

BREIT MARXIST INDUSTRIAL GROUP

**PATRIOTISM,
NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY
and the
SUPERPOWERS**

UNEMPLOYMENT

P. BRIGGS

DEVOLUTION

E. WAGLAND

CORRESPONDENCE

NUMBER THIRTY

PRICE 10p

THE MARXIST

THE LIBERATION OF THE PROLETARIAT

IS THE TASK OF THE PROLETARIAT ITSELF

Editorial Correspondence to:

T. Hill,
11 Barratt Avenue, London, N 22

Subscriptions to:

S. Graves,
5 Woodfield Avenue, London, N.W.9

Cheques and Postal Orders payable to 'THE MARXIST'

Subscription Rates (6 issues)

British Isles and Overseas (surface mail) £1.00

PATRIOTISM, NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND THE SUPERPOWERS

Brent Marxist Industrial Group

The main threat to peace between nations in the world today comes from Imperialism, and most of all the super imperialisms, the United States and the Soviet Union.

The latter are competing to maintain and extend their influence over the developing countries and in the process are pushing out the older, weaker imperialisms such as Britain, France, etc.

In addition they are striving to extend their influence over the more highly industrialised countries of Europe in order to strengthen their respective capabilities for world hegemony.

The capitalist classes in Europe are consequently faced with the situation in which they must either oppose the superpowers in order to retain their independent 'right' to exploit the people of the developing countries and 'their' workers at home, or accept a subordinate relationship with one or other of the superpowers in order to share the crumbs.

The working class of these smaller countries is faced with the task of continuing to wage its struggle against its own capitalist class whilst at the same time taking into account the need to unite with at least some sections of it to oppose the superpowers.

The existence of the E.E.C. is proof that European capital recognises the need for co-operation between themselves if they are to retain independence from the superpowers.

U.S. Imperialism.

At the end of World War II the U.S. (which of all the combatants did not suffer damage to its territory) emerged as the strongest industrial power ever known. This enabled it to undertake several roles, all connected with the expansion of its world influence.

It initiated the Marshall Plan to build up European industry - but under a strong American influence. It accompanied this with an anti-communist, anti-Soviet campaign aimed at uniting the greater part of the capitalist world in a 'holy crusade' to 'roll back' Communism from Eastern Europe, and indeed to overthrow it in the Soviet Union itself.

N.A.T.O. was created with this purpose in mind.

Alongside this, U.S. imperialism presented itself as an anti-colonialist power and effectively undermined the position of the old imperialists by backing demands for the political independence of their colonies.

It did so because it was confident that its superior economic strength would enable it to step into the arena and edge out the sitting tenant. This political liberation was an indispensable condition for U.S. economic penetration.

It can thus be said that the action of U.S. imperialism objectively assisted the political liberation of the colonies, but

the point must not be missed that the political liberation was (as far as U.S. imperialism was concerned) merely the prelude to economic enslavement.

This kind of U.S. 'help' was exhibited when President Nasser decided in 1956 to nationalise the Suez Canal which was owned by British and French capital.

The latter governments instigated the Israelis to launch an armed attack on Egypt and were themselves preparing for direct military intervention under the excuse of 'guarding the Canal', when the U.S. government issued a 'warning'. As a result, the intended intervention was called off and Israeli troops withdrawn.

In Europe, American aid was given with the twin objectives of rebuilding the economies of the capitalist states as a barrier against the spread of Communist influence, and at the same time extending the influence of U.S. monopoly capital over Europe.

After a time the European countries found it necessary to reassert their independence of U.S. capital. This was one of the reasons behind the formation of the E.E.C.

In Asia, the Japanese asserted their independence and in Korea U.S. imperialism was fought to a stalemate.

The defeat of U.S. imperialism at the hands of the Vietnamese people put the seal on the beginning of its decline.

Social Imperialism

In the early post-war years, the Soviet Union, devastated by the war against Hitler, was threatened by a powerful, aggressive

U.S. imperialism.

Back in those days, those of us who stood fast and defended the land of socialism against all comers, would have welcomed a much stronger economic and military situation in the Soviet Union. Why then are we now concerned that that country has now emerged as a military and economic equal to the United States?

Since the death of Stalin, the negative aspects of the policies which were pursued internally and externally have now become the dominant feature.

The technical, bureaucratic, and Party elite which these policies fostered have now usurped state power completely and transformed it into a different kind of state in which workers and peasants are once again wage labourers as they are in capitalist states.

'New' theories have been formulated to 'explain' the position.

Brezhnev and Co. agree that it is no longer a workers' state but now, according to them, it is a 'state of the whole people'.

Many years ago, Engels pointed out that as the state is an organisation by means of which one class asserts its will upon the other classes in the given society, it is nonsense and unMarxist to talk about a 'state of the whole people' because that implies that classes have disappeared and if this is the case, the state should also have withered away because it would have become unnecessary.

As class divisions are more evident than ever in the present day Soviet state and

the oppressive powers of the state are more all-embracing than ever, it can only be concluded that the present day leaders are using the same formula of a state above classes that is used by Capitalists everywhere to conceal the fact of their rule.

The evidence of this in their internal policies is largely outside the scope of this article but it can easily be seen that the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is no different in essence from that of its main rival, U.S. imperialism.

Both superpowers have ships patrolling the seas many thousands of miles from their home land.

Nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles have been accumulated by each of them sufficient to destroy the world's population many times over.

As we have noted earlier there is a fairly widespread recognition that the U.S. is an imperialist superpower, so we will concern ourselves with making some points to demonstrate that the Soviet Union is also an imperialist superpower.

Everyone who remembers the heroic sacrifices of the Soviet people during the war against Hitlerism will be the first to agree that they have every right to do everything necessary to prevent such a thing happening to them again.

But the world wide role being played by the Soviet Navy cannot be excused on the grounds that it is defending the Soviet Union any more than the presence of the U.S. Navy in the mediterranean and the Far East can be justified on the grounds that it is protecting America.

When conflict blows up in the Middle East both superpowers have units of their respective navies sailing in the vicinity, each complaining of the other's presence.

The U.S. is acting as a policeman for the 'free world'; the Soviet Navy is acting as policeman 'to ensure world peace'. (So they say).

The U.S. sent its forces to Vietnam at the 'request of the Government'; the Soviet Union sent massive supplies of arms and Cuban troops at the 'request' of one of the liberation movements in Angola.

The first was rightly termed aggression by millions of people throughout the world; the latter was claimed by Brezhnev to be 'fraternal aid'.

The expulsion of Soviet Naval forces from Egypt and the annulment of the Egypt-Soviet Treaty shows that relations between Social Imperialism and its 'allies' are not of the 'disinterested' kind referred to by Soviet propaganda.

Sadat claims (and it has not been refuted) that when the Soviet authorities were informed of the impending attack on the Israeli aggressors, they tried to dissuade him and when they did not succeed they hurriedly withdrew Soviet technicians.

At the height of the fighting the Soviet Union withheld replacements and spares in an attempt to make Egypt toe its line of maintaining a situation of no-peace-no-war in the Middle East for its purpose of keeping the situation fluid and gaining time to strengthen its position vis-a-vis U.S. imperialism.

Further, the Soviet Union has been pres-

sing Sadat for payment of Soviet loans at a time when it was known that Egypt was in serious financial difficulties. In addition aid and assistance was given to forces within Egypt with the intention of bringing to power a more pro-Soviet faction.

A similar thing occurred a few years ago in the Sudan where pro-Soviet elements staged a coup aimed at replacing President Nimeiry with someone more amenable to Soviet policies.

The invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 is probably the best known example of Soviet 'disinterested' aid.

Earlier still, when most of us were still unaware of the changes in the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China had its confrontation with Social Imperialism. As a result, Soviet technicians were withdrawn almost overnight, hundreds of projects were left uncompleted without even the blueprints with which to finish them.

The action referred to are those of an imperialist power that seeks to impose its will on other countries and cannot be squared with the statement by Brezhnev at the Conference on European Security held in Helsinki.

"It is only the people of each given State, and no one else, that have the sovereign right to decide their own internal affairs and establish their own internal laws."

Actions speak louder than words.

It is doubly important that we should judge Social Imperialism by its actions now that its world power is expanding, when it

is on the offensive, and when its rival is so beggared by contradictions that it is on the defensive.

The signboard under which Social Imperialism covers its expansionist aims is of a great socialist power supporting the popular revolutionary forces wherever they appear so that they can break free of the imperialist domination which has been their lot for so long.

This is not all that different from the signboard under which U.S. imperialism concealed its aggression after 1945 as it ousted the older, declining imperialisms from their former private preserves.

Angola

The intervention in Angola marked a new stage in the development of Social Imperialism.

Its invasion of Czechoslovakia was tacitly accepted by the N.A.T.O. powers as being within the Soviet sphere of influence.

Africa is new ground and the intervention was virtually unopposed, not because of any tacit understanding, but primarily because U.S. imperialism was temporarily immobilised as a consequence of events stemming from the debacle in Vietnam. It is unlikely that another venture by Social Imperialism will go unchallenged by the U.S.

The imperialist nature of that venture is clearly discernable.

In January 1975, after many years of armed struggle, the three liberation movements jointly signed the Alvor agreement, thus ending Portugese colonial rule in Angola.

They followed up with agreement on a common political programme and to jointly form a transitional government.

Several times during this period Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders made statements calling for "the transition of political power to the hands of the representatives of the patriotic forces". Any objective assessment would place all three of the liberation movements into this category, and the Organisation of African Unity certainly did so.

Not so the leaders of Social Imperialism, for this would not provide them with an excuse for gaining a foothold in Angola.

The importance which Social Imperialism attached to this aim can be measured by the amount of aid it gave at different periods. Between 1960 and November 1974 the M.P.L.A. received Soviet arms to the value of £27 million. Between then and October 1975, that is after the Portuguese had been defeated, it is estimated that that same liberation movement received £55 million worth of Soviet arms.

These figures demonstrate that Social Imperialism is much more concerned with establishing a base than helping the fight for national independence.

That apart, the point raised by the Soviet intervention is "when does fraternal aid become intervention"? International solidarity and fraternal aid are very important but however well-intentioned, they cannot be a substitute for the economic, political, and armed struggle of the people of the country concerned.

Undue reliance on outside forces engend-

ers passivity and the erosion of the revolutionary spirit of self-reliance. Anything which undermines the spirit of self-reliance is bad; the cultivation of this spirit is an essential principle of any struggle, for without it no real independence is possible.

Industrial workers will know from experience that solidarity is extremely welcome when engaged in struggle, but things begin to go wrong when outside forces intervene in such strength that the role played by the internal forces is relatively diminished. Decisions are effectively taken out of their hands.

The colossal weight of Soviet arms and the involvement of thousands of Cuban troops has achieved a military victory for the M.P.L.A. and put it into effective control of the territory. This has faced the other African states with an accomplished fact, but it does not alter the point that it was intervention in the affairs of another state, an act of aggression.

Although the M.P.L.A. may be recognised for diplomatic reasons as being in effective control, it remains to be seen whether it can manage to continue doing so without the assistance of Cuban soldiers. A liberation which needs to be 'safeguarded' by foreign troops is a very peculiar kind of liberation. The reports that families of Cuban soldiers have arrived in Angola indicate that they are there to stay for some time.

It would be difficult diplomatically, in the face of world opinion, for Cuban troops and Soviet advisors to remain if they were asked to leave by the Angolan government. However, given the willingness of Social Imperialism to give 'aid' in order to get

its feet under the table, and the 'need' for Cuban troops to 'maintain law and order' it is likely that they will be asked to stay.

The construction of ports through which to bring their 'aid' and facilities for fuelling Soviet ships and planes provide a convenient cover behind which Social Imperialism will establish a base in the Atlantic.

Two Sides of the Same Coin

When mistakes are made due to lack of experience or political understanding they can be rectified by honest criticism and self-criticism.

It is an entirely different kettle of fish when these things happen as a result of conscious policy decisions justified by theories which are in flagrant opposition to public statements such as the one by Brezhnev to which we referred earlier.

A book published in Moscow, entitled "The World Communist Movement" outlines the general strategy and tactics of the movement as seen from Moscow.

We just draw attention to one or two passages which illustrate the subtle changes which the Social Imperialists are making in Marxist theory in order to justify their expansionist policies.

Page 298. "In a number of the developing states, the working class is not yet mature enough to head the peasantry's liberation movement. In the countryside, political influence is wielded by bourgeois nationalist and petty

bourgeois elements of various shades and hues, while big landowners, tribal chiefs and officials are often in control there"

"The experience of the revolutionary movement in various parts of the world has shown that the surest way of effectively involving the peasants in the struggle against imperialism, for true social progress, is to establish a strong alliance between them and the working class."

Page 304. "Today the problem of a worker-peasant alliance in the newly free countries has emerged from national boundaries because of the present weakness of the workers' movement there. In present day conditions, the problem of relations between the working class and the peasantry in the former colonial countries is largely of an international nature. It is a question of consolidating the alliance of the whole international working class with the peasantry, with all the working people of the liberated countries."

The intervention of Cuban troops and Soviet technicians and armaments in Angola was, according to this theory, the international working class exercising its leading role. If we follow this through we now appear to have a theory regarding the international dictatorship of the proletariat.

As Social Imperialism has set itself up as the guardian of the international working class conscience and the protector of its interests, it needs little thought to come to the conclusion that this dictatorship will in all cases be exercised by the

armed forces of Social Imperialism.

AMERICA INTERVENES IN THE NAME OF THE
"FREE WORLD" IN THE INTERESTS OF U.S.
CAPITAL.

THE SOVIET UNION INTERVENES IN THE NAME
OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT IN THE
INTERESTS OF SOVIET IMPERIALISM.

Thus we have two superpowers, each with
colossal military might, spread over a
great deal of the globe, taking upon them-
selves the mantle of world policemen with
unlimited right of entry into anyone's back
garden.

When it suits them (and the little fel-
low doesn't fight back), they can divide
up spoils, but it is coming to the point
where the world is not big enough for both
of them, so sooner or later there will be a
clash, and in the interdependent world of
today this means that most of us will be
involved.

The counter-balancing effect may, on oc-
casions, permit some small country to play
one off against the other, but this situa-
tion is already changing due to the increa-
se in the relative strength of Social Im-
perialism. As this increases it will be
more disposed to take chances.

Relations between Social Imperialism and East Europe.

The East European states are sometimes
regarded as little more than obedient colo-
nies of Social Imperialism, but this is far
from being the case.

Each of them has generated its own bour-

geoisie with its own 'national' interests
and it is politic for Social Imperialism to
be a little circumspect (particularly after
Czechoslovakia) when dealing with them.

Each of these states have clauses in
their constitutions which formalise their
membership of the 'World Socialist System'.
The most specific of them is Article 6 of
the Constitution of the German Democratic
Republic which establishes that it is "per-
manently and indissolubly united to the
U.S.S.R.

In Poland there has been a recent revisi-
on of the Constitution. It was originally in-
tended that a passage similar to the one
referred to above should be included in it.
This was dropped after protests that it
would limit Poland's sovereignty.

Here we have an example of the contradic-
tory tendencies in Eastern Europe.

Brezhnev and Co. are demanding greater
integration of their economy with that of
the Soviet Union on the principle of "the
international division of labour" and great-
er ideological unity, (i.e. willing accept-
ance of imperialist world outlook of Social
Imperialism). These are prescriptions for
the whittling away of national sovereignty.

On the other hand there is pressure, agi-
tation even, for a greater degree of na-
tional independence.

The indications are that similar things
are happening in most other East European
countries and faced with such a widespread
phenomenon Social Imperialism cannot use
armed force against them all.

The Yugoslavs and the Albanians asserted

their independence many years ago; the Rumanians more recently.

During the earlier part of this year Premier Ceausescu made a blistering attack on those who assert that national independence is an outmoded concept. He quoted the writings of Marx and Engels on the subject to make it clear to whom he was addressing his remarks.

Attempts, short of direct invasion, have been made to bring the Rumanians to heel, but with no success.

On one occasion the High Command of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, of which Rumania is still a member, requested permission for the entry into Rumanian territory of W.T.O. forces "for the purpose of military manoeuvres". The Rumanian government was under no illusions about the kind of manoeuvres that Social Imperialism had in mind, so they rejected the request and gained another victory.

Contrast this with the Czechs in 1968 who were demoralised by a weak leadership and unprepared for armed resistance to the aggressor, and therefore suffered foreign occupation

The lesson is clear - national independence can be retained even in the face of a powerful enemy provided there is a leadership which can mobilise the people in a spirit of armed resistance. If this is done, it is possible that the attack will never be made.

Western Europe

Despite the talk about 'economic upturns' the crisis of the world capitalist system

is deepening and giving rise to greater political instability, particularly in those countries with the weaker economies.

The relative strength of the West German economy is raising the spectre of a German dominated West Europe. This was reflected in the statement by Giscard d'Estaing, the French Prime Minister, that French conventional forces must be at least equal to those of West Germany.

In Italy the C.P.I. is gaining electoral support to such an extent that the 'problem' of having Communist ministers in the Government is being seriously discussed outside, as well as inside, the country.

Whether or not Communists will enter the Government at this stage, the fact is that the government of the day, no matter what its political complexion, is forced to take the opinions of the C.P.I. into account when making political decisions.

The thought of Communists being privy to NATO military secrets is throwing politicians and military men alike into a flap.

The French Government appears to take the view, (at least in public), that the whole thing is a matter for the Italians themselves, but Chancellor Schmidt's reaction seems to favour some form of intervention, although he is too cagey to spell it out.

Kissinger has let it be known that the U.S. would have to reconsider its involvement in Europe in the event of Communist participation in the government of a member state of the Alliance.

Similar situations will increase rather than diminish as political instability be-

comes more widespread.

Bearing this in mind, and taking into account that Europe is a vast arsenal, it can be appreciated that this is probably the most dangerous part of the world in terms of being a potential area of conflict between the superpowers.

Both East and West Europe are pregnant with change, and both superpowers may be tempted to fish in the troubled waters, thus sparking off another world war.

One section of the American ruling class, conscious of its waning influence over events in its own sphere, has put forward what has become known as the Sonnenfeldt doctrine.

In essence this is a proposal to Social Imperialism that they should arrive at a tacit understanding to mutually refrain from interfering in the other's presently 'recognised' sphere of influence. This would mean that if either superpower had the need to take action against one of its more wayward 'allies', the other superpower would refrain from interfering.

The Albanians, Rumanians, and Yugoslavs have already strongly attacked this doctrine, the acceptance of which would increase the possibility of attack on their countries by Social Imperialism.

We in Western Europe must also reject this doctrine which would give U.S. imperialism and the worst reactionary elements in Europe the facility to oppose radical social change in any member state of the NATO alliance.

To Sum Up So Far

The contention between the United States and the Soviet Union is a struggle between rival imperialisms, each seeking world hegemony.

Together and separately they threaten the independence of the smaller countries, including the industrially developed ones of Europe.

This is reflected in the respective attitude towards national sovereignty.

The superpowers regard it as an outmoded concept.

Their intended victims embrace it most strongly.

The most dangerous opponent of national independence at the present time is Social Imperialism.

It is the most dangerous because it cloaks its aggression by posing as a liberating, revolutionary force, and opposes the concept of National Sovereignty in pseudo-Marxist terminology in order to ideologically disarm the international proletariat and so prevent it from mobilising the people of the world in opposition to Social Imperialism.

The revisionist theories concerning the international dictatorship of the proletariat and the international division of labour which are used to justify Social Imperialist hegemony are the antithesis of proletarian internationalism.

Here we have a struggle between two lines on an international scale and there can be no compromise between them.

In the conditions applying in the world today, proletarian internationalism imposes the duty to safeguard national independence and sovereignty, maintain equality among all countries, and defend the right of every people to be masters in their own country.

This is a cause which has mobilised people to inflict serious defeats on British, French, Dutch, Belgian, and even U.S. imperialism, all in the space of thirty years or so.

It is certain that Social Imperialism can be defeated in the same way.

Therefore the main task of the proletariat of each country at this stage is to lead the fight to uphold national sovereignty. We deliberately formulate the task in this way in preference to defining it as 'the defeat of Social Imperialism' for the following reasons:-

The political mobilisation of people around the slogan of 'defeating Social Imperialism' will tend to strengthen the hands of the most reactionary and aggressive forces within Western Europe and the U.S.A. It could assist them to mobilise the people for an imperialist war of aggression against the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

It could also give them the excuse to restrict political liberty at home on the grounds that it is necessary for the purpose of defeating the external enemy. It will also provide the reason for centralising economic, political, and military power in the hands of supra national bodies, thus strengthening reaction.

On the other hand, by placing the empha-

sis on upholding national sovereignty, we minimise the chances of becoming embroiled in an imperialist war of aggression, yet, by denying the superpowers the possibility to expand, we are encompassing their defeat. They must either expand or collapse under their own weight.

Whilst it is the duty of the people of each country to defend their national independence, it is advantageous for the smaller countries to enter into pacts with each other which provide for mutual assistance if the territorial integrity of a member state is threatened.

Such a concept, to be practical must involve a degree of technical, economic, and military co-operation. To the extent that the E.E.C. strengthens the unity and the technical and economic base of the West European countries, we should support it as an impediment to super-power expansion in the economic field and as the provider of the industrial base for military strength.

However, we should oppose its negative features such as the use of its collective strength to maintain an imperialist relationship with the developing countries, the tendency for the economically stronger states to dominate the organisation. In connection with this we should also oppose any tendency to diminish national sovereignty in favour of a 'European identity'.

The Military Defence of Western Europe

The working class should be concerned with the defence of the national sovereignty of the West European countries.

The capitalist class in these countries is concerned with the maintenance of the

capitalist system.

Herein lie our differences.

NATO as it stands is concerned first and foremost with keeping Europe safe for U.S. and European capital and, if possible, expanding the field of operation to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

In accordance with this role it is possible, even likely, that it would be used on the side of reaction in the event of an internal armed conflict in a member state.

At the moment, NATO is heavily dependent upon U.S. forces, and their withdrawal would alter the military balance not only between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, but also within NATO itself as there is always the tendency for the economically strongest state to achieve a position of dominance in a centralised organisation. This fear is reflected in the statement by the Prime Minister of France to which we referred earlier.

The subordination of significant proportions of the armed forces of the member states under a centralised NATO Command structure will tend to strengthen all of these negative features.

We contend that the defence of the national integrity of the West European countries can best be accomplished in the context of a system of collective security which entails a high degree of arms standardisation and a common defence strategy, but with each state maintaining absolute control of its armed forces.

By emphasising defence of national sovereignty as the object of the alliance it

will help create a climate of public opinion which will make it difficult for the reactionary elements to use the organisation to interfere in the internal affairs of a member state, or indeed of any state.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that NATO does not have a sound strategy for dealing with an attack by forces of the W.T.O.

It officially places its main reliance on the use of tactical nuclear weapons, but this appears to be more of a gigantic bluff rather than a serious strategy.

If tactical nuclear weapons were used it would set in motion a chain reaction which would lead to the destruction of a large proportion of the cities of Europe and the people who live in them.

If the politicians and military men admit this 'strategy' to be a bluff, it would undermine the credibility of the nuclear 'deterrent' and possibly precipitate an attack.

If, on the other hand, they expressed a readiness to 'defend' Europe by destroying it, they would incur the wrath of the people.

When it is realised that most of these so-called tactical nuclear weapons are more powerful than the one used in Hiroshima, one can see the extent of the problem.

This dilemma is never publicly aired in the mass media because it would put the politicians and military men in an impossible position.

In spite of the alarm that it would weaken

NATO, we should work to bring it out in public debate and propose the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Europe.

This will immediately raise the question of how the territory of Western Europe can be effectively defended, and unless some realistic answers are forthcoming, the result will be a spread of defeatism and an accession of strength to Social Imperialism and its allies on the one hand, and a growth of ultra-reactionary forces on the other.

The victory of either would be contrary to the interests of the working class and the majority of the people, therefore a way must be found which corresponds with the interests of the mass of the people.

A People's Defence.

As defence of one's own territory is a just cause and one which can arouse strong emotional reactions, it can be harnessed to prepare for a people's war of resistance should the need arise.

To accomplish this, the prime requirement is a correct political line, and from this point on we are considering the question solely in the context of the situation in Britain.

In Britain

In Britain the most vociferous opponents of Social Imperialism are also the most inveterate enemies of the working class. Margaret Thatcher and Lord Chalfont are perhaps the best known of this species.

For them and their kind, opposition to Social Imperialism and opposition to

Socialism are inseparable; they are regarded as one and the same thing.

These characters are intent on creating a climate of public opinion which will support the proposition that preservation of the status quo on internal matters is an indispensable condition for the defeat of Social Imperialism.

Every strike is laid at the door of 'agitators' whose loyalty lies with the Soviet Union rather than with the British people.

They are trying to create a situation in which justifiable popular opposition to Social Imperialist aggression will provide the political reason for suppressing militant working class activity.

This can present a danger to the forces of the Left being drawn into battle on a ground favourable to their enemies, with the political division being between those who support the status quo and those who support Social Imperialism.

In a deep political crisis, a battle on these lines could provide a measure of popular support for intervention by Social imperialism which would be regarded as a 'liberator'

This is precisely the situation that Social Imperialism is trying to engineer everywhere. It is a valuable tactic by which it seeks to justify its aggression as in Angola.

In this event the reactionaries, defenders of the status quo, would be able to mobilise support for themselves as patriots.

Patriotism As A Weapon Of Reaction.

For donkeys' years the most reactionary, corrupt and parasitic elements in society have manipulated people for their own ends by appealing to patriotic sentiment. Blatant acts of aggression have been 'justified' in this way.

As a consequence, patriotism has come to be regarded by the Left as a dirty word not to be used in civilised company.

We have allowed it to become the exclusive property of the social scum.

It is time that we gave patriotism back its true meaning and used its emotive mobilising power in the interest of the people.

After all, who is a patriot but one who:

1. Works for the interests of the majority of the people.
2. Upholds the right of the people to determine the path which their country shall take in its economic, political and cultural development.
3. Upholds the right of other peoples and nations to do the same.

Slogans such as 'Put Britain First' appear to carry a patriotic message, but like 'Deutschland Uber Alles', it is imperialist in content.

The difference must be explained.

Patriotism As A Mobilising Force For Defeating Reaction at Home

As patriots concerned with the independ-

ence of our country we must look at the material basis needed for this independence and define the obstacles in the way of its attainment.

THE MATERIAL BASIS OF INDEPENDENCE means that a country must be able, at a pinch, to exist without external trade and rely entirely upon its own efforts and internal resources. Except for armed attack, the country with this kind of independence would be immune from outside pressures.

The U.S.A., U.S.S.R., China, Canada and Australia are probably capable, (at least in theory), of achieving this self-sufficiency.

As far as Britain and most of the smaller countries are concerned this is not a practical possibility if current living standards are to be maintained.

The nearest we can come to achieving complete independence is by following a policy of self-reliance.

This means relying primarily on our own efforts and using indigenous raw materials as much as possible but appreciating that our independence is in actuality limited by our need to obtain certain raw materials and foods from abroad that we do not possess or cannot grow.

In order to achieve this practical kind of independence the economy must be balanced in accordance with the needs of the British people and the needs of the countries with whom we would enter into agreements for the purpose of obtaining our necessary imports.

Forms of mutually advantageous co-operat-

tion between industrially developed countries are also possible and advisable.

For instance, the cost of research and development is now so prohibitive that, in many fields, it makes political and economic sense for countries to share these costs of some new products and technologies and pool the results.

This prevents one state from achieving a position in which it can, by virtue of its possession of technical know-how, dominate its partner.

For this reason we welcome decisions by any British Government to undertake joint ventures on the above basis with other European countries. The European airbus is one such project.

Such co-operation is essential if the smaller states are to retain their national independence.

British Independence

The measures required to create the material basis for our national independence will necessitate structural changes in the economy which will involve sharp struggles with the ruling class.

In the final analysis, independence cannot be achieved within the context of an export orientated market economy.

'Export drives' are profitable for the capitalist class and may also provide full employment when successful, but it is a dog-eat-dog business and, sooner or later, the competition launches a counter export drive.

With the 'success' of each capitalist

economy depending upon the ability to import less and export more, there must be losers as well as winners and disaster is only just around the corner as far as all workers are concerned.

Whilst abolition of the market economy is not a practical proposition at the present time, this does not mean that we sit back and await the revolution.

There are other activities of the capitalist class which demonstrate their disregard for national sovereignty and the well-being of the people when their profits are at stake.

For instance, we have the example set by prominent political figures stowing their money in the Caymen Islands to avoid paying taxes in Britain.

Capital is exported whilst British industry, we are told, is starved of capital.

A consortium, including British banks, have financed the building of a large car factory in South Korea whilst leaving the state to furnish capital for British Leyland at home.

We are constantly reminded of the importance of obtaining a favourable balance of payments position, yet large numbers of nominally British-made products are made up of imported sub-assemblies.

This practice both increases the amount of imports and cuts down the work available in Britain.

If we think about it there are many examples. Although each one by itself will not shake the system to its foundation, in to-

tal they can be combined to expose the unpatriotic character of the capitalist way of life and assist in the building of a broad patriotic front with its cutting edge turned against big business.

Contradictions Within The Capitalist Class

There are also contradictions within the capitalist class itself, the resolution of which can have far-reaching repercussions, particularly if the working class takes its own independent class line and turns the situation to its own advantage.

We here refer to the contradictions between the City interests, whose parasitic function it is to make a profit out of borrowing money at one rate of interest and lending it at a higher one, and that section of the capitalist class concerned with productive industry.

It is the former who insist that sterling should retain its role as a reserve currency so that they may continue their parasitic existence. By retaining that role for sterling they subject the internal economy of Britain to the fluctuations of the international money market.

Any move towards greater national independence must entail the elimination of these parasites.

Those interests concerned primarily with industry are aware that the continued existence of Britain as a capitalist state is dependent upon its ability to improve the industrial base of the economy. This aim is continually frustrated by the increases in the Bank rate occasioned by the 'need' to offer high enough rates of interest to attract foreign money into the British

banks.

Thus we have the contradiction between the 'patriotic' section of the capitalist class who want to bring about a resurgence in the industrial field and the 'unpatriotic' parasitic section.

There is a further related contradiction between them concerning the need to assure that capital goes into productive industry rather than office blocks, the distributive network and other similar fields.

These contradictions between the two main sections of the capitalist class find expression in many of the differences between the Tory and Labour parties.

Unity and Struggle

Tony Benn is, at the present time, the most outspoken advocate of the 'progressive' trend.

It will be remembered that Harold Wilson was also an advocate of the 'white-hot technological revolution', but he was unable to overcome the City interests and they continue as the dominant section of the capitalist class.

Their removal from power will be no easy task and it is certain that it will only be accomplished by mobilising the organised working class for that purpose.

This struggle is centred around the 'need' to increase the British capitalists' share of world trade by increasing the volume and 'competitiveness' of our exports.

As far as we are concerned, that is their problem but the increase in the industrial

base which this will require is of great importance to the working class since it will provide a stronger economic basis for national independence.

There are other factors as well, such as the practical experience to be gained by involvement in the struggle to dislodge the City interests and the opportunities for strengthening working class power at the grass roots as a condition for assistance in that struggle.

Further, an increase in the proportion of the population engaged in industrial production will alter the class structure of Britain in our favour.

Whilst the working class should be mobilised behind the demand to improve the productive base, it must also wage an unrelenting struggle against the trend towards the Corporate State which is an integral part of the political philosophy of the 'progressive' capitalist.

This is a subject that demands a separate article and we will deal with this in a future issue.

In short, our relationship with these 'progressives' in the immediate future must be one of Unity and Struggle. The class struggle must be intensified; what is essential is that the immediate, medium and long-term aims must be clearly specified.

Our opposition to Social Imperialism will inevitably bring us into conflict with the revisionists and those influenced by them at home, particularly on the subjects of Anglo-Soviet Trade and Defence.

Trade

As we noted earlier, trade is used by Social Imperialism as one of its weapons for simultaneously undermining the independence of the trade 'partner' and drawing it closer into its economic orbit, and ultimately into what it describes as the 'world socialist system'.

The general strategy is to get important parts of the economy increasingly dependent upon Soviet trade.

In an advert. in the Morning Star on May 7th 1976, I.A.Ivanov, Deputy Head of the Soviet Ministry of Trade, outlined some of the 'advantages' of Soviet trade. All the quotes below are from the advert:

"Big contracts have been signed with British companies for:

complete sets of equipment for the production of low-pressure polythene for the Prikumsky plastics factory;

equipment for the expansion of the Mogilev synthetic fibre plant built with the participation of Polyspinners;

carpet-weaving equipment for the Vitebsk and Kairakumsky carpet mills and

forge presses and machine tools for the giant Kama lorry works and other Soviet factories.

Deliveries are being made by Courtaulds, I.C.I., Simon Carves, C.J.B. Vickers, Pickering, Singer Cobble, Stavely Machine Tools, Rank Xerox, Davy Leowy and other well-known firms."

Soviet orders placed with them are becoming increasingly important for keeping their production capacities busy."

"Recent developments have shown how Soviet-British relations are more and more taking the form of large scale co-operation on a long-term basis."

It may be argued that these quotes do not prove our assertions, but it is a long term process and all we can do at this stage is to draw attention to the danger and make some other points for thought on the subject of Anglo-Soviet trade.

"British estimates indicate that every £5,000 worth of Soviet orders keeps one worker in a job for a whole year."

This is in line with the general implication that increases in trade with the Soviet Union will alleviate the unemployment situation in Britain. This is not as simple as it appears.

"Under the new agreement on bank credits for purchasing machines and equipment in 1975-1979, the Soviet side is to be granted loans totalling £950 million. This has helped to increase Soviet purchases."

According to this, we could expect the £950 millions to provide jobs for 38,000 workers for 5 years. There are, however, other factors to be taken into account. One is that in order to balance the books, imports of Soviet goods would have to be of the same value, so that as far as the total number of jobs created is concerned one would cancel out the other. The other factor is that, according to reports, some of the loan is to be spent on buying know-how

instead of goods.

For instance, B.P. are reported to be negotiating a deal to co-operate with the Soviet Union in the exploitation of its offshore oil deposits.

B.P. will supply the technology, the Soviet Union will provide labour and materials.

The Lucas Aerospace shop stewards told a press conference in Birmingham in April of this year that the Company is about to conclude a deal to furnish the Russians with details of an electronic engine control system for installation in the 'Concordski'. They rightly protested that this advanced technology should be used to provide work in Birmingham.

In these and similar cases the Companies concerned will receive cash benefits, but no additional jobs will be created in Britain.

A further point to note:-

"The main tasks are to establish large-scale long-term co-operation, including co-operation on a compensatory basis (in which payment for the investment costs is made in products from the new enterprise),....."

Under this arrangement we could finance equipment for the production of lorries, and be paid in lorries; or equip a plastics factory and accept payment in plastics - Big Deal!

Most of British exports to the Soviet Union are machinery and such like, a great deal of the things that they want to export to us are consumer goods.

We need to ask the question, why is it that we can afford to grant credits at low rates of interest to assist Soviet industrial development when British industry is, so we are told, short of capital.

On a wider scale, the Soviet Union has accumulated debts to the Western capitalist states to the tune of 20,000 million U.S. dollars since 1974.

These loans have enabled Social Imperialism to build up its industrial capacity and allowed it to divert more of its internal resources into arms production with less impact on the standard of living of the Soviet people, thus minimising the political backlash which its militarisation of the economy would otherwise bring about.

Trade is profitable for the capitalist class. We need to study the fine print of trade deals and investigate the political implications if we are to discover whether or not they are in the interest of the British people.

Defence

In general terms we should support military expenditure necessary for the defence of Western Europe. In line with this, we must oppose the revisionist-pacifist line of unilateral reductions in Britain's defence capacity

The argument that the strengthening of the defence potential also implies a strengthening of the power of the capitalist state is a valid one but lessons should be drawn from the errors of the pre-1939 era.

Unlike the 1914-18 war which was essent

ially for a re-division of the colonies in favour of German imperialism, Hitler's aim was to impose a New Order on the peoples of Western Europe, a fundamentally different thing.

Social Imperialism is now intent on establishing a New Order in Europe after its own image.

The fact must be grasped that the present regime has developed traits which are more akin to fascism than anything else.

This being the case, we have no alternative but to give qualified support to a counter-military build up. To do anything else would be to strengthen the position of Social Imperialism on a world scale.

We use the word 'qualified' in order to indicate that we have no illusions regarding the negative aspects of the arms build up by NATO.

We must expose the fallacies and the danger inherent in the NATO defence strategy based on the use of tactical nuclear weapons.

We have already noted the dilemma which faces the military and political leaders of Western European in this respect.

It is a bluff which, if called, will lead to the destruction of Europe's people and cities, both East and West.

We have already observed that widespread recognition of this possibility will lead to an attitude of defeatism.

The lesson of history that we must propagate is that the only sure means of defeat-

ing an aggressor is by the use of the ultimate weapon, People's War.

The Soviet Imperialists, no less than any other, have no doubt drawn their own conclusions from this phenomenon and, faced with the prospect of a prolonged struggle which would result in their overthrow, it is possible that they would hesitate to get involved in the internal affairs of that particular country.

The other side of this coin is that the main body of the capitalist class in Britain will also be afraid of enlisting the aid of this weapon, presaging as it does the end of their state monopoly in the use of arms.

Yet the experience of the 1939-45 war shows that it is possible to overcome this resistance. The formation of the Home Guard, limited as it was, was the result of a political struggle waged by people like Tom Wintringham, a veteran of the Spanish Civil War, who saw the need and the opportunities offered by the threat of invasion.

As the threat from Social Imperialism becomes more widely recognised, the demand for the arming of the people must also increase.

By this we mean the development of fairly sophisticated weaponry suitable for use by individuals and one- and two-person units, and the training of the whole population in the use of these weapons, as well as small arms.

If this demand comes from the organised working class and the emphasis is placed on National Defence, the ruling class will either have to concede the demand or be ex-

posed as capitulationists and traitors.

A political struggle along these lines will make it difficult to isolate the revolutionary forces but will, on the contrary, tend to unite the majority of the people around the industrial working class and isolate the most reactionary elements as enemies of the people.

* * * * *

The indispensable condition for implementing the strategy outlined is that the industrial working class shall, in the first place, pursue its own class interests ruthlessly and on a broad, as distinct from a trade or sectional, front.

Its refusal to accept the burden of an ever-increasing non-productive and bureaucratic sector of the economy will be a major factor in either forcing a restructuring of the economy, or bringing it down.

Either way is a step along the road to working class power, although the first alternative provides the possibility of making an advance on a broader front.

The middle classes can only be rallied around the working class when the latter demonstrates its strength and determination to bring about changes which will benefit the majority of the people in the longer term.

To achieve this, the industrial working class must at all times recognise, accept, and assert its role as the national leadership.

JUNE 1976

UNEMPLOYMENT

P. Briggs

It is no accident that politicians of the party in opposition pay lip service to the 'sacred cow' of reducing unemployment if their party is returned to power. The present government, however, claims to have achieved this at a stroke when it settled the miners' dispute and scrapped Heath's policy of the three day week at the onset of its present term of office. This, we see, was nothing but a gimmick, along with other moves in the honeymoon period. We are now seeing the highest level of unemployment since the war because of their attacks on the working class.

Now they talk of 'acceptable' levels of unemployment, surely not acceptable to the thousands out of work. Certainly acceptable to the C.B.I., City, Civil Service, and our overseas creditors the International Monetary Fund, who see levels of unemployment necessary for the efficient working of the capitalist system, and the level which can be made politically tolerable to the working class at any particular time.

The main enemy, we are told, is inflation, not unemployment and that a major cause of inflation is the high wage costs of British industry which is over-manned and under-productive.

So what do successive governments mean when they cry about the high level of unemployment and in the next move pursue policies which increase it?

From the government and opposition, C.B.I., City, Civil Servants, and many leading

trade unionists we hear the cry of "Stop this inflation". Who are they asking to stop inflation? They are not out of work.

As always this problem is to be solved at the expense of the working class. Why should the working class make sacrifices for the purpose of solving the problems facing the capitalist class? Is there any assurance that unemployment will be abolished, or even reduced to the 'acceptable' level of five years ago, when the rate of inflation is reduced? Workers agree they do not want inflation to soar, it's an uphill struggle keeping one's head above water with high rents, rates, food prices, etc. It is a merry-go-round on which the working class is always the loser.

Why is the ruling class concerned? The fact is that inflation constitutes a very serious, perhaps the most serious, threat to their society. If they are to take the measures necessary to defend their way of life, the inevitable result must be increasing unemployment which itself is or can become a threat also. Hence the need to raise the 'threshold' to $\frac{1}{2}$ million, $\frac{2}{3}$ million, 1 million, $1\frac{1}{2}$ million, and so on.

The million and a quarter mark was announced with a sigh of relief and rejoicing that it was not a million and a half. In addition this 'tide mark' was reached following a period that was one of the quietest on the industrial front for years.

Despite the level of unemployment, and workers realising there are no jobs to go

to once laid off, there are healthy signs of developing resistance from the shop floor. A major movement over recent months came from the shop floor workers at the British Steel Corporation.

With unemployment at 1½ million (6.1%) Jan. '76, (the highest of any month since the war and rising due to the worsening of the overproduction crisis facing world capitalism and the Labour Government's counter inflation policy), the B.S.C. which employs a 220,000 workforce wanted to shed 44,000 jobs "for starters" in the words of Chief executive Bob Scholey. One doesn't have to cast one's mind back very far when Sir Monty Finneston, Chairman of B.S.C., was talking about "only" 22,000. That is an increase of 100%, surely the highest rate of inflation in lost jobs ever in such a short period. At that time B.S.C.'s losses per week were £5 million.

A six-point plan was made to save £100 million through more efficient work practices and better plant organisation. This, in fact, saved £7 million, mainly from plant organisation. If this was opposed then by the union officials along with the original proposal of sacking 22,000 steel workers, why not later when the figure was doubled? It seems that Tony Benn used his influence with trade union leaders to negotiate with B.S.C. to take the initiative from the rank and file, because a 100% increase in lost jobs was not going to be met with cries of joy. Indeed the shop floor ignored its union leaders' pleas not to take action and made up its own mind when and where to resist attacks on their livelihoods.

The first screw to be turned was the ending of overtime and weekend working. This

was quickly countered by 1,500 workers at Corby, Northants, who voted to uphold all existing local and national agreements. They were followed by workers at Llanwern, Ebbw Vale, Velindre, Trostre in South Wales and Shelton works, Stoke-on-Trent. B.S.C. took an immediate step back and said this would only affect 400 workers and those hit would be redeployed.

The attack on the workers was then pursued in another area when B.S.C. announced the ending of the guaranteed working week agreements signed in 1969. The magnificent response from the rank and file was to defy their union's recommendation and take ~~strike action~~, indicating their lack of trust in the kind of agreement the union leaders and B.S.C. were trying to reach, and so force negotiations to take place at local level with shop floor stewards on the above mentioned point. The fact is when things on the industrial front are comparatively quiet, it comes as a welcome sign that workers are not prepared to sit back and accept all the claptrap about the good of the country.

The following weekend a meeting between the B.S.C. and the steel unions lasting some 20 hours took place. Three days later it was revealed that this meeting had produced a document outlining far reaching changes that had been agreed to by the T.U.C. steel industry committee. The circulation of this document was limited to Trade Union leaders. It tied steel unions to acceptance of compulsory redundancies, measures to halt unofficial strikes, and managerial prerogative in deciding where the guaranteed working week would be applied.

The following is a statement from the document:

"That the maximum opportunity for voluntary redundancy will be allowed."

It further states:

"But after jobs have been declared redundant, it is the corporation's intention that if the manpower has not been reduced within 12 weeks from the date when jobs are declared redundant by the management, other redundancy measures will have to be applied."

From this workers are supposed to believe that the Labour Government was maintaining a neutral position over 44,000 lost jobs in what appears to be the thin end of the wedge regarding sackings in nationalised industries. A shudder must run through the shop floor of the steel works, indeed all shop floors, to think that our "friends" from the T.U.C. have been playing their part in all this, with the Labour Government about as neutral as any Tory government.

Nationalisation - ?

The very notable difference between the struggle at B.S.C. and Chryslers was that at Chryslers many of the official union leaders and top shop stewards were calling for nationalisation. The position of the steel plants is different as it is already state-owned, as are the mines and railways. Has this meant more work? Nationalisation means rationalisation and the above industries are under-capitalised and struggling and probably always will be under this system.

Some people are under the illusion that nationalised industries are run in the interest of the people and when the state

takes over, the workers of these industries help in the running of the industry for that interest. How wrong they are! As a worker in a nationalised industry, I know that the lads on the shop floor are under no such illusion; it is still the workers against the bosses.

The Rolls Royce management, in the process of reducing their 65,000 labour force by 6,000, issued the following statement relating to their plant at Dundonald, Northern Ireland, where the intention was to sack 800 workers:

"We are aware of the difficult employment situation in N. Ireland and are discussing with Mr Orme, Minister of State at the N. Ireland office, what steps might be taken to mitigate the situation at Dundonald and to find alternate job opportunities for the work force." (Times, 30th Dec. '75)

Can anyone seriously believe any work can be found in this part of the U.K., an area which has suffered the highest rate of unemployment for many years? Certainly not the 800 workers at Dundonald. Different shades of political opinion in N. Ireland see this as a gradual economic withdrawal. The reason given by the government department was that the decision is not influenced by the N. Ireland situation, it is based purely on economic realities. That is the brutal truth laid bare; profit is the prime consideration under capitalism - people are expendable.

Rolls Royce is another instance where workers thought their livelihoods would be protected by state capitalism. I don't imagine for one moment that those workers who saw their firm taken over in February 1971

thought they would be facing the prospect of dole queues in 1976.

Examples of industrial workers being sacked are so widespread that a book could be written along the theme of companies losing profit because of inflation and overmanning. One firm, namely Thorn's, have shown that, whilst they have been making profits in some areas, they are not prepared under any circumstances to look favourably on keeping things running for the workers in those factories whose profits are not so high, by diverting work there. They boast of pre-tax profits of £31.5 million and with profits at that level they can hardly claim poverty as a reason for threatening to close down a complete complex at Skelmersdale in South-West Lancashire, throwing 1,400 out of work.

The other big company in the area is Courtaulds whose future hangs in the balance after many months of closure rumours and short time working. This, in a new town where unemployment is running at more than 10% and likely to see a quarter of its workforce out of a job before the winter (1976/77) is out, is nothing short of disastrous for the workers and their families.

Lucas Aerospace provides another example of the employers "concern" to contain unemployment. In an attempt to check and reverse the steady decline in the workforce, (5,000 over 5 years), the shop stewards prepared and presented a detailed plan for diversifying the existing workforce and plant into a broad range of alternate products.

A major consideration in the preparation of this plan was environmental and social

desirability.

The management of Lucas Aerospace rejected the plan and expressed its intention to

"...concentrate on its traditional business which involves the development of aircraft systems and components for the aerospace and defence industries."

In the field of the capitalist rat race, Social desirability is an 'also ran'.

The important thing is, what lessons will the working class have learnt about loyalty to the Labour Government, and the trust they have in trade union leaders?

It is no accident that governments in the capitalist countries with combined unemployment running at 14 million will try to bring in legislation to curb struggle by working class movements. In the U.K. we are seeing more and more of the arbitration service set up by the present Labour government, free collective bargaining being interfered with, T.U.C. collusion with statements about getting unemployment reduced to 600,000 by the middle of 1978, as proposed in the annual economic policy review, which also suggests that the real level of unemployment might be as high as 1,700,000.

The achievement of a level of 600,000 unemployed by 1978, as proposed by the T.U.C. document, is dependent on a growth figure in gross domestic product of 7.9% in 1977 and 6.8% in 1978. The fallacy of this is that growth of this kind has never been reached, which more than justifies some leading economic experts forecasting jobless totals not falling below 1 million by

the end of this decade.

The Copper Handshake

It is true that workers are still volunteering for redundancy and receiving statutory payments. (The maximum is now £2,400). The hope is that something will turn up before the money runs out. But pressure on these workers will tell in about six months after their earnings-related benefits have run out and the unfilled vacancies drop. The mind boggles! With all this in the melting pot, which way will the Labour Government move? Remember they brought in the Redundancy Payments Act 10 years ago to stem industrial trouble on the shop floor. It's fair to say this form of legislation, along with many others of its kind, is nothing but an attempt to stop struggle.

On the other side of the coin, while the industrial workers are being thrown on the scrap heap once again, we find top civil servants are on the increase year after year, proof of the growing bureaucracy of the capitalist-run state machine. One has only to look at the new year's honours list to see old friends being looked after. Out of 744 names, 166 are from the higher civil service. Of 19 new Companions of Bath, 18 are from Whitehall's upper ranks. No redundancies for the Maharajahs of Whitehall. Investigation shows they retire at sixty and are almost the only section of the community who have their pensions fully guaranteed against inflation.

It is not unusual either for civil servants to be offered lavishly paid jobs in industry, banking and insurance when they have completed their task in the interest of those whom they are later to serve in big business. In turn the gap is filled by

a loyal recruit to follow the right line in the interests of capitalism.

Hard-up Britain produced £235,400 to buy a home for one of our Paris envoys with the moving-in fee a staggering £146,000. Also, in Rio de Janeiro, for the occasional use of Sir Derek Dodson who lives 700 miles away in Brasília, a spacious penthouse, cost £150,000 with £50,000 spent on decoration.

While workers queue for dole money, looking for an honest day's work, the rot at the top is deeply entrenched, where their life style is still that of a rich empire, with too much money and too many honours. This form of subtle corruption with jobs for the boys has been and will be a facet of this society for years to come, similar to the court of the middle ages with their rigid sense of duty to their own class. Do the right thing for the capitalist class and you will receive ribbons and baubles and look like a Greek shipowner's Christmas tree.

The government statistical service, which is just one part of the vast civil service machine, has produced figures for 1975 showing a decrease in its staff from 694,384 to 693,921, a total of 463, a grand total in comparison with the thousands of industrial workers laid off each week. It's bit of a joke, although one cannot be happy about even this small amount because they probably came from the lowest grades.

"Now You See Them....."

Further on in the report we find that 18,000 officials were transferred from the Department of Employment to the Manpower

Services Commission whose staff are no longer established civil servants, giving the impression of a drop in the number of civil servants which is not really a drop at all but a means of "concealed employment". It shows, also, that 5,767 of those transferred have gone to the Department of Health and Social Security, proving that whilst they have increased administration staff to this department, the service will not improve one iota because at the same time we are experiencing drastic cuts in expenditure on new modernised hospitals and modern equipment, over-worked doctors, nurses and all hospital staff in general. When unemployment goes up, the decline in society is shown in many ways with people's health affected with the pressure of not being able to pay bills and meet hire purchase commitments. The crime rate is soaring and more tramps and dossers roam the streets, particularly in London.

Local authorities have increased their staff to four times that of the civil service since 1952 when it was just twice the amount; the administrative and clerical workers increased by no less than 64%, which leaves only 36% on the manual side. In the last ten years employment in manufacturing fell by 600,000 while employment by local authorities increased by about 750,000.

While the imbalance between office and manual workers is shown in local authorities, the most important imbalance of these forces is more sharply raised within the manufacturing industry where the non-productive staff certainly outnumber the productive worker, so the pressure of work-study and productivity deals are pushed on to the shop floor, again squeezing the productive worker because management knows

it's what's at the end of the production line that counts and further realising many are living off the backs of the few, making this the main reason for the inability of British manufacturers to compete in world prices.

Instead of the T.U.C. pandering to the Labour government and acting as policemen against the workers it should, in the words of union leaders, be looking after its members' interests in fighting against the government on such issues as unemployment and wage restrictions, and for a return to free collective bargaining at plant level and the stabilising of rents, rates, food and fuel prices.

It now seems the workers come second so long as the interests of the Labour Party are not damaged and they remain in power no matter what harm they inflict on the working class in reducing their standard of living. If these demands are not met by the government, the correct action of the T.U.C., if it is working in the interests of its members, is to call for mass struggle against this or any government that doesn't fight for the basic needs of those that produce the wealth for this society.

A contributory factor to the general acceptance of the £6 flat limit was that it appeared very reasonable to perhaps a big majority of workers, even though it created difficulties over differentials. The new limit proposed (4½%) should provide a much better basis for the broadest agitation aimed at rejecting the Government-T.U.C. carve up.

If action is not called and the T.U.C. carries on with this carve up, then it's a

DEVOLUTION

E Wagland

At a time when moves in both political and economic fields are for more centralisation of power, the ruling class faced with a contradiction that may go far deeper than apparent. For some time the propaganda has been impressing upon us the basic forms of action required to overcome the present economic crisis. However, when it comes to the specific problem of Scotland, Wales, and of course, Ireland, then they are not in a position of having a line that even appears to offer a solution.

This situation arises because of the nationalist movements that have been developing for a long period in these countries. All the ills that afflict the working people there are seen as a consequence of English rule. This conviction is strengthened by the fact that the severity of the affliction is often greater in the 'subject' nations, for example, unemployment. This desire in turn provides the material for those political groupings who would solve all the ills by simply obtaining independence, Westminster being the 'enemy'.

It is essential that a distinct difference in attitude is taken towards the political organisations who put forward 'national' solutions and the genuine desires of the mass of the people. Nationalism is a diversion of class feeling into abstract channels, and experience to date would indicate that before class solutions are seen to be the answer, many people need to see the failure of 'national' solutions in practice.

These movements arise basically from economic factors, and the relative strength of these factors readily reflect themselves in the degree of national feeling shown, for example, the support for nationalism in Scotland ties in with all the vague promises of prosperity riding in on the waves of North Sea Oil. In Ireland, a different situation has a background of discrimination in jobs and housing, and so on. In Wales, the traditional culture rings more bells than their form of political 'nationalism' for they have been the least affected of the three nations.

However, to return to our objective. The ruling class realises only too well that some form of devolution is necessary if it is to maintain its power. Whatever form is proposed is likely to lead to an impossible situation, for it must leave a semblance of power for some form of assembly, etc. that is convincing, shall we say, to the people of Scotland but at the same time still enable the Government at Westminster to operate effective control.

With the decline in the prestige of the accepted political parties and the failure of any grouping to provide an alternative, what chance has either the Labour or Conservative parties of offering anything that will be acceptable to Scottish 'nationalism' (or any other nationalism) and also to themselves? No wonder the Government statement in the days of Harold Wilson indicated that there would be a year of debate before any decision would be taken. That year is giv-

ing them time to study the moves of their adversaries and to consider what tactics and fabrications may be possible.

Let us look further into this line of thought. In the first place we must accept that nationalist feelings exist in sufficient depth to demand more than a passing comment. In the extreme, they have shown themselves in Ireland on both 'sides'. As I have already mentioned, it is an unfortunate fact, but apparently a necessary part of historical development, that national aspirations, in some cases, will need to be experienced before the realisation that class struggle is the solution.

This being the case, those M.P.'s who 'represent' Scottish constituences, but who rely on Westminster for all that matters in life for themselves, are in 'queer street' for the first thing they must do if they wish to gain the support of the main body of Scottish Nationalism is to give unswerving support to the general nationalist movement in Scotland. The only ones who stand a chance here are those who were elected on a Scottish Nationalist ticket; the rest are suspect as they have already spent their lives working for the British solution.

If the Government at Westminster is to take note of nationalism seriously it has to operate on two levels. The first is the devolution of the political assembly. In a situation where people are not too aware, a lot of sins can be committed and got away with here, but already in Britain generally and Scotland, Ireland and Wales in particular, this situation is past, so we need to look at the second, the devolution of the administration. This where the Government will have a headache. To grant local power to some form of Scottish council,

etc. to control the effective functions of state power in Scotland, which is what the serious arguments of devolution are about, is to do two things.

Firstly, it is to admit that central control from Westminster has failed at a time when centralisation has become one of the system's main solutions. Secondly, it would give power to a localised body without any guarantee as to who may obtain power on that localised body. True decentralisation, and truly a problem for the ruling class.

The Irish situation increases the dilemma that the Government faces, for the actions of the British Army in Northern Ireland have clearly demonstrated what is possible should some sections in Scotland try a little self-determination.

The only form of devolution acceptable to the Government would be administration minus power, with the lines of communication to Westminster buzzing every time a query arose.

If power was handed to a right-wing grouping, then their policies would be exposed to the test and provide a lesson for the working class forces, thereby weakening the nationalist position and putting the perspective in a more positive light. There is little chance that any half-baked form of devolution will get support; on the other hand, the longer the delay the greater will be the support for nationalist groups and, in the final analysis, Westminster may well have to concede the fact that a serious concession may have to be granted as a result of a real movement of people, and the possibility of violence cannot be ruled out. However, if the ruling class can find

sufficient room to manoeuvre, then a tactical retreat would be preferable to a confrontation.

One interesting factor arises concerning the state forces. The armed forces are under central direction, but the police forces are administratively controlled on a local basis. In Scotland there are eight police forces operating out of the forty-three in the U.K. While we are under no illusions, it is still a fact that the local situation could be embarrassing for the Government should the reliability of these Scottish forces be in question. There is no problem in redirecting army units, but if it became necessary to draft in outside police forces, it could have the opposite effect to that required by the ruling class.

As far as taking a political stand is concerned then, it would be positive to support the demand for devolution as it definitely has the backing of many Scottish workers, and in any genuine form is an embarrassment to the ruling class. It can only lead to the revelation that nationalism is not the answer and workers will be all the more ready to seek class struggle as the real solution.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Continued from page 25

clear indication that they are serving the interests of the Labour Party who, along with the Tories, serve British capitalism. The British working class will then see that the power of the state is not at Westminster but controlled by the interests of capitalism.

"THE SUPERPOWERS, THE THREAT OF WAR, & THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS"

Copies from -

Second World Defence,
c/o 27 Priory Avenue,
London, N.8.

"POLITICS AND MONEY"

Taxing and Spending:
An Era Ending

- Part 1: The Politics of Ruling.
- Part 2: Britain's Present Situation
- Part 3: An Era Ending

Obtainable from -

Politics and Money
14 South Hill Park Gardens,
London, N.W.3.

"MONTHLY REVIEW"

Obtainable from -

R. Handyside,
21 Theobalds Road
London, W.C.1.

CORRESPONDENCE

Editor,
The Marxist.

I have read the Programme published in No. 29 of The Marxist. Please understand I am not a great Marxist-Leninist. I bought your journal at Collett's with pleasure because I had already read an issue before (about the Common Market) and found the articles very helpful and very interesting. After reading your Programme I had no problem with most of it but there were a few questions or comments about points I didn't understand or didn't quite make sense to me and I would like to bring them to your attention.

1. It is a bit disappointing the way you jump from "General Principles" to "we draw the following conclusions"! Maybe you have really made a thorough study of "applying these general principles to conditions in Britain" but in any case you have left the most difficult part out of your programme. It seems that too many other groups are quick to spout out "general principles" and "conclusions" but when it comes to the hard part of the real analysis they quickly run out of steam. The real analysis is what we readers are starved for, not "principles" of which we've had too many, so please don't leave out the best bit.

2. Similarly, you ought to be more specific in the next things you say. For instance, in (2), how is this domination expressed in the approach to industrial struggles, etc.?

In the next paragraph "we do not lose sight of the fact that there are contradictions...." - well, explain what contradic-

tions for us ordinary people who don't yet know, could you?

Four paragraphs below: "Between the two main classes are other classes and sub-classes" - could you say which these classes are?

3. After writing General Principle 4, it seems that here you are giving a deliberate kick in the shins to one such elite, especially in the second paragraph after "Classes". Wouldn't it be better not to lower yourselves to their level, at least here in your Programme. After all, if they're only an elite, they don't represent many people, and I don't think the people believe there are only two classes in Britain. It is more important to get through to the people than to get through to some individuals already organised in small elites. The vast majority in Britain are unorganised for revolution and yet they are the real masses.

They should be the main object of our revolutionary work and propaganda. The others will get sorted out sooner or later.

As I said, on the whole I agree with your programme, if you can resolve these points.

Your comrade
Peter Cook.

The Editorial Committee Replies.

The Editorial Committee welcomes correspondence from readers, particularly when of the critical-constructive kind like the one from Peter Cook.

We think that the letter can best be answered by explaining the reasons why we de-

cided to publish this very abbreviated "Programme".

It must be appreciated that not all our readers have taken out a subscription, and there are others who begin reading The Marxist at different times. This presents the reader with the problem of relating the articles on any one particular issue, to a general political line.

We hope that the publication of a General Programme in each issue will go some way to getting over this problem.

The main article in this issue and the article on the E.E.C. in No. 28 are amplifications of the terse statements in the General Programme, and this process will be continued in future issues.

We hope in this way to assist readers to view each article in a broader context.

On the question of elites. As a matter of policy we do not indulge in attacks on other groups and the point to which our correspondent refers is not directed again-

st one specific group.

Elitism expresses itself in many different forms and we included a reference to it in the "Programme" to indicate that we intend to consciously fight against it both as a general tendency, and specifically in relation to ourselves as a group.

Finally, we wholeheartedly agree with the last part of the letter:

"It is more important to get through to the people than to get through to some individuals already organised in small elites. The vast majority in Britain are unorganised for revolution and yet they are the real masses.

They should be the main object of our revolutionary work and propaganda."

Yours fraternally,

Editorial Note - Owing to lack of space we regret we have had to omit "General Principles" in this issue.
