place the main stress on nonsensical ideas of economic isolation, import controls, etc. and do not fight on issues such as nationalisation or even on the Industry Bill (despite the fact that the government's policy on the Industry Bill is a prime example of two things the Tribunites condemn in general - 'coalition policies' and 'going back on the manifesto'). The present limited revolt on the Second White Paper on the Industry Bill is led by Heffer but also supported by a Powellite like Biffen.

After the referendum result and their whole programme being repudiated, the left are cowed and have no perspective.

The Social Contract had a mainly 'ideological' function rather than attempting to set definite figures. The present 'kite-flying' among the TUC leadership is also largely 'ideological' in character, and dominated by exasperation. A dangerous possibility is a referendum on statutory incomes policy, which would probably yield a large majority for statutory i.p.

The Tory party at present is in a shambles, considerably divided on policy.

However, there is a possibility of polarisation in the LP, not over the present sackings, but over the general offensive of the right wing (and we should remember that the right wing includes Wilson). We can't simply react by saying we "fight alongside" the left; but maybe we can fight on the question of Labour Party democracy.

Finally, we should note that the reason why Benn has been put in the Energy Ministry is clearly because of the miners: which suggests a hard government line on wages.

PS said that according to NS's argument about the result of the referendum we should logically have voted "No". The setback was not the "Yes" majority, but the fact that the referendum loomed large at all. The "Yes" vote did facilitate the removal of Benn etc: but in fundamental terms it was no more a setback than a "No" vote.

What MT had said on the paradox of the Social Contract was true, but there was also the ideological effect of the Social Contract, which was not to be dismissed.

The chances of the Labour Government "scraping through" the recession without major confrontation are extremely slim. The economic prospects for British capitalism are

almost certainly extremely bad for years to come.

On the IMG's "Sack Wilson" slogan: in the absence of real mass feeling to which it corresponds, such a slogan effectively endorses left social democracy.

PS agreed with NS on the question of a Public Sector Alliance; felt it could be useful.

SM said there was a real danger for us of routinism and empiricism. This arose from the lack of a coherent Trotskyist tradition and our own reaction against 'scenario politics'.

We should review the class struggle of the last several years. In 1964 a Labour Government was elected on a technocratic programme. Attempts by that government to solve the crisis of British capitalism led to serious clashes with the working class. Labour lost the 1970 election. The Tory government then chose to take the working class head-on, and was defeated ignominiously. The upshot of this was what we described as a 'pre-revolutionary situation' - understanding that a pre-revolutionary situation does not necessarily lead into a revolutionary situation, and may last for years.

Our reaction has always tended to be empirical and routinist. The chief example is the proposal of a major section of WF in 1970 to vote only for anti-In Place of Strife Labour MPs. In the big anti-Tory industrial clashes, we oriented to direct action. But now, with a government of a party with organic links to the working class, a great deal of the 'traditional' Trotskyist approach, as per Transitional Programme, regains validity. Provided we don't take a supplicant approach of relying on the government or subordinating direct action to it, we can utilise the approach of saying to the government: break with the bourgeoisie!

We can also make demands on the Bennite state-capitalist left, without endorsing their politics.

There is a danger for us of carrying over the 'sectarian' approach we took in the EEC campaign to a later and different situation. We shouldn't just wait until new events hit us in the face. There is a possibility of the Tribunites evoking a movement in the class.

SCy spoke on the rail strike. Jones may withdraw support from the NUR, which would be a major blow. The AUEW and NUM conferences will be influenced by the rail strike; if the strike doesn't come off, that could help the right wing to dominate.

Our intervention round a possible rail strike should centre round key areas, e.g. steel where lay-offs will occur. A long strike will raise the question of jobs and layoffs on the docks, in the car industry, etc, and we will need to relate to this.

On cuts in public spending. It is difficult to organise a fight. But there is pressure on jobs among local government manual workers. In education and in the hospitals cuts will be very drastic. In the health sector they will be tied with an attack on TU organisation. A public sector alliance would be difficult to organise because of the differing interests of various sectors. The fight against cutbacks should be centred round redundancies rather than expenditure as such.

NS - To say, as PS did, that a big "Yes" is not a setback for the left is wrong. The left got a slap in the face which must affect them.

NS agreed with AH and could not see any prospect of a substantial fight from the Labour left. Could not see how our ideas on the Labour Party fit in with the idea of organising a fight of the left.

JBx said we should make propaganda about the need for alliances in the public sector, but tactically in local situations we may form narrower alliances than the whole public sector.

In relation to demands on the Labour government - two key items are the withdrawal of troops from Ireland and nationalisation without compensation. We should not say glibly 'nationalisation under workers' control', but should separate out the elements 'workers control' and 'nationalisation' so as to avoid any implication that workers control

is something legislated by a government.

On the Labour left: JBx agreed there was no way to fight "hand in hand" with Benn. Bennism and the Labour left are very closely tied up with the question of the EEC. Our attitude to the Labour government kicking Benn out would vary according to the nature of the issue on which such sacking took place.

There will be splits and tensions in the LP, but there is a danger of us substituting for a 'left current' in the LP.

AH presented a resolution:

We call on the Left to organise the rank and file on the basis of a programme relating to the real needs of the working class to maintain their living standards, and calling on the Government to make a break with the CBI and the Tory and Liberal Parties, that do not base themselves on the labour movement.

AH said there was a lot of common ground in the discussion, but there was a question of periodisation: whether the lefts begin to organise now or in some months' time. AH's resolution was intended to avoid illusions in the government and to place the onus on the left. Concretely now we should call on the left to support the rail strike.

DS presented a resolution:

We fight to build "Alternative Left" (as opposed to Broad Left) caucuses within the Labour Party. Membership to^{be} based on the policy "Break with the Bourgeoisie" and to draw in militants who we get to join the LP as well as present LP members.

It is possible for us to generate an alternative left. We are in a different situation from 1964-70. In those years people spat at the Labour Party, they went into direct industrial struggle. But now the industrial struggle is stymied by the economic crisis. People will move to fight inside the Labour Party. We should draw people in on an entrust basis.

MT presented a resolution:

as per composite (see later on in these minutes), but with only the first sentence of point 5, and with point 6 reading as follows:

"6) We conduct propaganda for an organised left-wing rank and file movement in the Labour Party. Such propaganda would have to be low-key if we are to avoid falling into schema-mongering (as with the use of the slogan "build the revolutionary party" as a panacea). However, the whole general political situation puts such a development on the agenda as a possibility for the next few years. We should conduct low-key propaganda. Possibly there may be some value in local left caucuses, though within such caucuses as within any general left movement (inevitably dominated, at least initially, by left-reformists), we would have to maintain absolute political independence"

MT was worried about the way AH and DS (more so) had blown up the idea of the "alternative left". We could not make the formation of a left-wing by the left-reformist leaders a central strategic plank, on pain of putting ourselves into a position of political subordination. And if we could form an "alternative left" ourselves - if we were that strong - we wouldn't bother, but would instead immediately form a mass revolutionary party

On the programme of the left, MT felt that AH and JBx were formalistic. If there is any serious conflict in the LP, the issues of polarisation will reflect the pressure of the working class (in however confused a way) rather than the peculiar economic theories of the Tribunites.

On the question of focusing on the left rather than the government: this is dangerous. There is an objective basis for demands on the government; it is the organ

of a mass party based on the working class, and it is the organ responsible for the general running of society. The 'left' is by no means defined so objectively; it is a matter of shades and degrees. To focus on the left is to encourage the wrong illusion that the 'left' is fundamentally different from and better than the Labour right.

SM agreed that there were problems with relating to the left rather than to the government as a whole. The approach focusing on the government gives an objective framework. AH's approach could lead to tailing the left. SM also agreed with MT on the question of the programme of the left.

There is a danger of schema-mongering. We can't with our own forces organise an 'alternative left'. We can't reproduce Clay Crosses at will. There is a danger of reproducing our errors we veered towards with the Open Letter for Regroupment; of substituting for a non-existent broad movement like 'The Week' did. We can and should organise militants to come into the LP; but there is no prospect of a mass flood into the LP. SM agreed with MT's resolution.

Agreed that there was a risk of plebiscitary methods being taken up, e.g. referendum on incomes policy.

AH agreed with much SM had said. But why then did SM agree with MT? MT was wrong to say AH ignores the question of government. AH agreed that DS's resolution was wrong. But MT was wrong too, in stressing the possibility of local caucuses while saying propaganda should be 'low-key'. In reality it should be the other way round: energetic propaganda, but understanding that local caucuses are generally not possible.

JS thought a Public Sector Alliance was not on the cards in practical terms. However, public service cuts have gone through easily so far and a lot more will come.

Felt we should put more effort into industrial work. Disagreed with DS on the LP.

JS appealed for a more popular style in the paper. We assume too much knowledge - we should explain more. Most workers associate 'Benn' with flowerpots rather than politics.

NW agreed we should put demands on the Labour Party - but we must be clear that our aim is to break individuals from the Labour Party, not to break the Labour Party from the bourgeoisie.

SCy thought SM and AH were wrong on the question of possible further use of referendums. Such a move would have a destructive effect on normal political-party structure, and the bourgeoisie are not that hard-pressed.

SM announced a composite of MT's and AH's motions, which both MT and AH had accepted.

DS said that he thought the composite was abstract and journalistic. Caucuses within the Labour Party are important and can be built. The present situation is of the 'valve' opening for people to come back into the Labour Party. Some workers, it is true, may not like the Labour Party - but what alternative is there to building a left wing in the LP?

The two resolutions were put to the vote:

DS's resolution: lost, DS voting for, all others against.

Composite resolution: carried, DS voting against, all others for.

WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER

SL opened the discussion by explaining the background to her draft document for the 'Women & Socialism' conference. (based on the document for the Coventry school reproduced in IB 27). Conferences like the 'Women & Socialism' conference are not structured as forums for organisation or decisions. Therefore, SL thought, we should relate by proposing forms of activity.

COMPOSITE RESOLUTION: POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES & THE PRESENT SITUATION.

To instruct the Secretariat to see that an addition is drafted to the Political Perspectives on our attitude to possible development of political crisis within the Parliamentary Labour Party/Trade Union bureaucracy. (This addition to be submitted to July NC).

General guidelines for this addition to be:

- 1) Though a sharpening of conflict between Right and Left is not certain, and though, if such sharpening occurs, the initiative will probably be taken by the Right, we must relate to the possibility.
- 2) We face two dangers: Opportunism ('Labour to power with a socialist programme' - type approach, "reinstatement Benn", presenting the left as fundamentally better than the Right); and sectarianism and economism (confining ourselves to relating to direct action, failing to relate to the question of government). Concretely, sectarianism is the more likely danger for us.
- 3) We must deploy an integrated chain of transitional demands, relating to questions of the general running of society. Key items should include: sliding scale of wages; work or full pay; opening the books and workers' inquiries (into all the financial and state connections, not just into individual bankrupt companies); nationalisation without compensation; sliding scale of public expenditure; no incomes policy under capitalism; withdraw troops from Ireland; scrap all immigration acts; withdraw from NATO; full implementation of equal pay and equal opportunities for women; hands off the unions.
- 4) We pose these demands to the Labour government, demanding that it break with the bourgeoisie and implement such demands. We continue, of course, to explain clearly the capitalist nature of the government and the primacy of direct action.
- 5) We relate to the 'left' by calling on them to take up a vigorous fight for their own proclaimed policies e.g. on nationalisation (where those policies are not simply reactionary: e.g. import controls), and for the demands we propose. We call on the 'Left' to organise the rank and file on the basis of a programme relating to the real needs of the working class to maintain their living standards and calling on the Government to make a break with the CBI and the Tory and Liberal parties, which do not base themselves on the labour movement.
- 6) We conduct vigorous propaganda for an organised left-wing rank and file movement in the Labour Party. Such propaganda would have to avoid falling into schemamongering (as with the use of the slogan 'build the revolutionary party' as a panacea). However, the whole general political situation puts such a development on the agenda as a possibility for the next few years.

Further, we instruct the Secretariat to prepare an additional supplement to the Political Perspectives on workers' control.

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(WWC - contd.)

SL did not envisage an immediate mass movement arising from the WWC, as some had supposed. It is true that the WWC is one element in a whole ferment.

SL raised the question of what we should be saying about the abortion campaign after June 21st.

PL said that many women had flooded in to the NAC who had not previously been involved at all in the women's movement. Many elements in the NAC are very hostile to any broadening of the campaign, but we should fight to draw people into the WWC.

NW said it was difficult in NAC to get people to think seriously about "after June 21st". But we must press them to do so.

SCy said NAC had brought in masses of new people. We can't have any general formula for 'the way forward' - it is more a matter of relating to the details of the local campaigns and taking them forward. Just to raise the WWC inside the NAC is sectarian - almost like intervening in a wages struggle by raising the Transitional Programme.

FB agreed we should try to push the WWC in NAC.

MT also agreed we should push the WWC in NAC. It's not a question of presenting a mass struggle with a propagandist ultimatum, as SCy suggests, but of trying to broaden the outlook of individuals we can reach in NAC and involve them in ongoing activity.

The WWC, however, is ephemeral - we should not look at it as the one and only way forward for the women's movement. At present IMG, who were largely instrumental in starting up the WWC movement, are un-enthusiastic, or so it appears. We should consider that it may be necessary for us to take some responsibility for the national organisation of the WWC.

PL said MT was wrong on the degree of the IMG's involvement in the WWC. However, the policy of the IMG varies from area to area.

PR said the WLM was nearing the end of a blind alley. We need to reconstruct the WLM and get it out of that blind alley.

JBx said that the opposition to raising the WWC inside NAC was not from the people who had newly come in, but from political groups, e.g. the CP.

On PR's contribution: WF is not in a position to turn the tap on and off for the women's movement. We can argue our politics etc. etc. but we can't remodel the whole movement.

SM said it was true that only a fraction of the energies involved in the NAC could be translated into the WWC. This is inevitable given the uneven development of the women's movement. We should fight for the WWC.

The WWC is not adequate, though. A serious, coherent women's movement is possible only when it is linked to a revolutionary labour movement. Thus the recent revival of the women's liberation movement, though basically healthy, has taken the form of a gaseous cloud of activity. We need to relate with a comprehensive programme. We must excavate the history of the women's movement so that we can fulfill our propaganda group tasks.

PL said we should stress that the WWC is not just for women; work round the WWC should be for men and women cds., not just women.

Asked SM: was he saying we should counterpose an independently-worked-out programme to the WWC.

SM said the relation would be that a fuller programme subsumed the WWC.

PS said that it was important that we should discuss questions of the women's liberation movement on the NC and not just in the women's fraction.

MT said there could be no question of counterposing a fuller programme against the WWC, any more than we counterpose the WWC against the NAC or our already-formulated amendments against the WWC. We fight within the general movement for our specific ideas.

DS stressed the need for all cds. including male cds. to push the WWC. In Coventry male WF cds had been instrumental in getting a WWC group going.

SCy raised the problem of how we work with the WWC when a union has adopted it as official policy, as the CPSA has done. SCy expected that within a few years the WWC will

be generally accepted on an official level and the problem will be to get effective action.

PL (a) pointed out that the WWC Campaign was planning a national conference; (b) agreed with SCy on problems of working with WWC in TUs. The key question here is women's caucuses in the TUs. NAC got TU support because of the fight for the WWC within the TUs. (c) raised the problem of the TUC women's charter. There is a possibility that the CP will back it and the TUC will close down trades councils which support the WWC rather than the TUC women's charter.

SM said we should organise an open women's fraction meeting for the purpose of planning a programme of research. We should also consider the possibility of an occasional publication for the women's movement.

JS said WF was too passive on the WWC; we should get organising

JBx said a special publication for women was out of the question. Also stressed the importance of working round the WWC in the LP and LPYS.

AH agreed that a special publication for women was out of the question. Better to produce serious occasional pamphlets. On the TUC Charter, referred cds. to the SC discussion.

Voting:

Proposal (SM): That an open women's fraction meeting be organised for the purpose of planning a programme of research. Agreed unanimously.

Proposal (DS): That we mobilise for the upcoming national WWC conference. Agreed unanimously.

DS also raised a procedural motion:

That comrades should speak to previously-submitted resolutions. Agreed.

TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT.

SM introduced the Irish fraction minutes of 9-6-75 and there was a discussion.

Agreed unanimously to endorse the Irish fraction minutes of 9-6-75.

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Amendments to British Political Perspectives

1. Delete in point 9 all of last sentence...." We should also argue.....
Public Sector Alliance."

Substitute - " While recognising the danger in forwarding schematic and abstract demands for the formation of a Public Sector Alliance, we should point out that these cuts affect all workers, particularly those in the public sector. We should also be alert and seize upon those real possibilities that will come our way to build alliances between different sections of public sector workers in their fight against the effects of the cuts. Our main thrust against the cuts should be to call for the restoration of cuts, a sliding scale of public expenditure, and resistance to the effects of any cuts on workers living conditions and levels of employment."

2. - Add at the end of section I4.

"Over the last year the group has necessarily emphasised the organisation of LP work. In doing so, industrial work and the industrial organisation and intervention of the group has suffered relative to LP work, and despite having a greater priority has not received anywhere near a greater amount of attention. We must therefore proceed with the re-organisation of the industrial fractions and strengthen the role of the Industrial Organiser and the Industrial Sub-committee. We should organise more schools to help our cdes in industry to function better both as TU militants and as WF members, and ensure that the re-organised fractions meet on a regular basis."

DRAFT POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES

1. The background to the political scene of the coming year is obviously that of the present economic crisis facing British capitalism. It will be this crisis and its development which determines the actions of the ruling class and the thus the sort of policies we are likely to see being put forward by the Labour Government. In that sense, these perspectives are inextricably inter-linked with the Economic Perspectives.

Steep levels of inflation have affected nearly all the major capitalist countries in the past year, and Britain in particular has experienced a very high level of inflation. This, unlike in many other countries, shows little signs of decreasing, and is continuing to put British capitalists at a great disadvantage vis a vis the capitalists of other countries. Their solution to this, as always, is attempt to shift the burden onto the back of the working class by attacking their standard of living and by reducing their real wage levels.
2. The last Tory government's attempt to do just this by a statutory Incomes Policy floundered eventually on the rocks of the militancy and intransigency of the miners. Not only had the Tories earned the hostility of the vast mass of rank and file workers, but also their 'tough' approach to the unions had alienated the union bureaucrats, the principal group who could have demobilised any activity against the Tories.
3. Learning from these mistakes, and indeed being carried to power precisely on a repudiation of these Tory union bashing politics, the Labour government have attempted to sugar the pill of wage restraint with the Social Contract. Thus, in return for what the government saw as being 'restrained' wage increases pursued voluntarily, the working class was made vague promises of more 'social justice'. Central to this policy was close collaboration between the government and the union bureaucrats.
4. Although the Social Contract can claim some success in restraining the level of wage increases, it has manifestly failed to be sufficiently tough. Workers have seen the government rat on their promises of more social justice and have felt the increasing pressure of inflation on their standard of living. This has forced workers into direct conflict with the policies of the Labour government - the most recent and most important example being that of the railwaymen in calling the first national strike since 1926.
5. For the Labour government it would be very difficult to introduce a statutory incomes policy after the fate of the Tories. Also it would alienate their working class base and produce considerable tensions between themselves and their principal allies, the union bureaucrats. For these reasons such a policy would seem unlikely, even though it cannot be ruled out.
6. The most likely option, and the one that is being aired increasingly at the moment, is to persevere with the Social Contract, perhaps in a slightly revamped form, and at the same time let the effects of unrestrained unemployment dampen the combativity of the class. Coupled with this there is likely to be further drastic cuts in social expenditure.
7. Unemployment is already around the million mark and will rise sharply during the summer as people leave colleges and schools. So far the reaction to unemployment has been muted and has often taken nationalistic forms (a particular example being that of the textile industry). We must launch a WF national campaign around the question of unemployment, paying particular attention to the LPYS around the theme of Work or Full Pay We need to begin now an

a thorough educational scheme on how to break down our general slogans on unemployment into to concrete steps for particular industries (eg. no covering etc). We should also attempt to get the LPYS and other bodies to begin to organise amongst the unemployed, and to establish where possible Unemployed Workers Committees attached to Trades Councils.

8. Increasing redundancies will pose the question of nationalisation and Bennism. Often, rather than engage in a real fight over the question of redundancies, workers may simply appeal to the government for help. We relate to this by calling for nationalisation without compensation under workers control. We reject schemes for worker participation, whilst accepting that we may in some circumstances advocate tactical participation in such schemes.
9. Public service cuts are already well under way and will become more severe. Crossland's recent speech announcing that the 'party' in public spending is over has not been contradicted by anyone in the Labour government, and we should see in the autumn further cuts in education, health service, aid to councils etc. Already the Child Poverty Action Group have announced that the proposed increases in social security and family allowances that will take place in the autumn are so small as to amount to a cut in ~~benefit~~ benefit similar to that which took place in the thirties. We should argue for the restoration of the cuts that have been made so far, and also for a sliding scale of public expenditure. We should also raise the notion of a joint fight on these cuts by arguing for the need in the present situation of a Public Sector Alliance.
10. All these measures which look like being carried out by the Labour government will obviously cause dissatisfaction amongst LP rank and file and amongst Labour supporters outside of the party. Set against this, however, is the expectation of a large YES majority in the EEC referendum. This will undoubtedly strengthen the hand of the LP right-wing and 'moderates', and may result in the removal of Benn to a less influential post in the Cabinet. The victory, or what will be seen as one, for the pro-Marketters will certainly produce confusion and demoralisation amongst the Labour left and also amongst the anti-EEC sections of the working class.
11. As far as the Tories are concerned, the election of Thatcher and the removal of Heathmen from positions of power marks a ~~drastic~~ shift to the right in the Tory party. However, the Tories seem to be in considerable disarray, particularly over economic policy. The swing to the Tories in the last local elections appears to be a product more of the dissatisfaction and consequent abstention of Labour supporters than an actual swing to the Tories. Since then the moderate wing of the party seems to have re-asserted itself a little, and people such as Carr are now resurrecting the old Heath slogan of a Government of National Unity (GNU).
12. A GNU is not likely though given the hostility of the majority of the LP to such a conception. However, the pro-EEC campaign has appeared to strengthen the links between 'moderates' of both parties. What therefore seems possible is that, although we may see people crossing the floor of the House or trying to set up a Tavernite party of the centre, the policies adopted by the Labour government as outlined earlier will receive some sort of backing from the Tories. Thus there may be developed as an answer to the economic crisis the same sort of bi-partisan approach that has occurred over the Irish crisis. Of course, the common ground wont be so great as it was over Ireland, but there will be substantial agreement over the use of market mechanisms and cuts in public spending.

13. As the Labour government moves to the right and perhaps achieves some measure of agreement with the Tories, disillusionment in Labour is likely to become more wide-spread with workers seeking to redress their grievances through direct action. In the coming autumn-winter period increasing struggles will occur over the question of redundancies and short-time working. These will probably take on the most militant forms in previously prosperous and well-organised industries, particularly the car industry. As ever, therefore, we need to keep our major orientation towards the direct industrial struggle of the working class, and at the same time to strengthen our members on the shop-floor both numerically (we need to re-affirm the policy of colonisation) and politically (hence the need for educational work on unemployment and the fight against it).

14. Finally, it would seem that the anti-EEC campaign, whatever the result of the referendum, will strengthen the chauvinism of the British working class and probably give a boost to both the Scottish and Welsh nationalist movements. Scotland has also seen a tremendous wave of struggles in the past year, centred on Glasgow. The SNP has also been given strengthened by the discovery of Scottish oil - a factor which seems to have affected the whole of the Scottish political spectrum. Apparently, all the Scottish political parties, with the exception of the Tories, are growing quite rapidly, with the SNP winning in the race for the highest growth rate. There is the strong possibility that the SNP may become within the next year the strongest political party in Scotland. The upsurge in Scottish industrial militancy combined with an increasing nationalistic militancy is something to which we should pay more attention (and look towards the establishment of a Glasgow branch).

These draft perspectives only point out the main themes which I see appearing over the rest of the year. Obviously other factors, particularly the Irish situation, may intervene to dramatically alter these perspectives. Similarly a NO vote in the EEC referendum will completely upset much of what I have written about the credibility etc of the Labour government. On this latter point at least, we should be able to make a correction at the coming NC.

Neal Smith 6/6/75